



Newsletter Highlights

- PTA Membership
- Back To School Night
- Direct Donation

President's Message

On behalf of the PTA, welcome back to school. Joining us at Sparks Elementary this year we have a wonderful new principal, Sharon Kearney, as well as 97 new students and 40 new families. We're so happy to have you all.

Coming home in the next couple of weeks you'll be receiving lots of information from the PTA. There are so many ways that you can be involved in your child's education and experience here at Sparks. You may decide to become a room mom, help in the classroom, join a PTA committee or chaperone a class trip. Whatever you choose, please find something that fits into your lifestyle and jump right in. With 527 students at Sparks this year, we need our wonderful volunteers more than ever.

Once again Sparks is fortunate to have a PTA executive board with officers and committee heads that are incredibly dedicated to our school. They've already been hard at work over the summer putting exciting programs in place for our children and families, so please be on the look out for important flyers coming home and take a glance at the calendar to see what's coming up this fall. One date you definitely don't want to miss is Back to School Night on September 4th when you'll have the opportunity to meet your child's teacher and hear

more about what they'll be learning this year. We'll also be kicking off the 2007-2008 PTA Membership & Direct Donation campaign, *It's Easy as A-B-C*, which includes incentives for joining the PTA and for submitting your Direct Donation early. Remember, this is the only fundraising we do at Sparks and the money raised goes directly towards classroom support, educational enrichment programs and fun family events. So please don't forget your checkbooks!

In closing, I'd like to personally invite every parent, grandparent, friend, faculty and staff member to join the Sparks PTA this year. The PTA's national motto is Every Child - One Voice and this powerful statement emphasizes the importance of giving every child here at Sparks a voice

through strong PTA membership. PTA meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month and they're a terrific way to meet new people and get involved at Sparks. Your PTA board is eager to hear your thoughts and ideas. Please feel free to contact me at 410-472-4817 or vandyharman@hotmail.com.

We're looking forward to another terrific year at Sparks Elementary.
-Vandy Harman

Thanks!

Thanks to the many families who helped monitor and maintain the bluebird trail over the summer!



-Pokey Fair

Mark Your Calendar September

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
3 Labor Day- No School	4 Back To School Night	5 Volunteer Training 9:15am	6	7 Pep Rally 9:00am
10	11 Volunteer Training 7:00pm	12	13 Rosh Hashana- No School	14
17	18 PTA Chairs Meeting	19	20	21 Cultural Assembly
24	25	26 Yearbook Party 3:45pm	27	28 New Parent Party

PTA Membership

It is a proven fact that children perform better when their parents are involved both at home and at school. Grades are higher. Test scores rise. Self-esteem grows. Schools improve. There is a simple way to make these outcomes a reality: join the PTA. Everyone - parents, teachers, friends, grandparents, and other people in the community are invited to join the PTA. This year the Sparks PTA is making it easier than ever to join. You will be receiving a flyer that explains PTA membership as well as Direct Donation. Just fill it out, enclose a check and bring it with you to Back to School Night, or return it to school in an envelope marked PTA. It's that easy! If you have any questions please contact Kim Butz at 357-9914 or Kimberleybutz4@msn.com.

Please Volunteer!

There are many, many ways to volunteer at school and for the school. You will be receiving a paper detailing all of the ways you can be involved. Please send it back to your child's teacher. We will have volunteer training in the Sharketeria on Wednesday, Sept. 5th at 9:15am and Tuesday September 11th at 7pm. You are not permitted to attend field trips or volunteer in the classroom unless you complete one of the training sessions. Any questions? Please contact Lauren May at 410-329-3172 or mayhenhouse@comcast.net .

Ice Cream Social

Mark your calendar! The Ice Cream Social is set for October 13! We are in need of volunteers to help staff activities and Games at the Ice Cream Social and help with set up and clean up. If you cannot help for the event on October 13th but can help in advance please E-mail Damita Baldwin at Damitajb@aol.com or call 410-357-0353.



WANTED: Your donation to the Sparks Elementary PTA!

Sparks is gearing up for its Direct Donation campaign, It's Easy As A-B-C!

This is the only fundraising we do at Sparks, designed to replace the wide variety of selling candy, gift wrap, cookie dough, etc. Our goal for the 2007-2008 Direct Donation campaign is to reach \$25,000. In order to achieve this goal, we are asking each family to donate \$50 for each child attending Sparks.

Remember, it's easy as A-B-C.

A - attend Back to School Night

B - bring your donation card

C - contribute to Direct Donation campaign

Should you have any questions, look for Tammy Waechter & Paula Kovinsky at the Direct Donation table at Back-To-School-Night, Tuesday, September 4th.

Thank You, Direct Donation Committee Co-Chairs, Paula Kovinsky & Tammy Waechter

Box Tops/Receipts

Our school participates in the Boxtops for Education program. Please send in your boxtops in a ziploc bag marked with the name of your child's homeroom teacher. We will be having a rewards/incentive program for classes that collect 800 boxtops or more. So keep clipping!

Our school also participates in the Giant A+ BonusBucks program and Graul's receipts program. The Giant Bonus Bucks program begins October 7th. You can sign up to support our school online at www.giantfood.com. More information will be presented at Back-to-School night regarding all of these programs.

Spirit Wear

All new Sparks Spirit Wear is here! Remember, every Friday is Sparks Spirit Day and what better way to show your school pride than by wearing Sparks School Colors. We have a whole new line of pink and blue Sparks Apparel available for this school year. We have added some great Under Armour apparel for the boys and some fashionable shorts and adorable rhinestone shirts for the girls. All of the new Spirit Wear will be available to purchase at Back to School Night on Tuesday, September

4th, so stop by and see the wonderful selection of new apparel. If you can not attend Back to School Night, Spirit Wear can also be ordered throughout the school year. A Spirit Wear order form will be sent home in September.

Yearbook

The yearbook for the 2006-2007 school year will be distributed on September 27th via your child's homeroom. (The class of 2007 will return for their Yearbook/Autograph party on Sept. 26th). The yearbook encompasses the entire school year from the 1st day to the last day of school and is then printed over the summer. As always we can use any of your group shots and candid photos of your child and his/her friends for the '07-'08 yearbook. Please send any pictures in an envelope marked "Yearbook". Should you have any questions, please call Joanie Schmalenberger at 410-472-1051.

Fall Work Day

Keep your eyes open for the date for our fall work day to help with our trail and outdoor learning area maintenance!

-Pokey Fair

Sparks Recycling



We will continue our recycling efforts this year! Not only does this teach our students about

being stewards for the environment, we get \$\$\$ for our environmental education programs.

Paper- We recycle and get paid for paper that we recycle but we do not take cardboard. You can send in paper with your child, deposit it in the lobby, or if you have a large load drive and put it in the yellow dumpster on the side of the building.

Ink cartridges and cell phones- There are containers located in the lobby to put these items. If you would like to place a recycling container for these items at your job site, please contact Pokey Fair at efair@bcps.org. We take all types of ink cartridges and cell phones.

20 oz plastic soda bottles- Terracycle, a green company that reuses the bottles to package "worm poop" fertilizer pays us for every 20 oz plastic soda bottle. **ONLY 20 oz soda bottles** are valid for this program, but we do keep bottle recycling containers in the building so students can recycle their water bottles. Consider purchasing your child a re-usable hard plastic bottle that can be refilled at school, rather than bottles of water and the bottle gets wasted.

Please direct any questions or concerns about recycling to Pokey Fair at efair@bcps.org.

Girls On The Run

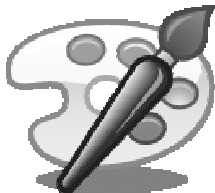
Girls on the Run is about to begin again! This wonderful program is open to girls entering 3rd through 5th Grades. It's designed to promote a girl's self-esteem, create a healthy body image, encourage community mindedness, and improve physical fitness. The girls will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school from 3:30 to 5:00 beginning Tues. 9/11/07. The program will run for 12 weeks and culminate in the girls' participating in a community 5K race.

Whether they walk it, run it or do a little of both, the girls will come away with such an overwhelming sense of accomplishment. Ms. Hoffman and Mrs. Tarlton will be the program's coaches. Look for registration forms to be sent home to girls in 3rd, 4th & 5th Grades during the first week of school. The program can accommodate up to 20 participants and we've already received a number of early registrations, so return your completed forms as soon as possible. Please contact Chris Carpenter at (410) 357-8214 if you have any questions.

Volunteers Needed

The Shark Bytes Newsletter needs volunteers to help with copying and distributing the newsletter. If you would like to help please contact Mary Maher at 410-472-9339 or marycmaher@msn.com. Thank You!
-Mary Maher

Reflections



Do you want your kids to express their thoughts, feelings, and creativity and have FUN!

Every child has a voice through the arts, so let your kids express themselves by using this year's theme in the following categories: photography, visual arts, literature, musical composition, dance theme, **"I can make a difference by..."** Your child can create an original piece of art that incorporates choreography or film-video. All participants receive an entry gift, ribbon for recognition and a pizza party at the end of the year. Winners will receive medals and go forward to compete in the Baltimore County competition. Every child that signs up for the program is a WINNER! Please email Kelly Tannian if you are interested in an information/rules packet at Tannianhouse@comcast.net or call : 410-357-9244. More information will be sent home soon.

1st PTA Meeting

The 1st PTA meeting be held Sept. 4 at Back To School Night. PTA members will be asked to vote on the following items:

2007-2008 PTA Budget - Proposed budget will be presented at Back to School Night

Amendment to PTA Officer Terms - Amendment to Article VI, section 2d: An officer shall not be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office unless no one else comes forward to serve as an officer for that position.

The Months Ahead

Take note of these important dates.

September

Sept 3: School Closed

Sept 4: Back to School Night, 7:00 PM

Sept 5: Volunteer Training, 9:15 AM

Sept 11: Volunteer Training, 7:00 PM

Sept 13: School Closed

Sept 18: PTA Committee Heads Meeting, 9:30 AM

Sept 28: New Parent Party

October

Oct 3: PTA Board Meeting, 7:00 PM

Oct 8-13: Book Fair ***

Oct 13: Ice Cream Social ***

Oct 19: School Closed

Oct 31: Halloween Parade

November

Nov 2: School Closed

Nov 7: PTA Board Meeting

Nov 9: Kid Movie Night (K-2) ***

Nov 12-16: American Education Week

Nov 15-16: Grandparents Days ***

Nov 19: School Closed

Nov 22: School Closed

Nov 23: School Closed

Nov 30: Kid Movie Night (3-5) ***

*****Volunteers Are Needed** to make these PTA sponsored events successful! If you would like to volunteer please fill out and return the PTA Volunteer form or contact Lauren May at 410-329-3172 or mayhenhouse@comcast.net.



Don't Miss
Back To School Night
Tuesday, September 4th
7:00 PM

Back To School Night presents Sparks Elementary
School parents the opportunity to:

- Meet your child(ren)'s teachers
- Visit your child(ren)'s classroom
- Hear an overview of your child(ren)'s curriculum, classroom practices, and motivational and discipline techniques used in the classroom
- Learn about home/school communication procedures
- Attend the year's 1st general PTA meeting
- Have the chance to join the PTA and/or contribute to the PTA's Direct Donation Campaign
- Learn about rewarding volunteer opportunities
- Meet the faculty, administration and Sparks parents over light refreshments



What To Bring:

- Your Direct Donation Card
- Your checkbook for PTA Membership, Direct Donation, and/or Spirit Wear
- Giant Bonus Card: We will assist you in registering (or re-registering) in the Bonus Bucks program.

Attend Back To School Night And Kickoff A Terrific School Year!