Gator Gazette

Volume 4, Issue 8
January 9, 2016

Alston Ridge Elementary
11555 Green Level Church Road, Cary, NC 27519
Phone: 919-544-2474 Fax: 919-544-6545

Principal: Teresa Caswell
Assistant Principal: Ben Cline
Assistant Principal: Niko Schutte

Happy New Year, Gators!

I hope everyone had a fabulous break and is ready for the second half of this school year. Our first big event will be Science Expo in February (see page 4 for further details) . We are also looking for parents to be part of a Wellness Committee (see page 2) and to be leaders in the planning of Gator Fest. Read on for more info about these activities and you can always check the website!

It is time to start planning for Gator Fest!

This is a huge event for all families to enjoy but we need parents who are willing to commit to leadership roles in the following Gator Fest events. If you are willing to take on one of these Gator Fest events, we will have an initial meeting with everyone involved. You will need to stay in communication with all other leaders and the PTA board about your particular event. Most of these jobs could be done with a friend or group of friends, why not have fun while helping to support a great event! Leadership roles include:

Food Trucks- contact, book and communicate with them

Games- organize games for the event. We still have most of last years games but we may need a few more. Organize the field layout - ordering prizes would be included with this. YMCA helped last year, they may be willing to help again so coordinating with them would be included.

Raffle Baskets and/or Teacher Experiences- Coordinate baskets and be on hand to coordinate the drawings at the end of the night.

Special Entertainment- We had a wandering magician and face painting last year, we would like to expand that this year.

Communications- Coordinate with the team to get info to put out via flyers and emails.

Sell tickets- Would involve getting ticket orders and processing ticket orders at school.

Decorations- A group of people to make and put up signs inside and outside of school. Will include making signs for the actual event as well.

Volunteer Coordinator- Work with the whole group to come up with volunteer needs and then coordinate volunteers for the event.

Parent/Vendor tables- Advertise for and organize set-up at event.

School Wellness Council Members Needed:

Dear Alston Ridge Parents,

Childhood obesity is one of the most serious health epidemics facing America today. The American Medical Association now recognizes obesity as a disease. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about one third of children and teens in the United States are overweight or obese. Childhood obesity is leading to a range of health problems that previously were not generally seen until adulthood, including high blood pressure, type II diabetes and elevated blood cholesterol levels. We believe we have a responsibility to improve the health and well-being of our children.

Experience shows that schools can be powerful places to make behavioral and environmental changes for students. To make the Alston Ridge environment healthier, our school is forming a School Wellness Council. The purpose of the council is to bring together representatives from the school and community who can help us address issues facing the health and well-being of not only our children but staff too.

As parents and teachers, your input is particularly important and we would be honored to have you as a School Wellness Council member. We understand that your time is valuable and we want you to know we are committed to making changes in policies and programs that will positively affect the health of our students and school staff. We will be examining the current standards we are able to change throughout the ARES environment. We are fortunate to have the support of the Healthy Schools Program through the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. The Alliance was founded by the American Heart Association and the Clinton Foundation, aimed at reducing the prevalence of childhood obesity. The Healthy Schools Program provides technical assistance, resources, and tools to help our school create a healthier environment for students and staff.

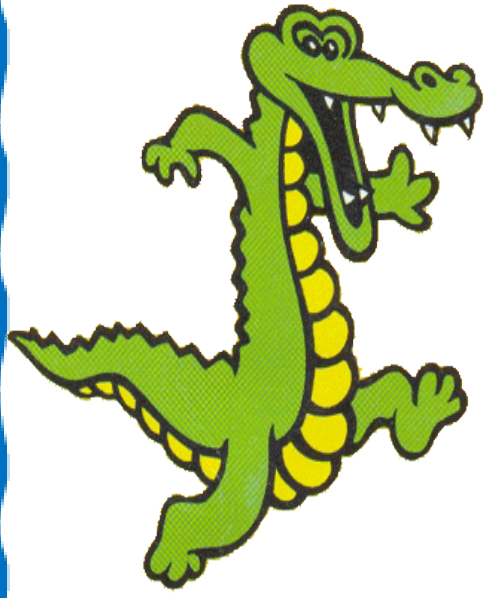
Our first meeting will take place on January 28th at 6:30pm in the media center at ARE. We anticipate holding meetings every 8-10 weeks during the school year. If you have any questions, or want to know more about what sort of responsibilities you would have as a member, please contact me at wellness.arpta@gmail.com. We hope you will accept our invitation and join us in taking action against the growing youth obesity epidemic.

Sincerely,
Holly Tibbo-Valeriote
Wellness Committee Chair
wellness.arpta@gmail.com

For more information on the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and Advocates for Health in Action please see the links below.

https://www.healthiergeneration.org/
http://www.advocatesforhealthinaction.org/

School Improvement Plan Team



The School Improvement Plan Team is a group of teachers and parents that meet throughout the year to develop and monitor a plan designed to address school and student performance goals. This plan is fluid and adjusted as data analysis indicates improvement or the need for updated goals.

We are looking for 1 or 2 parents to be a part of the School Improvement Plan team. The meetings would take place at 7:30 or 8am on a Wednesday morning once a month. There will also be a special session the afternoon of March 4th which is an early release day.

Please contact Christine Sulym at president.arpta@gmail.com if interested.

Transition Team:

Thanks to the Transition Team members on December 17th and 18th! The teachers greatly appreciate all of your help and support moving them in and out of their rooms!

Janice Overman
Juani Tyler
Benjamin Gergel
Rasika Joshi
Krishna Maddula
Shelbee Sorrell
Sanjeet Joshi

Be on the look out for the next sign up for Transition Team

Science Expo 2016

Tracks 2 and 4 - Thursday, February 11, 5:30-7:00pm
Tracks 1 and 3 - Thursday, February 18, 5:30-7:00pm

Presentations
5:30-6:00pm Set-up time
6:00-7:00pm Open to community

ARE Scientists, it is time to start thinking about the Science Expo! Science Expo night isn't until February but some projects take time to think about and time to complete, especially if you're growing plants or mold! Registration forms can be found on the PTA website at alstonridgepta.com- please log in and go to Online Forms.

Guidelines for participating:

The Science Expo is open to grades K-5. Students that enter the Science Expo are encouraged to (but not required to) pick a project that has to do with their grade level curriculum. Older students should be able to design and complete an experiment on their own. Younger students may need varying degrees of help and guidance, please use your own discretion. When they are finished, we want students to have a better understanding of the scientific process, and most importantly....have FUN!!!

Kindergarten
Investigating Properties (liquid, gas, solid), Animals 2X2, Weather

1st Grade
Comparing and Measuring, Balance and Motion, Organisms, Pebbles, Sand and Silt

2nd Grade
Solids and Liquids, Sound, Life Cycle of Butterflies, Weather

3rd Grade
Changes (Structure and properties of matter before and after they undergo a change), Human Body, Plant Growth and Development/Soils, Investigating Objects in the Sky

4th Grade
Earth Materials, Magnetism and Electricity, Animal Studies, Landforms

5th Grade
Motion and Design, Human Body Systems, Weather Systems, Ecosystems

Nominating Committee

The Alston Ridge PTA is looking for parents who would like to become more involved in the Alston Ridge community. The nominating committee has been set up to fill open PTA board positions for the 2016-17 school year.

The positions we need to fill are: Secretary, VP- Major Fundraising, VP- Merchant Fundraising, VP- Social Programs Families, VP- Social Programs Staff, VP- Academic Programs.

Communication describing the open positions will come out soon. The earlier we can fill positions, the more support we can offer incoming board members during an "overlap" period toward the end of the school year. We will also be searching for committee chairpersons to keep our many great programs running next year.

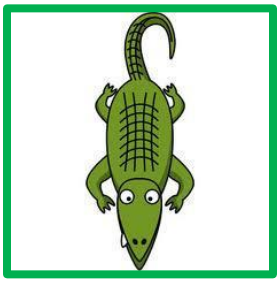
If you are interested in a board or committee position or have any questions about a position, please contact the nominating committee (Mary Morvan, Lakshmi Shridhar and Mandy Gooding) at:

nominate.arpta@gmail.com

Stay Up To Date & See What is Happening at Alston Ridge Elementary

Follow our up to date calendar HERE

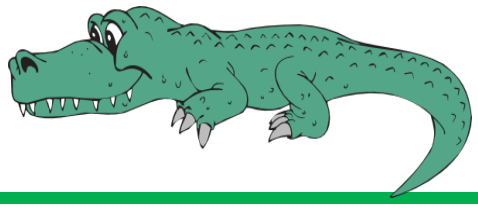
Look for us on FaceBook: https://www.facebook.com/AlstonRidgePTA



Have You Joined the PTA Yet?

Everyone should join the PTA! We are always looking for talented and dedicated parents to help with all of the PTA's programs and events. We have so many opportunities throughout the year to help in small or big ways, time at home or school, donation of money or items, everything is appreciated!

Click HERE to Join the PTA Today!



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2015-16 PTA Board
Christine Sulym - President
Pakita Lee - Treasurer
Tiffany Malory - Secretary
Lakshmi Shridhar- VP-Academic Programs
Heather Ng - VP-Social Programs Teachers
Ellen Martin – VP – Social Programs Parents
Mary Morvan - VP-Major Fundraisers
Lili Matias - VP-Merchant Fundraising
alstonridgepta.membershiptoolkit.com