

*Every School  
Communicating...Collaborating...  
Connecting*



**East Cobb County Council**

**PTA<sup>®</sup>**

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**The *Connections* Newsletter -  
A Publication of the East Cobb County Council of PTAs**

**2011 Dates to Remember**

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Sept 27</b>       | <b>District 9 Fall Conference<br/>Piedmont Church – 9:30 am</b>                               |
| <b>Sept 30</b>       | <b>Audits Due to State Office<br/>Platinum &amp; Early Bird<br/>Membership Award Deadline</b> |
| <b>Oct 23-31</b>     | <b>Red Ribbon Week Campaign</b>   |
| <b>Oct 25</b>        | <b>Cobb Chamber TOTY Pep Rally<br/>Roswell St Baptist Church</b>                              |
| <b>Oct 28</b>        | <b>ECCC PTA Reflections Drop-<br/>off @ Sprayberry HS</b>                                     |
| <b>Oct 31</b>        | <b>Gold, Oak Tree &amp; Comm Part.<br/>Membership Award Deadline</b>                          |
| <b>Nov 1</b>         | <b>ECCC PTA Dues &amp; Fees Due</b>   |
| <b>Nov 2 &amp; 3</b> | <b>Nominating Committee<br/>Training Location: TBA</b>  |
| <b>Nov 8</b>         | <b>Election Day – No School</b>   |
| <b>Nov 16</b>        | <b>Cobb Alcohol Task Force<br/>Workshop- Central Library</b>                                  |

Greetings from your ECCC PTA Executive Committee. We thank you for all that you have done so far this year in support of the children and school communities that make up our Council. We are 35 schools strong and enjoy a rich tradition of parent volunteerism, advocacy, membership and programming. We hope to share some of that news with you here via our Fall Newsletter.

We thank you for choosing to be *informed*, *involved* and *engaged advocates* for our children. We stand ready to help you and your team in that awesome responsibility. Thank you for the privilege of serving you and your school communities.

Please check out the important dates to the left and also remember to share this information with your leadership team.

Warmest Regards,


**2011-12 ECCC PTA Executive Committee**  
**Irene Barton, Beth Anderson, Stephanie Daniels,  
Pamela Kent, Steve Budow & Karen Hallacy**

## Wrap Up from Priority Fair

We had a great turnout for our first general membership meeting and Priority Committee Fair held at Mt Paran North Church. We were fortunate to have several guest presenters from Georgia PTA join our Board of Directors in delivering training to attendees.


The survey for the event is still open and your feedback is very important to us. Please take a moment to answer this quick survey: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/33DWBFH>

If your unit was unable to attend the program and would like some follow up training, please let us know at [irenebarto@gmail.com](mailto:irenebarto@gmail.com). We will make arrangements to come to you and deliver some targeted training.

One of the highlights of the morning was the **Presidents & Principals Panel** discussion. Here is a recap of the discussion items with Best Ideas noted with a 



**Communication** - PTA presidents should find out communication preferences of principal - Email? Face to face? Prescheduled meetings or as needed? Start opening up the communication channels over the summer.

- Recognize the fact that the principal has many demands on his/her time - foundations, booster clubs, athletic events, not to mention running a school with thousands of stakeholders - students, parents, faculty, central office, businesses, etc. This is not to diminish the importance of PTA/PTSA, but rather to highlight the numerous responsibilities of a principal.
- Committee chairs should follow up with all who wish to volunteer; even if program won't happen for several months. Contact volunteers to thank them and let them know when you'll be in touch.  **If there are immediate needs, ask if they are interested in helping out with a more immediate need before the other program kicks off.**

***Stand together. Power up. Reach out.***

(Priority Fair Wrap Up cont'd)

**Priorities** - PTA leaders should match programming and activities to support school improvement plans and focus areas.

💡 **Have a PTA rep on the School Council where those plans are discussed.**

Be flexible! A program that you and your team thought would be perfect for your school and you have a budget for might need to be changed due to any number of circumstances.



**Community Partnership** - Reaching out to potential business partners should be a coordinated effort between school, PTA/PTSA, clubs and Foundation. 💡 **Appoint one faculty person to serve as coordinator for all requests.** True partnership is a two-way street - it's not *just* what company can give to school, but what the school can in turn *give back* to the business.



**Parental Involvement** - critical at all levels of school. If your children say they don't want you at the school, that's your cue to show up! Some middle school and high school parents may think that there is no interaction with students if you are a PTSA volunteer. **Not true!** Communicate opportunities where parents can still see children - front office volunteer, lunch monitor, textbook

distribution, etc. 💡 **Last Minute Donations Helper** volunteer position is designed to connect with those parents who are already strapped for time, but still might be available to help on a one-time basis. One high school received a huge response and it actually led to people signing up for committees full time once they saw how easy, fun and stress-free volunteering could be!

**Collaboration** - ask your stakeholders what their priorities are. 💡 **Conduct a teacher survey in addition to a parent survey.** Ask teachers what programs are effective in the classroom, what their priorities are and make changes where possible. Communicate that the change was made based upon their feedback! And if you can't make a change or implement a program, explain why.

Recognize that outside programming that takes away from instructional time is *very difficult* to

schedule. 💡 **Host assembly programs toward the end of the school year when there is not as much going on. Or incorporate a theme in the morning announcements that gives students something to think about/talk about.**

Note: This is repeated from the District 9 Fall 2011 Newsletter: Carol Lindstrom, District Treasurer

## Treasurer's Resources ...



### \$\$\$ MONEY MATTERS \$\$\$

#### It's that budget time of year again

Here are a few details to help you with your budget process now and all year long:

#### \$ Goals, Purpose and Programs -

Before you can create a budget, you need to know your focus for the year. By now you should have met as an Executive Committee (EC) and/or Board of Directors (BOD) to discuss a focus and create a Strategic Plan.

#### \$ Have a budget committee-

Typically chaired by the Treasurer and including the president and principal, this committee will help speed up the process of creating a budget and leave your EC and BOD meetings with more time to discuss other agenda items.

\$ Balancing Act - As a 501(c)3 organization, the budgeted expenses should equal the budgeted income. Unallocated funds should be put in a line item as "start-up" funds for the next school year.

#### \$ Don't bog 'em down with the details -

Too many details can be frustrating, confusing and time consuming. Although you need to have line items in which to allocate funds (as well as explain where funds are going), you can group these into more general categories and assign a monetary amount to the category. Not only does this make it easier on your members to go through and approve the budget, but it allows for fewer amendments throughout the year.

#### \$ Don't spend what you don't have -

Remember your budget is an estimate of income and expenses. If your income falls short of the projection, do not expect to support all of the projected expenses.

\$ Do Amend! - As stated above, the budget is an estimate. If you fall short on income (or make a killing), your budget will need to be amended. Be sure to announce intentions of the amendments to your membership before your meeting.

\$ Thank you for the donation - Reimbursements can only be made for budgeted and approved expenses. In addition, documentation must be attached to a Check Request Form and approved by the president before a reimbursement check can be cut. Any purchase made that is not approved or goes over the budgeted amount should not be reimbursed.

\$ Check Please - ALL purchases for your PTA must be made by check. Cash payments, PTA credit cards and debit cards are NEVER to be used to pay for ANYTHING. Run out of pizza during the dinner rush at a PTA meeting? Cut a check or have someone pay for the extra pizza and keep their receipt for reimbursement.

\$ Transparency is Key - We are accountable to our members. Make sure your budget is supporting your purpose and benefiting all of the children of the school. Don't cut checks or approve expenditures that you wouldn't want your membership to find out about.

For a detailed  
Treasurer's Guide, please  
go to [www.georgiapta.org](http://www.georgiapta.org)

Questions? Contact Steve Budow, ECCC  
PTA Treasurer at  
[steve\\_at\\_eccc@att.net](mailto:steve_at_eccc@att.net)

## ECCC PTA Community Outreach

It has been a while since the [Community Outreach](#) Committee Chair position has been filled for our Council. We are delighted that Hilary Hill and Kathy Addeo were recently appointed to this position as Co-Chairs. ECCC PTA has a rich tradition of partnering with schools under the "Sister School Program" and Hilary and Kathy will continue to provide direction, leadership and enthusiasm for that. There are many opportunities for parents and students to assist schools right now!

In addition, the Community Outreach Committee is considering some "Council-wide" community projects to benefit some of our non-profits and service providers in the County. Look for more communication about these projects in the weeks to come.

If you have questions or want to contact them, please Email Hilary at [hillsinga@yahoo.com](mailto:hillsinga@yahoo.com).

**"To the world, you may be one person,  
but to one person, you may be the world."**

Anonymous

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## ECCC PTA Membership



Many of our schools are enjoying some tremendous membership numbers. As of the end of August, our Council-wide membership totaled 26, 272. That's an increase of over **2,000** from August 2010. **WOW!!** Since we want Every School to enjoy a strong membership base, here are a few Membership ideas to consider:

- 💡 Combine Membership with another school activity - discounted Fall Festival tickets for PTA members, free entry to 6<sup>th</sup> grade dances for PTSA members, a free spaghetti dinner for PTA members when they buy one dinner.
- 💡 To encourage high schoolers to lend their voice to our "one voice", create a competition among clubs or between grades with an incentive.
- 💡 Need to communicate in a different language? Check out <http://www.georgiapta.org/leadership-membership-news.html> for forms in **6** different languages.

## Committee Updates - A Few Bright Ideas!!



**Diversity & Inclusion** - Hold a **Cultural Summit** at your school. Use the templates provided by our Diversity Chair, Wendy Stewart, from the Georgia PTA website: <http://www.georgiapta.org/leadership-diversity.html> Wendy is also happy to help you implement!



**Environmental Education** - Promote a **Waste-Free Lunch Day**. A typical student who brings his lunch will generate over 60 pounds in waste over the course of the year. Reward students with an eco-friendly container for future lunches, BPA-free water bottle or other small item. <http://www.georgiapta.org/documents/HowtoConductaWasteFreeLunchDay.pdf>



**Youth Services** - Bring the **No Place for Hate** program to your school. Check out [www.noplaceforhate.org](http://www.noplaceforhate.org)



**Community Outreach** - Include a **canned food item** as the "cost of admission" to your Fall Festival, middle school dances or Friday night football game.



**Legislation & Advocacy** - Invite an **elected official** (e.g., State Representative or Senator, School Board Member or County Commissioner) to attend a program or sporting event at your school. Give them an opportunity to meet with staff, students and/or parents.



**Health & Wellness** - Start a **Fresh Fruit Friday** program at your school. Easy to implement and very popular with students. Contact Amy Waldner, ECCC PTA Health & Wellness Chair for info on how to get started.



**Family Engagement** - Host a "**Coffee with the Principal**" - works for all grade levels. Parents can ask questions in a relaxed atmosphere. The principal and counselors can talk about why parental engagement remains critical at all levels of the K-12 educational experience.