



2007-2008 Best Ideas

94th Annual Georgia PTA Convention/Leadership Training
July 11-12, 2008
Georgia International Convention Center



Communications

Rocky Mount Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

To help identify all PTA material sent home for the year, each piece was printed on blue paper. Additionally, PTA was afforded the ability to send home their flyers and announcements via the Tuesday Home Folders. All PTA chairs knew to copy on blue paper and have their items ready for teachers each Monday.

Paul Laurence Dunbar Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Atlanta, 10

The PTA Board met with the Mechanicsville Civic Association (their local area civic organization), in order to discuss each group's role in the community. Board members from both organizations then went door-to-door in the community asking about concerns families had about the community and school. Each family received a personal invitation to attend PTA and community meetings, and parents were encouraged to visit the school often! Additionally, Dunbar PTA wanted to boost faculty/staff morale. They did this by sending notes of thanks to teachers/staff, learning all staff names and consistently greeting them with smiles during the day, producing certificates of appreciation for all staff. All staff joined PTA!

Nicholson Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Nicholson elementary maintained a PTA webpage and added a two-way communication device. Nicholson PTA blog helped get information to parents in a timely manner.

Timber Ridge Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

One of TR's Communication Goals was to approach a local newspaper about covering a school event and to provide parent tour guides for prospective students' families to promote the school. Two articles were published in the Marietta Daily Journal about TR's top state ranking by the Georgia Public Policy Foundation and their Red Ribbon Week. The tours were coordinated through the front office and included a chance for the tour guides to share parent perspectives with interested families about the TR family!

Kincaid Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

To meet recertification of the Parent Involvement Award, the PTA sent out surveys designed to involve parents in decision making for programs for the year. Many opportunities were offered at the first PTA meeting, via the webpage, and through random issuance throughout classrooms. Based on the results of a second survey, Kincaid's Parent Involvement Committee worked with their School Council to compile a school improvement plan and create a new Parent Involvement Policy. To further the community spirit of communication, the monthly newsletter, *CatTracks*, was distributed to bus drivers as a way to include them in the school community.

Beecher Hills Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Atlanta, 10

In early fall, the PTA conducted a Parent Availability and Interest Survey to determine: how, when and where they preferred to receive information about PTA programs and projects. Additionally, parents were provide with a list of nine workshop topics and asked to select five topics they would like to see as workshops. All nine topics were directly related to the National Standards for Parent and Family Involvement! Feedback resulted in a shift of communication from calling posts and compilation of the calendar/student handbook to monthly Email Calendar Notes.

Mountain Road Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Cherokee, 13

Starting at the beginning of the year, all PTA officers wore blue PTA t-shirts. This was the start of branding for the school family to recognize PTA board members and to be able to go directly to them for help when in and about the school. To promote communication, an orientation "pot luck supper" was held. Expectations, budget information, check and cash verifications, etc., were all passed out in folders, so everyone had the same information and understood the functions of PTA. To keep this line of communication open throughout the year, everyone was invited to come to Tuesday morning "coffee talk." held at the Frosty Frog, a Partner in Education. This has been a great team building vehicle and also allows us to increase our volunteer base by encouraging the chairs to bring their volunteers.

Mulberry Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Gwinnett, 12

Member Benefits! Included in the Mulberry Elementary Student & Parent Calendar were member benefit coupons. PTA member coupons are a great way to promote PTA membership in your school. Designed with perforation dashes and a clip art pair of scissors, these included discounts to yearly events: Yearbook (\$2.00 off), Bingo Night, Leap Year Dance, Spring Fling, and Mulberry Movie Night-free admittance to PTA members! What a great way to encourage membership.

Mableton Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, South Cobb, 9

PTA awareness! In order to improve attendance at PTA events; Mableton PTA has PTA volunteers create stickers for the students to wear home on the day of the event as a final reminder. All kids love stickers and it is another method to "get the message out." Don't have time to make your own stickers? Check out the Georgia PTA Mart for Join PTA and Meeting Tonight stickers.

Centennial High School, High, North Fulton, 10

Newsletter is available as an email, as a printed copy, and as a link on the PTSA website (www.centpts.org). Vital parts of the newsletter are starting to be translated into an International edition for ESOL students and parents. The PTSA's Freshman Parents' Handbook is a valuable resource for parents, containing school rules and procedures (attendance, checking out early, dress code,

cafeteria, clinic, parking), and can be downloaded from the website. Copies of this handbook are left with school counselors to distribute to parents of students who register after Orientation. They include a New Student Survival Guide, with every registration pack. They will soon have a "Report Hours" web page for reporting hours of volunteering in various areas of the school.

Chattahoochee High School, High, North Fulton, 10

Our printed PTSA newsletter has the school logo, the PTSA logo, and tagline on the top of each page. Their online newsletter has the PTSA logo and tagline at the bottom of the first page. The student directory/PTSA handbook has the PTSA logo and tagline on each page that contained PTSA information. Also included are the PTA National Standards and the names of business partners and their contact information. Their membership materials were translated into Korean and Spanish. For increased input, a student and a faculty member sit on their Executive Board. Website contains links to North Fulton Council, Georgia PTA, National PTA, and also provide online forms to print (PTSA membership, student membership, expense voucher, and parent guide): www.chatcougar.com; click on PTSA.

Pope High School, High, ECCC, 9

Copies of weekly PTSA e-newsletter, *Hound Highlight*, <http://popehs.typepad.com/hh/>) sent to Central Office and Pope feeder schools. Also back issues archived on website, click on "Hound Highlights Archive." PTSA funds were used for school website domain name license. Over 2100 copies of printed newsletter, *Pope Voice*, mailed to every family in school, along with faculty, county administrators, their feeder schools, other area high schools, PTA district and council officers and their community partners. Two special summer editions of the newsletter are: the *Freshman Pages*, for incoming ninth grade students and their parents, and the *Welcome Back-to-School* edition.

Walton High School, High, ECCC, 9

Partnered with their Foundation to fund newly updated school website; Foundation paid hosting fee and PTSA funded initial set-up costs. By sending out timely emails and weekly updates, they were able to cut their printed newsletter mailings from 5 to 4 issues and saved printing and mailing costs for the dropped issue. The front page of their website contains a listing of what PTSA does for the faculty, students and community (www.waltonhigh.org/ptsa.cfm). Put together two surveys, one for parents and one for students, to assess how they are doing and to identify new needs.

Lassiter High School, High, ECCC, 9

Printed and mailed first newsletter, but posted subsequent issues on PTSA website, www.lhsptsa.typepad.com. Website lists PTSA scholarships and displays photo of state-level Reflections winners. Events announced too late to make the newsletter deadline are advertised through their "Lassiter Express" email system. An automatic system emails PTSA members whenever an update to the website has been posted or a newsletter has been released. They implemented software to make volunteering easier--reaching out to every parent who desired to help but was not sure how to get involved. They would like to add a counter to their website, monitoring their number of "hits" to quantify their communication efforts. All PTSA board members were given a handbook containing contact information for local, council, district and state levels of PTA.

Community Outreach

Mableton Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, South Cobb, 9

International night – Each grade studied different countries and created signs and posters for their classroom depicting items important to that country's culture. As people entered the school that night they were given a passport which was stamped as they entered each classroom and visited a different country. The classrooms were set up with posters, food, music and other items from that country. This was an opportunity to educate parents, students and community members about the different cultures and people we have living in our community.

Marietta Center for Advance Academics, Elementary 750 and below, Marietta, 9

Due to the drought in Georgia, the students had the opportunity to suggest conservation tips. These tips were published in the school newsletter and later in the local newspaper. The students came up with an idea called "Hot Water Waiters". The purpose is to collect water from the faucet while you are waiting for warm water. The water is then used to water your plants, fill your pet's bowl, or poured into the back of toilet tanks so they would not use as much water when flushed. The students then reached out to the community by contacting Harry's Wholesale and collecting empty water and milk jugs. They rinsed out the jugs, cut off the tops, and put a label on the outside of the jug explaining its use. The waiters were then give to the Marietta Housing Authority and used to educate others on how to conserve water.

Westside Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Marietta City, 9

Locks of Love – Students, parents, teachers and the community began growing their hair over a year ago. When they had reached the 10-inch ponytail requirement, they went to a local salon and had it cut. In four hair-cutting ceremonies, over 50 people donated over 500 inches of hair. This hair was then donated to the Locks of Love foundation; a non-profit organization that provides hairpieces to financially disadvantaged children under the age of 18.

Timber Ridge Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Our school wanted to pay tribute to soldiers serving in Iraq. We have many students who have parents serving in the military and wanted to let them know we were thinking of them and how much we appreciate them. Our student's collected needed supplies over a few months. We had a day designated for boxing the items. The students wrote thank you cards and letters to the soldiers and mailed them.

Taylor Road Middle School, Middle, North Fulton, 10

We partnered with the "Give the Gift of Sight Foundation" to collect eyeglasses throughout the year to provide free eyewear to the underprivileged around the world.

Dodgen Middle School, Middle, ECCC, 9

Every April, DMS holds a bike drive for Bud's Bikes (a local community bike store). Members of the local PTA and the local community donate used bikes for this cause. These bikes are cleaned, reconditioned, and distributed to needy children.

Freedom Middle School, Middle, Cherokee, 13

On Friday, August 31st, FMS held a "Hat Day". On this day, students were allowed to wear hats to school for a \$1.00 donation. The children were encouraged to wear funny and creative hats. The money that was raised on Hat Day was given to the Children's Miracle Network.

Freedom Middle School, Middle, Cherokee, 13

Freedom Middle School held a "Teddy Bears on Patrol" collection. New or used Teddy Bears were collected and donated to the Cherokee Sheriff's Department. As officers encounter children that are the victims of violence, abuse or other traumatic incidents, the officers give these children one of these Teddy Bears that they keep in their patrol cars. Officers report that the Teddy Bears are valuable in comforting upset children.

River Trail Middle School, Middle, North Fulton, 10

"Cultural Awareness Days" - This year, the Korean culture was featured. Parents put together posters and artifacts displaying various aspects of Korean life. They gave treats to teachers and provided a resource list of parents who could eloquently showcase more specific aspects about Korean culture. This idea can be used by PTAs in schools with cultural diversity to increase parent involvement and grow student understanding of the world in which they live

Chapman Intermediate School, Middle, Cherokee, 13

"Hats for Healing" campaign - Students could buy tickets for \$1.00, which allowed them to wear a hat to school for the day. Students were encouraged to be creative and inventive with their hats. This money was used to assist the families of two students that were hospitalized. The students raised over \$5,000.

Education Enrichment

Addison Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Scarecrow Project - To kick off the fall planting season in our school gardens we held a Scarecrow Contest. The goal was to introduce original classroom creations into the gardens using recycled materials. The entire student body, teachers, parent volunteers and members of the community helped prepare, organize and judge the competition. Students collectively brainstorm and vote on a design for their scarecrow using recycled materials such as old clothes, soda cans, water bottles, or plastic grocery bags. Additional activities included learning about recycling and reading books about scarecrows. As a result, the fall garden was filled with creative and cheerful scarecrows. The scarecrows were stuffed with pines straw, which was later, used on the school grounds for beautification.

Keheley Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Mr. McGregor's Garden - Combining literature with science, the McGregor's Garden project was for kindergarten students along with parent volunteers, to plant a Winter garden. On the morning of the project, teachers read the story of *Peter Rabbit*; then the children went out and planted a winter vegetable, bulb or flower. They had a live rabbit in a hutch and learned about rabbits and what rabbits ate. It was not just to watch plants develop, it was also to understand that plants were food for wild creatures that share our environment. The children were able to see the maturity of their garden and to also observe the disappearance of the plants little by little as they were being nibbled by beautiful wildlife.

Tritt Elementary, Elementary 751-1000, ECCC, 9

Art Extravaganza Day - The Arts in Education Committee organized a school-wide celebration of the arts to expose students to highly skilled artists in a wide array of disciplines. A schedule of events was provided to each teacher, who rotated with their students through six activities; such as, theater, painting, dancing, improvisation, story-telling, and more. Who knows how this spark will play a part in igniting a future passion in the arts?

Woodland Elementary Charter, Elementary 751-1000, North Fulton, 10

K-9 Kids - Canine Assistants provided service dogs to help at-risk 1st graders in developing their reading skills. Children who were uncomfortable reading in front of their peers or teachers for fear that they might make a mistake quickly changed by being at ease

reading in front of a dog. Scientific and anecdotal evidence has demonstrated that dogs can be instrumental in enhancing academic as well as emotional wellbeing. The children felt at ease with the gentle dogs and really enjoyed the warm, soft, non-judgmental companion while practicing their reading skills.

Health/Youth Service

Freedom Middle School, Middle, Cherokee, 13

Anti Bullying Program - Adopted the Olweus Bully Prevention Program for school counselors to provide an educational program for students and parents. Posters were displayed in the hallway explaining, "What is Bullying?" Information flyers were sent home with reports to aid parents in understanding bullying behavior and how to guide their children in various situations. Students role-played different situations in homeroom as well as other classrooms during the school year to provide ongoing educational training.

McClure Middle School, Middle, Tom Mathis Sr., 9

RED RIBBON IDEAS - Collaborated with teacher sponsored Movie Makers Club to create, direct and produce commercials that would air during the morning announcements. The first commercial expressed how RRW was originated and read the oath to stay drug free. The following two commercials dealt with handling situations when confronted with drugs through the force of peer pressure as well as how to deal with helping a friend dealing with addiction. Commercials were powerful to our students at McClure because they starred our own students who taped these programs on school campus.

Lovinggood Middle School, Middle, South Cobb, 9

RED RIBBON IDEAS - Each day was designated as a different style of dress in conjunction with Red Ribbon theme: Monday- Dress for Success by wearing business attire, Tuesday- Sock It to Drugs by wearing crazy socks, Wednesday- Make `Em See Red by dressing in as much as you can find, Thursday- Team Up Against Drugs by wearing your favorite team jersey, and finally, Friday- Hats Off to Drug Free Schools by showing off your favorite hat.

Chapman Intermediate, Middle, Cherokee, 13

Fitness Run Childhood Obesity and Physical Fitness - Hosted a fundraising event "Fitness is Fun" family run/walk. Holding this early in the school year provided an opportunity for students and families to meet each other as they jogged around the track. Funds made from Fitness Run were used to purchase new PE Equipment and classroom outdoor equipment to encourage physical outdoor activities.

Taylor Road Middle School, Middle, North Fulton, 10

Community Health Fair - Health Fair provided speaker sessions for parents and speaker sessions for students. Topics for parents were Internet Safety Tips and Alcohol and Drug Use among middle schoolers. Tips were given on how parents can be proactive in ensuring their child not be a part of these two negative actions. Students also listened to speakers who addressed issues dealing with preventing sports injuries along with how to prevent accidents, basic first aid tips, and making good choices to eliminate emergency room visits. Along with speakers, there were free health screening provided and booths set up by local professionals. The homeroom with the most attending students was awarded an ice cream during lunch the following Monday.

Hightower Trail Middle School, Middle, ECCC, 9

Hoops For Heart - PTSA sponsored 3 on 3 basketball games after school to support the American Heart Association. Teams signed up to play against each other collecting pledges for the games in which they participated. PTSA supplied refreshments, trophies and worked with the BETA club to offer babysitting during the basketball games.

Dickerson Middle School, Middle, ECCC, 9

Pie Eating Contest - In raising awareness for Childhood Cancer, the Dickerson PTSA hosted its 2nd Annual Pie Eating Contest. Homerooms collected money during a three-week period, and those homerooms with the most funds collected had their teacher participate in the pie-eating event. The teacher who finished their pie first was awarded a trophy to be on display in their homeroom until next year's event. This allowed teachers and students to work together towards a common goal of helping others. They raised \$1,109.49 for Rally Children's Cancer Foundation.

Alton C Crews Middle School, Middle, Gwinnett, 12

Bronco of the Month - Student Recognition is a very important part of the PTSA. Once a month, a student from each homeroom is selected to have a positive part of their personality displayed. These traits may be things such as: outstanding citizenship, good work effort, or a positive attitude during the month. A breakfast in their honor is provided, and their names are displayed on a bulletin board for the month. A congratulatory letter is mailed home to parents, and a small gift is awarded to each honoree at the breakfast from local business partners. Also to encourage awareness and respect of fellow classmates, teachers award students with "Caught in the Act" postcards and a wooden nickel to be used towards an ice cream treat during lunch. The postcard is to be given to the parents so they will know their child was spotted performing an act of kindness to fellow students.

Dodgen Middle School, Middle, ECCC, 9

Encourage student participation in PTA committees - During open house, committee lists were made available to all students so they could become more involved by becoming co-chairs to the adult committee chair. Students were included in the entire process of

each program/event. Adult chairs benefited from their input and were able to mentor the student using the PTSA motto of “Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow.” Almost all of our 40 committees received student volunteers to be either a co-chair or helper.

River Trail Middle School, Middle, North Fulton, 10

Created a School Store staffed by students and supervised by parents - River Trail Middle School wanted to provide opportunities for their students to gain valuable work experience in a non-threatening environment. They also wanted parents and students to work together in a mentoring role. A school store was opened every morning (7:50- 8:30AM) and supervised by an adult and worked by students. Students created display cases, sold items, restocked shelves, selected items to be placed in the store, took inventory and handled cash transactions. Parent volunteers cashed out at the end of each morning and filled out a deposit ticket and returned the moneybox to school safe for the PTA treasurer to deposit into PTA account.

Lassiter High School, High, ECCC, 9

Student Defensive Driving Classes - Car Control hosts an opportunity to come to your school for an evening class of defensive driving for parents and students. The following morning, with the child, as driver, and the parent, as passenger, go through a designed course on school grounds, using the family car, several times until they can safely and successfully maneuver the car. Cost is \$169 per student/parent team.

Columbus High School, High, Muscogee, 4

Sexual Assault Speaker - Kyle Blair, Director of the Sexual Assault Support Center in Columbus, spoke to over 1300 students addressing issues listed as concerns from a survey taken by parents of the school. She spoke on abuse, rape, date rape, dangerous behaviors, laws and case studies. Assemblies were held four times to accommodate the number of students in each grade level. Index cards were made available for students to write their questions down, and after Ms. Blair spoke for one hour, she addressed the questions on the cards.

Walton High School, High, ECCC, 9

Student Climate Committee - Walton PTSA in its’ effort to bring the “S” into the PTA, created a Student Climate Committee that met the 2nd Tuesday of each month. This committee organized a Student/Teacher Trivia Night. Five teacher teams and 7 student teams competed against each other for a fun evening of laughs and education. In addition, they were the decorating committee for the Homecoming Dance. They also held a student panel Q&A session for new students at the beginning of each semester.

Chattahoochee High School, High, North Fulton, 10

RED RIBBON WEEK EVENT - A drug and alcohol questionnaire was given to the students and the results were broadcast school-wide during homeroom. Over half of the students responded to the survey with results showing 70% of students knew an underage drinker and 75% knew someone who used illegal drugs, validating the need for this Red Ribbon Program.

Centennial High School, High, North Fulton, 10

RED RIBBON Event - Contacted a local towing company to donate a wrecked car and place it on school grounds for the entire week where it was visible to all who came to the school. Red carnations were also donated by a local grocery store and students were given the opportunity to write a dedication to someone who they currently know who is struggling with drugs, alcohol or tobacco to write down a pledge to be drug free. The dedications were attached to the carnations and then placed around and inside the wrecked car.

Pope High School, High, ECCC, 9

RED RIBBON Event – Working in support with the English teachers, students were encouraged to write a 6 to 10 sentence positive drug free message to the eighth grade students at the feeder school. The messages from the students explained why it is important to stay alcohol, drug and tobacco free. These letters were collected by the Youth Service Chair and taken over to the Middle School Youth Service chair where she divided them into homeroom classes and passed them out during Red Ribbon week.

Carver School of Health Science and Research, High, Atlanta, 10

Health Issue of the Month and Suicide Awareness - The PTSA selected a health observance that would be the focus of each month’s newsletter, communication or program. September – Prostate Cancer and Cholesterol Education; October – Dental Hygiene and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome; November – Lung Cancer and Alzheimer’s Awareness; and December – AIDS and Hand washing awareness, etc The School also held a “Walk for Life, Walk for Health” in memory of a classmate who committed suicide at the beginning of the school year. A quilt by Suicide Prevention Action Network was on display along with speakers from the Georgia Crisis and Access Line, Link Counseling Center and the Oak Hill Adolescent and Family Center, who presented valuable information during the program.

Collins Hill High School, High, Gwinnett, 12

Health Fair and Heart Screens for Teens - A Health Fair offered free screenings for parents which included: cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure check, BMI, spinal column screened, and bone density checks. Also included was a blood drive, healthy snacks, massages, chiropractor services, and eye checks. The Gwinnett County Board of Health was present to provide information about the flu and offering flu shots. Heart Screens for Teens were offered to students who had signed up in advance. This was in honor of a former student who died from an undiagnosed heart condition.

Membership

Lovejoy Middle, Middle, Clayton, 7

The theme of "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child" from the African proverb, provided a focus on diversifying membership. Members' names were displayed on color-coded huts using the school colors to represent parents, students, faculty & staff. The "village" was displayed along the main hallway.

Arnold Magnet Academy PTSA, Middle, Muscogee, 4

To keep students motivated in reaching target numbers, the top 6 classes that had increased membership 20%, by the end of October, participated in a pig race. Donated battery-operated pigs were decorated for the race. This activity created lots of excitement among teachers and students as "each one reached one" for membership increase.

Outstanding Local Unit

Reese Road ES PTA, Elementary 750 and below, Muscogee, 4

Reese Road ES PTA created a committee called the SPIRIT SQUAD. The committee has taken school pride to a new level. They and the Roadrunner mascot attend all school functions and rally the spirit of the students, families and teachers. They promote a positive school image with their red T-shirts, car magnets and school supplies. This is especially visible during FANTASTIC FRIDAY, an activity that highlights three annual breakfasts: Grandparents' Breakfast, Fathers' Breakfast and Mothers' Breakfast. At these events, the Reese Road PTA Spirit Committee provides breakfast, token gifts for guests, an appearance by the Spirit Squad and mascot, a PTA membership booth and sportswear.

Dr. John H. Heard ES PTA, Elementary 750 and below, Savannah Chatham, 6

Heard ES PTA had three best ideas. A WELCOME PACKAGE included the names of the new PTA officers; Volunteer forms with the events for the year; Volunteer sheets to record volunteer hours and a PTA membership envelope. A SUMMER READER PROGRAM - On the last day of school, students are given a log to record their summer reading. Logs are collected when they return to school and students are recognized at a PTA meeting and awarded a \$5.00 gift card to the book fair and a free Dairy Queen ice cream token. A SCHOOL PATROL -Students are selected, trained and given equipment to be a part of the safety patrol. They assist with traffic routing and monitor the safe passage of the walkers.

Haven ES PTA, Elementary 750 and below, Savannah Chatham, 6

To address student learning and parent involvement, Haven ES PTA hosted a SUPER TUESDAY PRIMARY ELECTION that gave the children an opportunity to vote for whom they'd like to see run for the president in the general election. As part of the election process, they offered a volunteer to the teachers to help instruct the students on the platforms of the different candidates and read an election book to the class.

Garrison Mill ES PTA, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Garrison ES PTA enriched the educational environment through its substantial ARTS AND EDUCATION PROGRAM. They contract in-school performances that educate, entertain and enlighten children in the 5-11 age range. Five professional artists or artistic groups share their talents throughout the year. Every child has multiple opportunities to enjoy this professional talent brought in-house through PTA financial support and volunteer leadership.

Kincaid ES PTA, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Kincaid ES PTA had several best ideas that created a successful year for them. SURVEYING THEIR MEMBERS provided them with great ideas to increase and exceed their membership goals, get full support for new programs and obtained five local business partners. They sent a letter home in July with a revised membership form encouraging parents to join early, sign up other family members and avoid long lines. In September, they sent a mailing home to ask non-members to join and was able to get 200 more members. Their "WALK TO WASHINGTON" was a great parent involvement program with 195 pedometers donated by the Clean Air Campaign, participants logged over 1.3 million steps to walk the almost 650 miles from Atlanta to Washington, D.C.

Marietta Center Advanced Academics PTA, Elementary 750 and below, Marietta City, 9

A best idea for the Marietta Center for Advanced Academics came from a healthy habits initiative funded by the Promoting Healthy Habits Grant. They SUPPLIED FRESH FRUIT on Friday afternoons prior to dismissal. The fruit has been extremely popular with students and they hope to include fruit sales in their school store. In their attempt to improve the health and nutritional habits of the students and their families, they have received powerful supportive responses from the parents.

Rocky Mountain ES PTA, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

A VOLUNTEER WALL was created on a bulletin board outside the cafeteria highlighting all volunteer opportunities; a list of the events; who to contact; a list of the committees (their responsibilities and programs); strips of paper that list the budget, time commitment and estimated schedule for each event and posted a volunteer signup sheet. Those interested in volunteering could take the strips with them to study in greater detail and contact the appropriate committee chair if interested. The strips and signup sheets gave the committee chairs a running start on the school year and, in some cases, to have organizational meetings over the summer.

Timber Ridge ES PTA, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Among the great programs and activities at Timber Ridge ES is the awesome work of the Exceptional Children committee. They helped form a consortium of about ten (10) East Cobb schools. Together they SPONSOR A MONTHLY LECTURE SERIES (that also earns Professional Learning Units for teachers) on topics including perfectionism, autism, ADD/ADHD and even Executive Dysfunction for parents! This is a great resource for parents.

Beecher Hills ES PTA, Elementary 750 and below, Atlanta, 10

INCREASED MALE PARTICIPATION by identifying specific area where fathers could support PTA efforts. They learned some fathers possessed exceptional carpentry skills and composed a list of carpentry projects that would support PTA goals (i.e. building a trophy case, lost-n-found storage area, etc.). Some fathers had horticultural skills and were asked to chair the Beautification Committee. Another strategy was to ask Husband/Wife teams to chair committees. These measures increased the visibility of males in the PTA and helped to encourage more fathers to participate.

Avery Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, Cherokee, 13

Avery ES utilized their communication along with the OMDR system to notify all of their PTA members of upcoming events at the school. Blood Drives, Career Days, Cultural Arts Day and general PTA meetings have benefited from the communication system. Avery ES, as a brand new school, had three feeder schools all contributing traditions and programs into the new school. One such tradition was from the Dr. Seuss book, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. The Avery students and parents enjoyed a pancake and biscuit breakfast while visiting the Grinch himself! The American Red Cross blood drive brought over 90 generous donors to the school for the first Avery blood drive. The Cub Forest was created to beautify and reforest an area that had been denuded of all vegetation when the site had been prepared by the school.

Collins Hill High School, High, Gwinnett, 12

Collins Hill HS PTSA used a program designed to detect heart problems and expand the idea to encompass over 14 areas of health issues. Initially receiving resistance to the program, *Heart Screens for Teens*, from the Athletic Department, the PTSA decided to add other elements to their effort. A Blood Drive and nutritional piece became an additional part of the day. Other medical professionals also joined the effort with free cholesterol, diabetes, vision, blood pressure screening and the nervous system function assessment.

Chattahoochee High School, High, North Fulton, 10

The Guided Studies Program is designed to aid students who are at risk of failing more than one class. PTSA volunteers and 70 student tutors work with struggling students to identify areas of weakness, reinforcing lessons, preparing for tests and assisting with organizational skills. Health concerns initiated a Suicide Prevention Awareness that included the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Georgia and Miss Georgia Teen USA. Discussions centered on the warning signs of suicide and what parents, students and faculty can do for people who may be contemplating suicide. "Be Comfortable in Your Genes" was the theme for a week-long event educating students of the dangers and consequences of eating.

Centennial High School, High, North Fulton, 10

The Centennial HS PTSA's Caring and Sharing Committee, along with the Centennial Student Council, has many community wide activities. One such new program implemented this year was the *Senior Day of Service*. The idea evolved when seniors normally spent the day unengaged during the time underclassmen were taking exams. The entire Senior class served over 12 community organizations and charities through service projects. Parents, teachers and administrators assisted the Seniors.

Carver School of Health Sciences and Research, High, Atlanta, 10

Carver HS is considered a small learning community with an emphasis on health science, from the scientific inquiry and research to engaging in the debate of healthcare in America. With health being the core of student education, it made sense to focus on the promotion of health and wellness to the Carver families. It was agreed upon, by the PTSA and Principal, that each PTSA meeting would include two health presentations. The students and advisors planned each month to coincide with national health observances. The presentations began to take on many forms with each advisory group trying to top the previous one. The biggest outcome of the students participation was that the parents really looked forward to the next meeting and found the information useful for themselves and their families. What better way to exemplify PTA!

Carver School of Health Sciences and Research, High, Atlanta, 10

Carver also had the National Reflections Theme Search winner, tripled their entries for Reflections. Healthy Lifestyles award recipient, Youth Services, Parent Involvement, and Membership.

Pope High School, High, ECCC,

Pope HS PTSA has shown an increase of awareness for the cultural difference of some of the Pope students and families by working with the Student Ambassador Program to ease the transition from middle school to high school. Select juniors and seniors were trained in the spring to mentor three to four incoming ninth grade students in the summer and throughout the school year.

Parent Involvement

Addison Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

The International Festival was a great success this year. We focused on understanding cultural values and differences. Attendees were asked to bring a dish that represented their native homeland and to dress in their native costumes. The cafeteria was decorated and divided into continents, and we had the most incredible displays and food from all over the world! After everyone had a chance to visit all of the continents' displays, our Vice-Principal hosted a fashion show and invited each continent to come up on stage in groups and model their traditional costumes. Together, children, parents and grandparents proudly modeled their family heritage.

Beecher Hills Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Atlanta, 10

The primary goal was to engage as many members as possible and provide support to the school and community through advocacy, volunteering, wellness promotion and financial resources to ensure all students, parents, and teachers have the "ultimate educational experience." The new National Standards for achievement have driven *how* we operated this year. Activities include: Triplicate Student Data Forms, Muffins for Moms, Doughnuts for Dads, Grandparents Day, Parent Survey, Fall Festival, National Parent Involvement Day Luncheon, Parent Workshops, Take Your Family to School Week, Test Preparation Rally, Discounted Test Preparation Books, Family Read-In, Father/Daughter Dance, Parent Volunteer Appreciation Reception, Teacher Appreciation Week Activities, Community and Partners Appreciation Program and Reception, National PTA Parent Involvement School of Excellence, and Community Collaborations.

Clifton Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, DeKalb, 11

We were honored to have one of our PTA members awarded the PTA Lifetime Honorary Member Award at the DeKalb County Council of PTA Dinner Meeting. Some of the attributes of this honored member include lending a helping hand when needed, encouraging parents to get their students to school on time, assisting student patrol officers when students arrive to school, serving as a mentor to the Clifton Gents Young Men's Club, and assisting custodians with assembly arrangements and other areas of the school.

Davis Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Davis ES PTA offers many opportunities for Davis families to get involved in their child's school. Early in the year, one activity we sponsor is "Tune Out TV Week," which encourages the entire family to commit to a whole week without television, in an effort to promote family-friendly alternative activities. Another activity is an annual "Read Across America" day, which is held in conjunction with Dr. Seuss's Birthday. Each classroom has parents come and spend a portion of their day reading, either to the students or just in a comfy chair outside the classroom.

Eastvalley Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

The Eastvalley Parent/Family Involvement program comprises 13 committees, each of which is dedicated to fostering parent involvement in their child's school. One committee, Career Day, provides students the opportunity to obtain more knowledge about careers available to them in the future. The 35 participating speakers provided information via activities, or a lecture using videos and overhead projectors. This is followed by a Q&A session to give students insight into the speaker's career. Emphasis is placed on education required for work experience, as well as licenses or examinations that may be required. The goal is to stress the importance of an education to reach their future goals.

Garrison Mill Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Parent Involvement is the focus of several key PTA leadership positions--Parent Involvement, Volunteer Development, and Room Parent Coordinators. After the school year begins, all new students receive a personalized welcome packet that includes a directory, calendar, guide sheet and class shirt; along with a step-by-step encouragement packet on getting "plugged" into the school. Garrison Mill ES PTA underwrites the cost as a benefit and tool for new families.

John Heard Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Middle GA, 5

The Heard School Talent Show, presented in early February, offers a venue to showcase student talent, allows for teacher and staff involvement, and it draws tremendous parent involvement. This year's theme was entitled "*Heard School Musical*" (a take-off on High School Musical). Our talent show featured two former Heard students in the roles of Ryan and Sharpee, as emcees for the evening. A total of 45 students participated with singing, dancing, skits, gymnastics, playing violin and much more. The show concluded with many hilarious teacher skits that most students would find hard to forget!

Kincaid Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

The first goal of the PI Committee Chair was to learn about the PI Standards and the certification process for the National PTA School of Excellence. This effort involved the school council relying heavily on feedback received on multiple parent surveys, as well as advice and expertise of National and Georgia PTAs. We worked with the school administration and school council to publish a Parent Involvement Policy and Plan of Work for our school. The committee intends to continue the assessment practices used for seeking recertification to ensure the programs offered are meeting the needs and interests of the parents. We are pleased to announce that Kincaid ES PTA became certified as a National PTA School of Excellence on April 2, 2008.

Mableton Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, South Cobb, 9

Our primary objective is to promote parent/family involvement by offering free, fun and educational opportunities for everyone to enjoy. Our theme is “*Catch the Spirit of Excellence.*” This P/FI Committee supports all six of the National PTA PI Standards, by having a Parent Liaison, a Parent Resource Room, and continued use of our PI Plan - which includes a variety of PTA programs. One of our programs, Reading Awards Night, (our 3rd annual this year) took place during the October General PTA Meeting, where the importance of reading at least twenty minutes daily was stressed. Approximately 30 students were rewarded for participating in the *Summer Reading is Fun Program* with \$10 Borders gift cards, certificates, pencils and bookmarks with a reading theme.

Mountain Road Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Cherokee, 13

One of our goals this year was to recognize the parents for their continued involvement by hosting our first Parent Appreciation Night. As parents entered the building, the Executive Committee greeted the parents and handed out thank you notes with numbers listed on the back for drawings of prizes. Refreshments were served. The focal point of the evening was to raise awareness of the research that shows that parental involvement has a direct affect on children’s education. Community businesses gave donations for parent appreciation gifts. Students from each classroom made banners, which were displayed throughout the school.

Mulberry Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Gwinnett, 12

Our goal is for family members, not just parents, to have an opportunity to bring their experiences, knowledge and enthusiasm to the students at our school. “Camera Parents” are a very important part of the PI Committee. During school registration and curriculum night, parents are asked to volunteer. More than 30 parents attended an organizational meeting, at the beginning of the year, that provided photography criteria and helpful hints. Volunteers took photos of field trips, class parties, holiday luncheons, and daily classroom fun. Most of the photos in the yearbook are from camera parent contributions. Photos are available for use in school bulletin boards and scrapbooks, and are shared with other parents who are unable to attend events.

Reese Road Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Muscogee, 4

Our main goal is to increase parent participation by celebrating the National PTA’s, *Take Your Family to School Week*. The theme for the week was “Stories from the Heart”, and all of the National PI Standards were included in the initial plans. The week kicked off when students were asked to write a story of a special time in their family, utilizing the current Georgia Performance Standards (younger students were asked to draw a picture). Parents were asked to send in a short note telling why their child is so special. These stories and notes were displayed in the school hallways. The week’s activities closed out with a performance of a singing storyteller program “I Hear America Singing.” The week’s activities were video recorded and will be forwarded to family members whose parents are currently serving in Iraq *Reese Road ES PTA, one of 32 national winners, applied for and received the National PTA Grant for Take Your Family To School Week.*

Timber Ridge Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, ECCC, 9

Family learning and fun takes place during Science Fair Night, with the objective of getting students excited about Science. Students are given full creative reign in choosing a science experiment and then documenting their results in a casual format. Emphasis is placed upon participation and growth rather than on rules, regulations and judging. Parents are given an opportunity to share an excitement for science and exploration with their child. Teachers also completed projects and inspired their students. We expect the Science Fair to result in fresh new perspectives on scientific projects that hold special interest for students and their families.

West Side Elementary, Elementary 750 and below, Marietta City, 9

The city of Marietta hosts “Treasures from the Attic,” a city-wide day of yard sales conducted by non-profit organizations and individuals, with the Mayor’s office providing maps of the locations that are participating. We jumped in full force this year, and many families donated items for sale, including bringing big-ticket items. Many parents helped organize and sell the items, along with our custodian. The 5th grade parents assisted in this effort by selling coffee, water, and popcorn to shoppers. Our vast array of sale items, available refreshments and restrooms made West Side a popular stop for many bargain hunters that day!

Campbell Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, South Fulton, 10

Our goal was to increase the Dad’s involvement in contrast to previous years. We met our goal to establish a communication with our dads by creating a “Donut for Dads” day where we invited our fathers into the school. The Counselor and a representative from All Pro Dads spoke to the dads, and asked them to make a commitment to volunteer in the school. Some of the other events we had for dads were African American Men Do Read, Shadow Your Student Day, Breakfast for a Day, Family Night at Maxx Fun, Campbell ES Nature Trail Family Day, and D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything And Read). Dads were also given a copy of all meetings, projects, workshop dates, and the theme “Campbell ES Dad’s Commitment to Walk the Journey with Our Students.” *Campbell ES PTA, one of 32 national winners, applied and received the National PTA Grant for Take Your Family To School Week.*

Cogburn Woods Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, North Fulton, 10

One of the goals this year was to sponsor a new parent educational program, targeting parents to provide information that would give them valuable skills they could use at home. We combined programs with our General PTA meetings, and were able to expose more parents to the work and goals of PTA. The two parent workshops were “How to Keep Your Child Safe,” which focused on how parents could protect their children from predators and other dangers. The second parent workshop was entitled “The Parenting Paradox: Neither Friend Nor Foe.” This presentation focused on the importance of laying the foundation and ground rules that help kids deal with the challenges to come in middle and high school.

Dunwoody Springs Charter Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, North Fulton, 10

One of our objectives was to bring families into the school and provide them with meaningful enrichment events. We partnered with the school to create Family Nights, nighttime events for parents, students and staff. PTA provided food and entertainment, while the school determined the theme and created the programs for the parents to attend. This year's Family Nights were focused on Parenting Support and CRCT Prep. Participation for these events numbered in the hundreds. Students were entertained by a magician, a DJ, and several Math games, while the parents participated in classes such as: SuccessMaker, Math skills, getting ready to read, attention and focus issues, and CRCT prep.

Eastside Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, ECCC, 9

The Parent Involvement Committee provided a table in front of the school, staffed by committee volunteers to welcome all families into the school community on Tiger Day (Meet and Greet). Volunteers helped direct students and their parents to their classrooms, the cafeteria and the gym. Volunteers answered questions, gave families a map and Survival Guide to help them navigate the Meet and Greet process. The Survival Guide was translated into Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Spanish to accommodate the diverse population. Bilingual volunteers were also on hand to help answer any questions.

Findley Oaks Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, North Fulton, 10

Our PTA focused on physical fitness, character education and team building. We hosted a "Fun Run" event. The school and PTA formed a core team to plan the event, and established planning teams, which consisted of Awards, Business Sponsor, Character Education, Communication, Finance, Health and Wellness, and Operations. On the day of the event, every student participates with a goal of running as many laps as possible. The more laps run, the more dollars raised. After the Fun Run, a percentage of the dollars raised is donated to both the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society.

Lake Windward Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, North Fulton, 10

To become more of an active community and get the parents more involved in activities, we felt our PTA should give back to the school to build this involvement. We held a series of family events, including a 5K race, a 1 Mile Fun Run, and two very successful Family Fun Bingo nights. There were over 350 race participants and all Family Fun Nights were filled to capacity.

Mountain View Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, ECCC, 9

Highlighting areas where families could contribute to the success of parent/family involvement is vital to our goals. Our Washington Mutual Banking Program gives our parents and students an opportunity to learn the benefits of early savings. This program is designed to encourage the students that earning and saving money is vital to make their money work for them by putting it into an interest earning savings account. It also provides the chance for parents to be educated and teach their children about saving money for their future.

Mt. Bethel Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, ECCC, 9

Parents are always welcome at Mt. Bethel. At Meet & Greet, more than 300 parents volunteered to help with the 50 plus PTA initiatives. The following programs focused on increasing student learning: Room Reps, Music Parent, Art Parent, Story Book Readers, Community Outreach, Habitat Committee, Cultural Celebrations of the World, Challenger Book Publishing, and more. Night in the Parking Lot is a free, fun filled evening in September, designed to welcome families & kick-off the New Year. Families bring their own blankets and picnic dinners. PTA and Partners in Education provide refreshments and desserts.

Murdock Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, ECCC, 9

Our goal is to provide each teacher with a volunteer parental support team that would allow our teachers to dedicate the majority of their time to meeting their instructional goals. Initially, teachers were surveyed on their wants and needs from their room parent team. From the survey results, we planned a packet of information that explained the duties of room parents. Meetings were held three times during the year to help parents understand their role as room parents. At the first meeting, suggested monthly activities were provided to guide room parents in meeting the needs of their teachers and students.

Tritt Elementary, Elementary 751 – 1000, ECCC, 9

Our PTA's main focus this year has been to improve relations between our families and school staff by redesigning existing programs to better address the needs of all. Based on the successful PTA Lunch and Learn programs, we continue to present programs designed to provide information and resources to meet the needs of our parents. "Lunch and Learn" programs this year include presentations by two of our Partners in Education. A few exciting after-school programs this year include a Family Fitness Yoga Night and Internet Safety Special, which communicates directly with our 5th grade students about "Youth Culture" and included such things as online gaming, cyber-bullying, drugs, and more.

Woodland Elementary Charter, Elementary 751 – 1000, North Fulton, 10

We focused on our children, parents and teachers by tailoring our activities and communications to best meet their needs. One of our programs, *Men of Woodland*, is a bi-annual event when the men of Woodland families take the school by storm. Over 150 fathers and grandfathers act as hall monitors, carpool, news show, librarians, computer room assistants, cafeteria monitors and servers, science lab assistants and more; dads rule the day. We provide breakfast and lunch, as well as a personal name badge. This is the third year of this highly successful event.

Avery Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, Cherokee, 13

Our goals were to connect families and build community partnerships. As a new school, we need to establish a sense of community. "Avery heritage" shows families and community, via programs/projects, what they have in common. *Grub with the Grinch* is a breakfast in December, featuring photos with the Grinch, a special gift shop for a kid's budget, and the Principal reading the famed Dr. Seuss story. More than 50 parent volunteers organized and executed this event. Volunteers were also solicited from the Beta Club. Flyers were sent home to announce the program, asking parents to RSVP with their payment. More than 400 people attended!

Bascomb Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, Cherokee, 13

The goals of the PTA are to provide an opportunity for the school community to socialize and have fun, to involve parents as 'priceless stakeholders' in their child's education through the re-certification process of the National PTA School of Excellence program, promote the P.A.S.S. program and host a meeting, and foster a Science initiative by presenting concepts in a fun and interesting manner coupled with parent interaction. Opportunities for involvement include book fairs, ice cream sales, proctors, room parents, spirit shop/wear, mentors, classroom readers, hearing/vision screenings and Grandparent lunch. Over 600 families and staff were served, recertification of the School of Excellence program earned, and over 100 parents volunteer daily to promote the inviting school atmosphere where students, parent volunteers, and teachers are recognized as "priceless."

Camp Creek Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, Gwinnett, 12

Our goal is to strengthen the family unit by providing opportunities for families and friends to come together in an educational setting. *Coffee with Kathy* – a parent education series allows parents to hear from and speak directly with the school principal on a variety of issues in an informal setting. This year the discussions have ranged from dealing with children's health issues, reading test score reports, and helping students with homework. Parents are invited to come have coffee and conversation once every other month.

Carmel Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, Cherokee, 13

Literacy - (1 to 1 Reading) is a program that begins at the start of the school year. The chairperson sends two letters, one to teachers asking for a list of potential student candidates they feel will benefit from this program and one home to the parent with a description of the literacy program and a permission slip for the student to participate. Once the completed form is returned, a student is matched up with a volunteer tutor who has completed a favorable background check. The student meets with the volunteer for 30 minutes each week, throughout the school year. At the end of the school year, an outside literacy consultant is brought in to review and evaluate the progress of each student

Cheatham Hill Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, South Cobb, 9

Our PTA Committees offer opportunities to all parents and teachers to be involved at various times almost every day. We have room parents, PTA events that encourage family involvement and require assistance from a number of volunteers to help plan, set up, lead and clean up, including our Fall Festival, and great education enrichment programs such as – "Reading Coaches" and "Rocket Reader". "Reading Coaches" pulls students out of class on a weekly basis, with the teacher's permission, to work one-on-one with students who struggle with reading. "Rocket Reader" encourages students to read extra books at home and rewards students for completing forms and returning them for processing.

McKendree Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, Gwinnett, 12

We recognized a declining involvement of parents, and wanted to provide an activity where parents could attend with their children, mingle with teachers, and get to know the PTA board members. A "clean up day" was designated, which began with "Pancakes with PTA." We served over 300 attendees pancakes and breakfast drinks. Breakfast was served from 9:00 to 11:00 am, and the cleanup day ran from about 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. The Environmental Committee had more volunteers than they knew what to do with, and all the work projected that day was completed without issue. All board members were in attendance, and many teachers floated in and out throughout the morning.

Grayson Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, Gwinnett, 12

The objective of the Family Fun Committee is to plan and promote family-oriented social activities/events for all members of the Grayson ES community. Our family fun events consisted of a Father/Son Cookout, a Mother/Daughter Scrap booking and Dessert Day, a Father/Daughter Dance, and a Mother/Son Night of Fun. The committee started planning these events in July, securing dates on the school calendar and booking vendors in advance, as needed. The committee relied on many parent and high school-aged volunteers to assist with all of the events. The school administration and custodial staff also offered vital support to the PTA for each of these events.

Jackson Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, Gwinnett, 12

The first International Night was co-hosted with the faculty. This was an occasion to join together to celebrate diversity. The event included a buffet of international food samples, entertainment from several different countries, and activities for families and children throughout the evening. We hosted a fashion show, featuring our school's children in various original international costumes. While entertainment and food were being enjoyed in the cafeteria, families and their children had their "passports" stamped as they traveled from 'county' to 'country' through our classrooms and participated in many activities related to the culture of that county. Over 1600 people attended this event.

Sope Creek Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, ECCC, 9

Our primary goal of the PI Committee is to promote a strong partnership between parents and school personnel. We offer a wide variety of workshop topics, vary the scheduling of events between mornings, lunches and evenings, and communicate via flyers, e-mails, and the PTA calendar, *The Chronicle* newsletter, and Sope Creek's website. We work closely with our guidance counselors and Administrative Staff to utilize their expertise on specific topics and their experience with outside speakers. We enlist them to lead some of our workshops. Parent input is essential. We survey parents regarding programs that they feel would be valuable for our school population. Based on their choices, we schedule workshops and lectures throughout the school year.

Vickery Creek Elementary, Elementary Over 1000, Forsyth, 13

Two main goals of the Family Science Night were to generate student excitement and interest in the sciences, and to have families participate in the process. This event was designed to provide a family-centric night, at no cost, where students attend with a parent and participate in hands-on science demonstrations and experiments led by local experts in those scientific fields. Students were required to register in advance and choose classes in order of preference. Students in Kindergarten and first grade attended two assembly-style presentations. Students in grades two through five attended three 45-minute interactive classes. An additional element involved the Art Department and a t-shirt design contest, themed *Science in the Community*. Prizes were awarded to the first, second and third place designs.

Chapman Intermediate, Middle, Cherokee, 13

Hearts for Sidney" plan. Not only was it a helpful way to help a child with a serious disease/condition, but also it was a perfect way for students to raise money and to have fun doing it. The Community Outreach event sparked a remarkable spirit of giving and pride in helping others that was seen in so many unique ways.

Dodgen Middle School, Middle, ECCC, 9

Gifted Learners. This can improve relationships between students, parents and faculty. Another great idea is letting a student become a "Co-Chairperson," and letting other students volunteer on the committee. This encourages student's ideas and plans to be used in future projects.

McClure Middle School, Middle, Tom Mathis Sr., 9

Teacher Forum. The teacher forum supplied parents and students with the latest changes in the curriculum mandatory to students promoted to the next grade level; i.e., changes in the math curriculum, so that parents could prepare their child with necessities such as providing a tutor.

Butler High School, High, Richmond, 8

The objective of the Richmond County High School Talent Show was to bring all Richmond County students together in a common place, meet and make new friends, and to see a variety of talent from students at other schools other than at sporting events. The goals were important because it brought students, families and different communities together for a night of family fun and entertainment. Of the ten high schools who involved, a total of 16 different acts and 22 individuals from eight of the ten high schools participated. This event garnered huge community support, and prizes and money went to the first, second and third place winners.

Centennial High School, High, North Fulton, 10

In 2003, PTSA developed the REACH (Reach Everyone At Centennial High) Initiative, in order to address areas of decreased parent involvement. Identified this year, are the non-English speaking students, special education students, new students, non-traditional volunteers, and non-traditional community business partners. Forms have been translated into Spanish, PTSA hosted an International Night, a weeklong "soccer fest", Interpreters are available at Orientation, Curriculum Night, Principal's Chat, and other PTSA gatherings. Communication is key with the Freshmen Parent Handbook and the "*Freshmen's Survival Guide*". Over 35 committees provide many opportunities for parents to be involved and has created a successful formula for community awareness and giving.

Columbus High School, High, Muscogee, 4

Often working parents ask, "What can I do even though I work full-time?" We feel a good volunteer program must be initiated early and carried out efficiently. This year the Volunteer Chair helped to create a list of eleven committees that could use volunteers. We included in the Welcome Back packet to every home, a list of potential volunteer jobs and a brief description of each. Sign-up sheets are available at the Big Brother/Big Sister Night, registration days, and at Open House. This information is posted on our website. A strong, supportive volunteer base provides the opportunity for our high school to be one of the best in Georgia!

Northview High School, High, North Fulton, 10

Realizing the necessity to control our own email communications, the PTSA invested in a web-based email management account where we can reach most of the families within the school on a timely basis on a variety of important topics. This has strengthened our communications, broadened our volunteer pool, and improved the sense of community felt by families. After much research, we selected our provider; created an email template, and currently have three difference databases we utilize (all school, senior parents, and junior parents). This has been the best way to make our families feel connected, see where their help is needed, and really work together to make a difference for all the students at our school.

Pope High School, High, ECCC, 9

Our main objective is to increase involvement in the high school and to foster positive interaction with the community. PTSA takes an active role in educating students outside the classroom. We continue to sponsor a defensive driving class focusing on rules of the road, distractions while driving, and driving under the influence. The class also has a one-hour parent information session focusing on drinking and current Georgia laws for teenage drivers. This year, we sponsored Car Control Clinic, a hands-on, in-car training that consists of a 120-minute discussion of vehicle dynamics and human dynamics followed by four hours of in-car instruction in accident avoidance and defensive driving maneuvers. With their parents in the car, the student learns to master these skills.

South Cobb High School, High, South Cobb, 9

Our goal this year was to create an informed and empowered parent. A secondary goal was to remove negative perceptions that have been associated with our school and are sometimes perpetuated by parents. We followed the National Standards for Parent Involvement, encouraged feedback from parents through a survey, and after many discussions with parents and our board; a plan of action was developed. Programs were presented to parents on the following topics: introduction to the school (South Cobb 101), gang activity (Cobb County Anti Gang Enforcement), financial management (Money Management 101), school testing (EOCTs, SATs, GHSTs), and teens and driving (Marietta-Cobb Drivers Education Program). All sessions are relevant, informative, and deal with a particular issue that parents and teenagers face today.

Walton High School, High, ECCC, 9

Our PI goal this year was to welcome all families into the school to enhance communication. We send out weekly e-mail updates and continue printing our PTSA newsletter. This year 400 parents signed up to volunteer, and they were put to work within our 40 active committees. New this year, we added volunteers to the front desk during the first two weeks of summer break and during the two weeks preceding the beginning of school. This helped the Principal's secretary to better serve summer visitors. We have a special orientation for newcomers, Walton 101 for incoming freshmen parents. Some of our volunteer opportunities include parent education programs, Special Services committee, and Teacher and Bus Driver Appreciations. Walton High School is one of nine schools in Georgia to receive the National Blue Ribbon Award.