

ZIA NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2007

PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Zia is continuing to be a busy place. Teachers have been giving several assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. This information gives us data we can use to plan instruction and document your child's progress this year. Teachers will share this information with you at our first conference in November.

You recently received a mid-term progress report for your child. This gives you a brief snapshot of where your child is academically after the first six weeks of school. The November conference and standards-based progress report will provide you with more information.

An important part of school success is being here to learn. We have many children who are frequently tardy or taken out of school early. In late September we sent out over 80 letters to families whose children have excessive absences or tardies. The Albuquerque Public Schools has a strict policy in place regarding absences and tardies with consequences that include family court and notification to state agencies. Please be sure your child is here on time, every day, for the full day, when they are not ill.

We continue to make progress on the parking and traffic issues. We now have the circular drop off lane painted for drop off on the school side. This makes it safer for children. Remember this circular lane is for stopping briefly for drop off and pick up only. If you need to park and come on campus please park in the north lot.

We had a successful Open House in September. It was nice to meet so many parents and discuss the learning that is occurring in our classrooms. Research shows that parents who are involved in school, and communicate with teachers, have the most successful children. Please do all you can to help your child succeed.

Thank you also for helping our PTA by buying and selling Innisbrook materials. We raised a significant amount of money which all goes for programs that support our teachers and parents.

Coming up is the Halloween Carnival on October 26. Please plan to attend and enjoy the evening with other Zia parents and our staff.

Sincerely,

Gregg McMann
Principal

ZIA STAFF

Gregg McMann, Principal

Helen Gomez, Secretary

Lizette Nuñez, Clerk

Cara Cawood, Counselor

Laura Buell, Counselor

Valerie Karwowski, Nurse

Mike May, PTA President

CONTACT ZIA:

(505) 260-2020 phone

(505) 255-1014 fax

440 Jefferson Street NE

Albuquerque, NM 87108

www.zes.aps.edu

School Class Hours:

9:05-3:40

9:05-1:30 Wednesday

Parent Workshop:

Parents for Behaviorally Different Children presents, "The Explosive Child and Treating Explosive Kids: a Collaborative Problem Solving Approach with Dr. Ross Greene," 8:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., Nov. 9 at the Sheraton Uptown Hotel. Cost is \$175.

Dr. Greene is a clinical psychologist and noted author. To register, call 265-0430 or e-mail pbdc@comcast.net.

PTA BRIEFS. . .

The Zia PTA has been very busy the past few months. Attendance has increased to an average of 20 parents and 3 staff. And, thanks to the efforts of several translators, we are pleased to have several Spanish speaking members of our community actively participating. After a quick dinner and socializing we get down to work. The PTA breaks into three smaller teams where more detailed work and planning is done. Here's a brief summary of what these teams are doing:

Communications and School Life Team

- o Established phone line, PTA email, PTA postings, and updates to the website
- o Submits articles to the ZIA newsletter
- o Creating and implementing new events to better connect families with the teaching and learning that occurs at Zia, focusing on student achievement, health & wellness, media & technology, and student safety.

Welcome Team

- o Organized and implemented Zia Movie Night. Enjoyed by all while netting ca. \$350.
- o Currently planning the Halloween carnival (ticket price reduced to \$6 this year). Team will be conducting analysis of event attendance and revenue to more objectively set future prices.
- o Will be working to implement new events created by the Communications Team.

Fundraising Team

- o Developed a process for teachers and staff to request funding from PTA.
- o Implementing additions to playground games and structures.
- o Organized successful Innisbrook Fundraiser. Revenue numbers to follow at next meeting.
- o Currently brainstorming new fundraising events.
- o Planning and organizing upcoming Zia Bookfairs

The PTA membership

- o Designated \$1,000 for class field trips. Designated \$5,000 to be available for funding teacher proposals.
- o Funded \$100 for the Zia Spelling Bee, organized by parent Holly Newman.
- o Conducted a feedback session on the recent Open House. This information will be routed to the Zia Instructional Council for use in planning next year's event. Here is a brief synopsis:

Positive: Good turn out; one-on-one time with teachers; good time frame; was nice to meet other parents; good chance to see childrens' work and progress.

Negative: No group welcome session; unclear agenda; teacher's had to use out of pocket expenses for food; no food in some places; miscommunication about prizes for attendance; no organized playground supervision.

Suggested Changes: Link Open House with ice cream social; convene an initial welcome session; have food available; supervision presence on playground; Vietnamese language information.

Thanks again to all of the parents, teachers, and staff who contribute their effort and ideas. We look forward to seeing you at our meeting in the cafeteria the first Thursday of every month at 6:00 pm. Food and child care are provided.

*PTA MEETS THE
FIRST THURSDAY
OF EVERY MONTH
AT 6:00PM.*

*DINNER AND
CHILDCARE ARE
AVAILABLE AT
EVERY MEETING.*

****Contact the following people to help out with these upcoming events****
Zia Halloween Carnival, October 26th: Libby Henry ehenny@unm.edu
Zia Bookfairs, November 12-16th, Pam Murphy turtle4527@comcast.net

Mike May, Zia Elementary PTA President (ziapta@gmail.com)

LIBRARY NEWS

Destiny is the online catalog we use to search the library collection at Zia. Destiny can be used at home for searching. Use the following IP address: 209.189.173.18 Destiny is the online catalog used in all APS schools.

World Book Encyclopedia is also online and available for home and classroom use. To use World Book Encyclopedia at home go to <http://www.worldbookonline.com>.

The UN is apselsch and the password is jackrabbit

Alison Almquist, Librarian

NEWS FROM THE NURSE

"Rules of Two"

Many families in this community are affected by asthma. Anyone can develop asthma from infants to the elderly. One way to help control your asthma is using the "Rules of Two:"

- Do you take your rescue inhaler more than 2 times a week?
- Do you wake up at night with an asthma episode more than 2 times a month?
- Do you refill your rescue inhaler more than 2 times a year?

If the answer is "Yes" to any of these questions, ask your doctor about "Controller Medicines." These medications help prevent asthma attacks!

Remember not to make any changes in your medicines unless ordered by your doctor.

If you have any questions, call our health office at 260-2020 ext. 3, and talk with one of our nursing staff members, Valerie Karwowski or Corinne Martinez.

Everyday Mathematics® PARENT CONNECT WEB SITE

Everyday Mathematics® is one of the most popular programs on the market. We wanted to develop a resource for parents to learn more about it. That's why we've created the *Everyday Mathematics*® Parent Connect Web Site, available at www.wrightgroup.com/parent_connection/index.htm.

Parents whose school is considering adopting *Everyday Mathematics*® can access success stories and testimonials and learn about the history of the program.

Parents of students already using *Everyday Mathematics*® will have access to resources from the *Home Connection Handbook*, including do-anytime activities and literature lists.

Please take a moment to review the *Everyday Mathematics*® Parent Connect Web Site and remember to recommend it to customers and prospects.

FROM THE ATTENDANCE CLERK

Parents and guardians, you must call the attendance line leaving the child's name, teacher, **AND** reason when your child(ren) are going to be absent. The message will be forwarded to the appropriate teacher.

Even if you sign your child(ren) in when they're tardy, or out for early dismissal, this does not automatically excuse your child. You must notify the attendance clerk of the reason and have appropriate documentation for tardy or early dismissal.

You will be notified of any excessive tardies, early dismissals and absences.

Lizette Nuñez
Attendance Clerk, 255-7451

Upcoming Events

October 26	PTA Halloween Carnival 6-8:00PM
October 29	Instructional Council 4-5:00PM
November 1	PTA Meeting 6-7:30PM
November 4	Daylight Savings Time Ends
November 5	AHS Cluster In-service—No School
November 12-16	Parent-Teacher Conferences; 1:30 Dismissal all week

Reading and talking to very young children gives them an early edge.

Five Suggestions

- *Start Early*
- *Read*
- *Don't Watch Television*
- *Put Knowledge in the Curriculum*
- *Rich Content*

Reminder on APS policy regarding dogs on campus. ONLY service dogs, such as seeing eye dogs, are allowed on campus. Thank you for not bringing pets on campus.

How Might I Help?: Techniques and Strategies to Further Your Child's Educational Growth

Background knowledge is key to comprehension

Reading and talking to very young children gives them an early edge.

With humor, exercises, videos and a smattering of research data, cognitive psychologist Dan Willingham laid out the case for why background knowledge is the essential ingredient to reading comprehension at the AFT's QuEST (Quality Educational Standards in Teaching) conference in July. As AFT executive vice president Antonia Cortese noted in her introductory remarks, a consequence of No Child Left Behind has been a narrowing of the curriculum, so history, art and other subjects that contribute to a student's knowledge have been pushed aside. "We know this isn't good for kids—not what we call an education."

Willingham, who is a professor at the University of Virginia, pointed out that while the skills necessary to read—that is understand symbols and decode words—are transferable to reading about any subject, comprehension is not a skill and is not transferable. It depends on background knowledge to understand the vocabulary to a given subject, to provide context that allows readers to fill in the gaps and to draw conclusions based on generalities.

In education, the relationship of background knowledge to reading comprehension is profound. Research shows that when students are learning to decode in the first few years of school, students from disadvantaged families and their more-advantaged peers can progress at the same pace. But when the students get to the third or fourth grades, a gap opens, which many associated with a shift in emphasis from the skill of decoding to the art of comprehension. Students who have been read to and talked to as very young children outpace those who have not received this early stimulation.

Willingham offered five suggestions for instilling background knowledge:

1. Start early—the place to pour in reading resources is in the early schooling years, not in high school.
2. Reading—or being read to—[in your home language] is the best early source of background knowledge.
3. Don't watch television. Research shows that TV, as compared with all print media, provides less than 25 percent of the content-rich vocabulary and information gleaned from books, magazines and newspapers.
4. Put knowledge in the curriculum . Don't make students memorize facts; factual learning must be meaningful.
5. Limit "strategy instruction." Don't use vapid reading materials and ask students to practice comprehension. Provide, instead, rich content that is appropriate to the grade level.

Excerpted from American Teacher, October 2007.