



PTA 101

Sonoma Elementary
2009-2010

PTA 101

Welcome to the Sonoma! We are thrilled that you are inquiring about the PTA. The following guide is an overview of what our organization does and how we can use your support. Please refer to a separate list for committee chairperson information. We hope you find this helpful!

Throughout the year, watch for correspondences to come home on pink paper for more details about PTA activities.

Together.....We Can Make A Difference!

September

Open House

The Open House, held the second week of school, allows students and their families to visit Sonoma. The PTA has several tables where members can sign up, Market Day information is available and Spirit Wear can be purchased. The PTA provides a snack during this event. Volunteers are needed to work at the PTA tables.

Fall Fundraiser

Each fall, we have a big catalog sale, shortly after school starts. The students attend an information assembly at school to get them excited to sell. The sale usually runs about 2 weeks and it is a pre-pay sale, so money is turned in with the order forms and checks are made out to the Sonoma PTA. The product is delivered before Thanksgiving. This is the "meat and potatoes" project that supports our yearly budget. We profit several thousand dollars from this event. Although there are many good fundraisers available, we have found this to be the best way to meet our budgetary needs. It takes a few volunteers to help with product distribution on delivery/pick-up day.

October

Box Tops / Campbell's Labels for Education

We kick off our "Box Tops for Education" and "Campbell's Labels for Education" programs. The chairperson will send home information outlining the basics of this on-going fund- raiser. It is as simple as collecting the box tops and UPC labels and sending them in with your child. During the year, contests will be held where the winning classrooms receive a pizza party or ice cream social, courtesy of the PTA. Volunteers are needed to count and sort the box tops and UPCs.

November

Scholastic Book Fair

Every fall during parent/teacher conferences, we bring in the Scholastic Book Fair. This fundraiser is set up in the lobby of the school. The students are given a chance to visit during the day and it is also open to all on the evenings of conferences. Each year, we manage to give away lots of good books to our students! MANY volunteers are needed to work this wonderful event.

Spirit Wear

This is an opportunity to purchase Sonoma and Harper Creek apparel and is not designed to be a fundraiser. This is a pre-pay sale where money is due when the order forms are returned. Checks are made out to the Sonoma PTA. The product is delivered prior to the holiday break as these items make excellent gifts! We have different items every year and apparel available throughout the year as well.

Yearbook Pre-Sale

Forms will be sent home to pre-order yearbooks. These are full color, soft cover yearbooks that make very nice keepsakes. Feel free to check out past yearbooks in the library. We always appreciate any donations of pictures taken at school functions.

December

Kids-N-Crafts

Students have the opportunity to pre-order craft items at very low prices and then spend an evening at school making their creations! These are great gifts. Dinner is also available for purchase during the event. It's an affordable evening for the whole family! MANY volunteers are required to work at the craft tables.

January

Reflections

This is a nationally sponsored PTA event that focuses on the arts. Competition categories include Visual Arts, Photography, Music, Literature, Videography and Dance Composition. The rules and guidelines may seem overwhelming. It is really as simple as encouraging your child to create something based on a given theme, in whatever area is interesting to them. Take time to read the rules. We have awesome entries disqualified every year because of little things that don't comply to the rules. Every participant is recognized at an assembly at Sonoma. 1st and 2nd place winners are sent on to be judged at a state level. State winners go to national competition. Watch for information on rules, dates, and applications.

Usborne Book Fair

This book fair is very different from the scholastic book fair in the fall. During this book fair, students record their own reading and take pledges from people to earn free books. It's a win-win situation and a 100% profit fundraiser. Half of the pledges go directly to the students to pick out their own personal prizes. The other half goes to the PTA to purchase books and keep as cash profit. It is fun and very successful.

Countdown to Kindergarten

This program meets once per month. It is designed for children starting school the following fall. The students and their families have opportunity to visit and become familiar with Sonoma through many enjoyable activities. The PTA provides a book or a small supply that can be used when school starts. It has been a great way to prepare our incoming kindergarteners.

February

Talent Show

Each year, we try and host a school talent show. This is a variety show and no one is excluded from performing. There is no judging for this program. Once a date is determined, practice times will be scheduled after school. A few volunteers are needed to help monitor the practices.

March

Reading Month

This is a big event at Sonoma. Reading is highlighted throughout the whole month and many activities are announced. Guest readers are welcome. Watch for details to come home and always encourage your child to read!

A Tale of Battle Creek

After studying the city of Battle Creek throughout the year, the 3rd graders put on a wonderful presentation, written by our very own Mrs. Kathy Harris, about what they have learned. We are proud to sponsor this event by donating funds toward special class t-shirts.

April

Fun Fair

This is an incredible day at Sonoma! It takes MANY volunteers to make this successful, so please volunteer when the time comes! It is a carnival type event with games and prizes, clowns, pony rides, food and more. Our silent auction has been a huge attraction! Each class is asked to take donations for things that are sold in the silent auction. It features many unique items and great gift baskets. This is not a fundraising event. Don't miss out on this family fun day!

K Drive Greenhouse

Each year, we offer K Drive Greenhouse vouchers at a discounted price. You may order vouchers for hanging plants and flats of flowers. These are very high quality. This is another win-win fundraising opportunity. You save a little money on your purchase and we earn a little \$\$! Thank you for participating.

May

Staff Appreciation

We take one week during the beginning of the month and really spoil our wonderful staff at Sonoma. Each year has a different approach, but what really makes it special is when you send in something personal that your child has made or written to a staff member. Watch for specific information to come home on this event.

Yearbooks

The yearbooks arrive near the end of this month. A few volunteers are needed to deliver them to each classroom.

June

4th Grade Bridging Ceremony

This ceremony is for 4th graders who will be leaving Sonoma and heading to the Middle School. The program includes a slide show (watch for picture requests!), honor roll and citizenship awards, and shaking the hand of their new Middle School Principal. The PTA asks for donations of baked goods to serve after the ceremony. A few volunteers are needed to set up and serve the treats.

Field Day

The gym teacher organizes and schedules a track and field day for the students. This is great fun for them. The PTA provides an inflatable bouncer and snow cones for all students to enjoy. It takes up to 10 volunteers to make this run smoothly. The students REALLY appreciate this one!

PTA Sponsored Activities

Memberships / Meetings

You are welcome to join the PTA at any time throughout the year. It is only \$4 to join and is as easy as filling out a simple form! This is a perfect way to get involved in your child's education and meet people. You get to decide on the amount of time you spend....ANY help is greatly appreciated! It takes many volunteers to operate an awesome organization like ours. Get involved...join today ☺

Meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month in the Sonoma library at 6 pm. Childcare and refreshments are provided!

Attendance Hotline

This is a 24 hour answering machine for reporting student absences. These messages are compared to the teacher's daily attendance reports. If Sonoma has not been notified of a child's absence, the parents will be contacted by a PTA volunteer by phone. If parents cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called. This is a way for us to monitor illness and absence trends, but most importantly to insure the safety of your child.

Market Day

Starting in September and once per month after, there will be an opportunity for you to buy food from a company called Market Day. You can order food by completing a form and returning it to school or by visiting the Market Day web site. Orders are delivered to the cafeteria on a specified day where you can pick them up. Sonoma gets a portion of the proceeds, so this is a very easy way to support the PTA on a monthly basis. The food is high quality and prices are comparable to Sam's Club or Gordon's. There are several special sales months, where our school earns extra money on specific items purchased. A few volunteers may be needed to help sort food on delivery day.

Assemblies

The PTA works in conjunction with our Principal and the staff at Sonoma to sponsor many educational assemblies throughout the school year. It adds a little bit of fun to learning and helps provide a well balanced education.

Popcorn Sales

Starting right out in the fall, classrooms will be sponsoring popcorn sales to raise money for various things, mainly fieldtrips. Teachers will be looking for volunteers! It takes 3-4 people to pop and deliver the popcorn. Volunteers usually work from 9 – 11 am. Specific instructions will be found with the popcorn machine.

Sonoma Stars

The PTA supports the Sonoma Star program which gives positive reinforcement to students that practice behavior that is Safe, Truthful, Appropriate and Respectful. Staff members pass out stars to deserving students that are then recorded in the Principal's office. Different prizes are given at different levels of achievement.

Miles of Smiles

The PTA recognizes births, deaths, hardships and celebrations among our staff and students with a small gift or card. One person handles this committee, but it is always helpful to pass on information when appropriate.

Little F.A.R.M. Puppet Shows

Our very own Mrs. Hunt provides a wonderful and fun educational puppet show once per month to our lower elementary grades. This includes giving free books to students.

Family Fun Nights

Throughout the each, the PTA organizes several Family Fun Nights. These have included swimming, movies, bowling and skating to name a few. They are enjoyable, affordable events! Watch for details and join us for a night out.

Meijer Rewards

Signing up for a Meijer's Reward card is one of the easiest ways you can earn money for the PTA. You complete a form and receive a card which is scanned at Meijer's when you shop. This is not a charge card. Meijer's has different payoffs for different payment types. If you signed up prior to 2007, you must reapply in order for the school to receive benefits.

Restaurant Night

Several times a year, we try to organize restaurant nights where we earn a percentage of the sales, during a specific time period. Beckley Road McDonalds has participated several times. Come and enjoy a meal or snack with your Sonoma friends.

Staff Surprises / Conference Treats

We like to show a little appreciation to our Sonoma staff each month by offering a little surprise or treat. Ideas are always welcome.

During parent / teacher conferences, we try and provide food for the staff so they can get a bite to eat between meetings. Our efforts are appreciated!

M.E.A.P. Treats

We supply a healthy snack and beverage to all of our 3rd and 4th grade students that take the MEAP test each fall. This really means a lot to the students and helps them get through the long days during testing.

Playground

In the summer of 2009, the district expanded the playground that the PTA funded and built in 2006. What a great place for our children to enjoy! We continue to support efforts to upkeep and improve this area.