

Who's Who A quick guide for our new parents.

Administration, Main Office

Virginia Flynn – Head of School
 Ian Spanic – Executive Director
 Jessica Rodriguez – Director of Admissions,
 Child Care Coordinator
 Liz Becerra – Administrative Manager

Reading and Special Education:

Barbara Rankin – Reading Specialist, Lower Level of
 Adolescent Building
 Tina Lawrence – Special Education
 Kate Teipel – Speech Therapist

Specials:

Will Branch- Music, Rm North of Office
 Jenny Urbanek – Visual Art Teacher, Lower Level of Main
 Building

Children's House, 1st Floor

Kim Fowler – Rm. 2
 Sasa Sokolovic – Rm. 5
 Amy Goodenough – Rm. 4
 Sarah Shay – Rm. 3

Lower Elementary, 2nd Floor

Sara Vondrachek – Rm. 8
 Jeannette Bree – Rm. 9
 Jenny Aicher – Rm. 7
 Kelsey Koranda – Rm. 6

Upper Elementary, 2nd Floor

Beth Milhans – Rm. 10
 Micah Hoffman – Rm. 12
 Ashley Petry – Rm. 11

Adolescents, Adolescent/Child Care Building

McNeal Stepien
 Kjersti Wahr

Spanish Club – 3 Groups, 1st Floor of Main Building

Green Team Notes:

All are green team meetings will be the first Wednesday of the month at 5:00PM at the Anodyne on KK, but we ask everyone to email dماغreenteam@gmail.com if they plan on attending the meeting. Keep an eye out for workshops coming soon from the green team!

DMAGreenTeam@gmail.com

Important Dates:

Oct. 22nd Dress Code Optional
 Oct. 23rd No School
 Oct. 24th Fall Ball in the Great Outdoors
 Oct. 29th Dress Code Optional
 Oct. 30th No School
 Nov. 9th Classic Slice Fundraiser
 Nov. 13th Dress Code Opt (\$)

PEN Notes:

Events & Fundraisers Already in the Works:

Saturday, Oct. 24 6:30 - 8:45 pm - Fall Ball in the Great Outdoors: This annual school dance will be held at Beulah Brinton Community Center. PEN will rent both the gym and the cafeteria. Costumes are optional, no masks please. Please consider volunteering for setup, supervision, food, or clean up.

T-Shirt Fundraiser to Support Breast Cancer Awareness - Raised \$606. Shirts will be arriving shortly.

Dress Code Optional Fundraiser - Has raised \$1490 so far. Forms can be submitted at anytime during the year.

Nov. 19-Dec. 11 - Coffee/Kringle Fund Raiser

Nov. 30-Dec. 16 - Food Drive

Dec. 15-17 - Holiday Happiness

May - DMA Dash & Teacher Appreciation Week

Spring - Craft Fair: Kelsey, one of our Lower Elementary teachers, would like to pursue organizing a Craft Fair.

Suggested Events & Fundraisers That Need Volunteers to Coordinate Them:

- Calendars, Selling with Kid's Art
- Restaurant Fundraisers: Qdoba, BW3's, etc.
- T-Shirts
- Book Swap/Book Fair
- Hat/Socks/Mittens Drive (Help kids stay warm) - WINTER
- Spaghetti dinner -- SPRING
- Ice Cream Social -- SUMMER.
- Empty Bowls - This event has passed already so PEN suggested an interested parent look into this for next fall.

If You Can Help or Have Other Event/Fundraising Ideas Contact PEN's Co-Chairs.

Ask Ginny:

Could you please provide an update on the new playground?

We have known for years that the current playground doesn't meet the needs of our kids. We know that asphalt and a single climber is not suitable for our children. Because we are an urban school we need to look at creating a space that is more nature driven and more centered on the child's need for nature and their need to experience nature. So our goal in looking at developing ideas and plans for the playground was firstly to make sure that everyone had the same vision and view and then finding people who could make that vision a reality.

We went through the process of speaking to all of our different school groups and we ended up selecting site design group, ltd. because they share our view and vision. We also selected them because they have a lot of ideas about projects that can be staggered in such a way that we can initially create a more nature focused space, and over time, as we continue to raise funds, we can expand on the existing vision of a more nature-centered play space for our children.

The first thing to be done is to tear out as much of the asphalt as we can. We will not have a centrally located single climber, which is traditionally how playgrounds are laid out, but we will break the space up so that children have different choices and can form different, smaller groups for play. This way we won't have 20 kids waiting in line to go down a slide. We will have a slide, but we will also have a space where children can choose to go and sit quietly. There will be another area where there will be a separate play structure and also a space where there will be plantings and a more natural landscape. We want to continue to utilize the planters that we currently have, and integrate them into the new playground.

We are also looking to use the space on the other side of the adolescent center and also in front of it. We will be creating natural seating areas which might be logs or stones to create a natural place for kids to gather. There will be little balancing areas for kids to walk on, because it's a more narrow space to work with, but there are still things we can do within that space. And for the smaller kids, there will be a space where they can work on their motor skills like perhaps riding a bike over a little bridge that we're going to build. And outside of that space we want to have an area where students can play more physical running games or ball games. For the older students we might have a basketball hoop or a space to play four-square or pickle-ball. Our space is limited, so we need to make sure that we use it wisely. And within that available space we want it to be as natural as possible. We will have natural plantings to divide the available spaces rather than a chain link fence.

Funding for this project is a big job, and it's not one that will take place overnight. It will take a commitment from everyone who wants this space to be created. We have already paid for the initial plans and investigation of the area. Now we need to raise enough money to move forward and make these plans a reality. The total cost of the playground could be more than what we have currently projected as we continue to look at how our vision of the playground unfolds throughout this process. We will also need the involvement of parents in the process. Anytime we create new play spaces the parents are involved in the actual physical building of the space, and also with helping raise funds for the space.

Right now we are planning on having another auction. We are looking at having a planning meeting for that auction towards the end of October which will be led by Michelle Hake, who is the treasurer of our board. We have had tremendous success with auctions in the past, and they have been excellent sources of revenue for our school projects as well as providing a fun night for our families. We are also looking at all of the fundraising opportunities that will be happening over this current school year such as our coffee and kringle fundraiser. All of the proceeds of these fundraising activities will be going into the account that is designated for the playground. Parent involvement and interest in these activities are always an important part of this whole process.

I am very interested in creating a natural space for our children. I am not interested in simply building a large single climber. Those are available throughout the city, including at Humboldt Park. But Humboldt Park also has trees. We don't have that, and children, by their nature, need to be connected to a physical, natural space. They need a space where they can be calm. A space where they can dig in the dirt, or admire a flower or tree. They won't be big trees, but it is important that they are there. Everything will be built to scale. We are doing mindfulness in the school and I think that gardening and a connection to a natural space enhances that process.

To submit questions for Ginny contact Daniel at danielgatewood1@gmail.com.

Call for Parent Skills: Do you have a skill or interest you'd like to share with your child and others? Help us build DMA's extra curricular activities by reaching out to be a coach, start a club, or run a class. Contact PEN to help and connect with other parents to start something for the school.

Library Volunteer Needed: The school is looking for any parents willing to volunteer Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 12:30-2:30 to help with library items in the basement of the Adolescent/Resource Building. Volunteers would be responsible for helping check out books and if they felt so inclined, organize what we have in a more usable format. Parents can contact the office.