

# WMMS PTSA PANTHER NEWSLETTER

WALKER MILL  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

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PRIDE!*

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PTSA BOARD 2009-  
2010

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Principal

Shantelle Croom  
Parent Liaison

WALKER MILL MIDDLE SCHOOL PTSA  
800 KAREN BLVD. CAPITOL HEIGHTS, MD 20743  
301-808-4055

MARCH 2010 PTSA UPDATES

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

Due to MSA testing and our historical winter weather, we have not been able to have our monthly meetings. This newsletter is a way to communicate vital information to *YOU*, the parent. Due to a security breach, our Yahoo web email is **NO LONGER AVAILABLE**. It took long hours to add everyone's email address to the contact list, and we are working on securing another email based community to share news and network. If you need to contact a board member for any reason, please call the school and leave a message with a return telephone number.

## PGCPS County Information & Updates

1. **PGCPS School Board Phase III - Secondary School Reform** is currently focused on determining which programs students and families would like to see in their communities, and expanding high school programs that are successful in raising student achievement. Students, families, and community members are asked the Secondary School Reform Survey. **YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED!**

Go to <http://www1.pgcps.org/phase3/>.

2. **SNOW DAYS** - Dr. Hite announced PGCPS will make up 4 out of the 9 snow days. The State has given a waiver for 5 of the snow days. Right now the last day of school for students will be June 16<sup>th</sup>.

3. **LUNCH PRICE INCREASE** - Next year's proposed budget reflects a .25 increase in lunch. The true increase is .50 because .25 was also proposed back in December.

4. **BUS TRANSPORTATION FOR SPECIALTY SCHOOLS VIA HUB** - Based on the explanation given by the Superintendent the bus transportation will NOT cease. The students traveling to specialty schools outside of their neighborhood boundaries will be picked up from their normal bus stops but they will be transported to a HUB. Students will assemble at the HUB, most likely a school in the area, and will be transported to their school from the HUB. This will result in more than 4 or 5 students on a bus traveling sometimes to the other end of the County. The cost saving could be close to 5 million dollars. The specifics have not been 100% worked out so more information will follow.

## PTA News:

CONGRATULATIONS ON THE NEW PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PARENTS AND  
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION COUNCIL, INC!

"In February, 2010, a PTA Council was established to serve Prince George's county local PTA's. The following officials were elected: Theresa Saunders, Pres., Carmen Braxton, 1<sup>st</sup> VP, Michael Sedgwick, Second VP, Rhonda Chandler, Recording Secretary, LaTisha Corey, Corresponding Secretary, Felton Magee, Treasurer. Our goal is provide a networking organization for parents and teachers, to combine the tremendous resources of Prince Georges County towards improving the educational environment of our youth.

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## CATCH UP CORNER

### Dates to Remember

- 3/9-10 MSA Testing/Reading
- 3/12 Progress Reports
- 3/12 Market Day Orders Due
- 3/16-17 MSA Testing/Math
- 3/18 Deadline Laser Tag Bus Trip Payment
- 3/18 Market Day Pickup
- 3/25 End of Third Qtr
- 3/25 WMMS PTSA Laser Tag Bus Trip
- 3/26 - 4/5 SPRING BREAK
- 4/13 PTSA Meeting
- 4/14 Report Card
- 5/10 Progress Reports
- 5/11 PTSA Meeting - ELECTIONS
- 5/31 NO SCHOOL
- 6/16 LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

### **Market Day School Fundraiser**

Please support the school in their new Market Day Fundraiser. Market Day offers quality foods and goods to families at reasonable prices. Your orders are delivered to the school and our school receives a portion of the profits to support school programs and activities. This program is very successful throughout the county. Order online by Friday, 3/12<sup>th</sup> at [www.marketday.com](http://www.marketday.com). Pick up at the school is March 18<sup>th</sup>.

**School code is: 28158**

### **Important Links:**

Prince Georges County School System: [www.pgcps.org](http://www.pgcps.org)

Walker Mill MS Website: <http://www.pgcps.org/~wmill/>

Prince's George Camps: [www.pgparks.org](http://www.pgparks.org)

Maryland Department of Education : <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE>

### WE NEED YOU!!

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS AT WMMS.**

#### **Volunteers**

needed in the following areas:

- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Picnic (June)
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Trip (May)
- Teacher Appreciation (May)
- Health & Fitness Expo

#### **PTA opportunities:**

- Nominating committee for spring elections
- Membership chair
- Events chair

#### **2010- 2011 PTA Positions:**

Join a phenomenal team of parents, administrators, teachers and students truly committed to the success of our children' education and future, our school and our nation by becoming a member of the WMMS PTSA board. Please let us know if you are interested in any of these positions for the upcoming 2010-2011 school year:

President  
Vice President,  
Secretary,  
Treasurer,  
Delegate,  
Membership,  
Events

If you are interested in any of the opportunities listed above, please contact Velarie Rice @ [velarieharvell@aol.com](mailto:velarieharvell@aol.com) or

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## WMMS PTSA Upcoming Events:



The WMMS PTSA will be partnering with our school to assist in raising funds for the end of the year activities, including the grade level picnics and 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion and celebrations. Please support our students by participating in our upcoming events:

- WMMS LASERTAG Bus Trip.  
MARCH 25, 2010  
(SEE ATTACHED Flyer)
- CHICK-FIL-A WMMS SPIRIT NIGHTS-TBA
- WMMS HEALTH EXPO AND FAIR-  
MAY 2010

## SCHOOL REQUESTS:

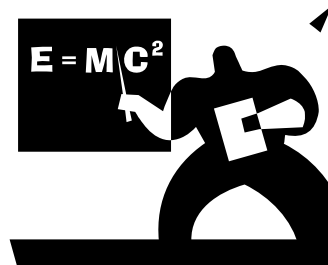
*If families would like to donate snacks or bottled water for the young people to have during MSA, they would be welcomed as our budget has been restricted in regards to the purchase of these items. .... Principal Brown*

## Ms. Croom's Spot



### **Healthy Habits & MSA**

CONTINUING WITH WALKER MILL'S, "HEALTHY HABITS/HEALTHY LIVING" THEME; WE WILL EXERCISE OUR BODIES, BEFORE WE EXERCISE OUR MINDS! EVERY MORNING OF MSA WEEK, WE WILL HAVE AN EXERCISE ACTIVITY, TO GET OUR ENERGY AND OUR SPIRITS BOOSTED, TO GET THOSE BRAIN CELLS WORKIN' AND GET US READY TO DO OUR BEST ON THE MSA's! IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOUR CHILD GET A FULL NIGHT'S REST, AND A HEALTHY BREAKFAST. THESE ARE THE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR A HEALTHY, ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL CHILD!



## PRINCIPAL BROWN'S PAGE

Dear Parents and Guardians.

As we move into our annual testing season, I urge each of you to encourage your children to commit to academic excellence as it relates to the MSA. Often I am asked why MSA is important to individual students as it is a common misnomer that these tests only measure whole school achievement. There are several reasons why individual student success is important on MSA.

- Often high schools look to MSA scores as a determining factor in allowing students access to more rigorous curricula (Honors, IB, etc..). Students that don't demonstrate academic success on MSA are relegated to courses when they enter 9th grade, which will have an impact as they matriculate through High School and prepare to enter College.
- The MSA is aligned with the Maryland State Curriculum. Success or failure on MSA is often the first indication if a student is prepared to access that Curriculum in High School, and therefore pass the HSA exams, which are required for graduation.
- The MSA is a THINKING exam. Very few questions are asked at the level of memorization/regurgitation. Students ability to successfully problem solve and utilize high order thinking skills, competencies that most agree are indispensable for the 21st Century work force, are measured with these exams. If we want to assure that our young people are ready to access opportunities in this global society, we must ensure that they are acquiring these skills.

Walker Mill MS will be hosting the first Middle School "Stop the Violence" teen summit in April. Students will be engaged in workshops that are aimed to empower them with anger management, conflict resolution and leadership development skills that are also necessary to successfully traverse this society. The school will be selling tee shirts for \$7 that students are encouraged to wear to commemorate this event. Order forms were sent home in January, and will be re-distributed this week to ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to purchase.

The record snow fall has caused a major concern with regard to student third quarter grades. Although third quarter progress reports were completed by teachers Thursday, and will be sent home this week, school closings have led to many courses have an inadequate amount of grades to support a true "snap shot" of student progress. The next two weeks will be spent on MSA administration, and the following week is the last of the quarter followed by Spring Break. To support our young people that may have had a "slow re-start" after returning to school, each Core Academic Department will providing students with extra credit projects that they may complete for an additional assessment grade. These assignments will also give students the opportunity to receive Student Service Learning hours in Social Studies and Science. We will send a letter home detailing these assignments this week. This letter will also be placed on the website as I am aware of the challenges some of our students have with bringing correspondence home.

The 2010-2011 budget will offer the system and school operations some special challenges. Some of these include:

Staff furloughs

Decreased operating budgets

Increased class sizes

Release of Parent Liaisons

Our Superintendent and School Board have stated that they will do everything to ensure that they minimize the effect of these changes on student learning, and that they are committed to continuing the growth that our system has experienced over the past several years. In order to ensure that this is the case, we will need the commitment of time and resources from our families and school community. We look forward to our continued partnership in the future.

**Principal Gorman Brown**

*Do all the good you can  
By all the means you can  
In all the ways you can  
In all the places you can  
To all the people you can  
As long as ever you can-  
John Wesley*

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