

Elysian Charter School Weekly Newsletter

March 12, 2012 Vol. 7 Issue 25

Please note that the school newsletter is sent out on Mondays. When Monday is a holiday, the newsletter is sent the following day. If you have news, please send it to lynneshapiro@rocketmail.com by 3:00 PM on Mondays.

Harry's Corner

How does preteen and teen development affect teaching and learning?

Developmentally, children hit a new phase when they enter middle school. A ten year old child is still a child. A fourteen year old is “almost an adult.” In younger children developmental milestones are fairly predictable; with young teenagers everything comes in a rush, with wide variations between individuals. These physical changes have a far reaching affect—a girl going through early puberty will have a far different set of interests than a girl entering puberty much later. This sometimes leads to shifting friendships, which may have many side effects. This is also a time when children begin to learn about the greater world around them. In a recent article published by the U.S. Department of Education (*Changes—Helping Your Child Through Early Adolescence*, at <http://www2.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/adolescence/part4.html>), the authors listed

the concerns that are typical for a young teenager:

- their school performance
- their appearance, physical development and popularity
- the possible death of a parent
- being bullied at school
- school violence
- not having friends
- drugs and drinking
- hunger and poverty in the country
- their inability to get a good job
- nuclear bombs and terrorists attacks on the country
- the divorce of their parents
- dying

Huge cognitive changes occur in preteens and teens as well. Rather than only understanding issues concretely (having to see it, touch it, etc.), adolescents develop the ability to work with ideas and abstractions; they develop the ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate ideas. This has huge implications for instruction. Teachers have to provide issues, develop structures and challenge students to reach these higher order thinking levels. Children must become independent and thoughtful and not just be able to repeat a teacher's analysis. The highest levels of thinking occur when a child can take information that he/she has learned and apply it to a new situation, and create new ideas. It takes time to develop these skills, and it takes time to develop the experience that will shape the children's thinking as they grow into adulthood.

The question becomes, "How do we approach the changes that occur during the preteen and teen years at Elysian?" On Wednesday, April 4th, at the PTSO Meeting (6:30 p.m. in Diane's room in the Rue Building), the entire meeting will be devoted to a presentation by the middle school teachers and current and graduated students, to discuss how we approach middle school learning. We will also be discussing some new and exciting changes planned for the sixth grade next year. All parents are encouraged to attend—this meeting is especially important for parents of children in 3rd grade and higher.

Spring Fling - March 16, 7:00 - 9:00 PM

The spring fling is an event for 6th,7th and 8th grade Elysian students. Tickets will be on sale Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8:15am-9am. Students must bring a completed permission/ dismissal sheet in order to purchase tickets (\$7 in advance).

Chaperones for during the event and volunteers for set up and clean up are needed.

This is an important event for our older students, but parents of all age children are asked to help out! please e-mail Kim Demopoulos (kim.demopoulos@ubs.com) or Melissa Kleckner

(makleck@gmail.com). There are no dates or students from other schools. This year the theme is Under a Starry Sky!

Annual Meeting is Tuesday, March 13

The Elysian annual meeting will take place on Tuesday, March 13 at 6:00 PM in the Rue Gym, 301 Garden Street. It is imperative we have a quorum at this meeting. If we do not have a quorum, we will need to reschedule until a quorum can be reached. The purpose of this meeting is to elect candidates onto the school board. We will also be voting on important changes to the by-laws. It is a great opportunity to get to socialize with other parents and staff and enjoy a yummy potluck dinner. Ken Nilsen and Anne Murphy will update us on the exciting strategic long-term plans for the school and other school information will be announced.

Please see the Elysian website, <http://www.ecsnj.org/board/board.aspx> for the by-law changes and further details of the event. John Mercado also has copies of the by-law changes in the Rue office. Email Pam Cushing (Pamcushing@verizon.net) or Donna Olah-Reiken (Donna@Olah-Reiken.com) with any questions.

Babysitting and dinner provided for kids

6:00 pm – sign in

6:30 pm – meeting begins after quorum

Can't make it? Cast your vote in the Rue office with John Mercado from 8:00 am – 9:45 am and 2:15pm – 4:00 pm.

POTLUCK SUPPER

(Held while waiting for the vote to be counted – Please be prepared to stay until the end in case we need to vote again!)

Share your family favorites!

Please bring:

K – 1st grade families – Salads & Appetizers

2nd – 3rd grade families – Pasta & Vegetarian Dishes

4th – 6th Grade Families – Entrees

7th & 8th Grade families – Desserts

All paper goods, utensils, and water provided by Elysian

Children in childcare upstairs will have a separate dinner – RSVP for a child dinner headcount to Susan – 201-876-0102

News From Friends of Elysian

_\$27,000 Raised for the Elysian Technology Fund Thanks to YOU!

Thanks to all the Friends of Elysian who stepped out Saturday night for the Annual Friends of Elysian Annual Dinner Dance and Auction. We had a record number of guests on Saturday night with more than 215 people enjoying good food, fine music and spirited fundraising.

We are happy to report that we exceeded our fundraising goal for the night, bringing in \$27,000 for the Elysian Charter School Technology Fund. Our goal was to raise \$25,000, but thanks to your generosity we surpassed our goal and had a lot of fun in the process. With these funds, we will be able to install new computers, smart boards and tablets in our classrooms by September 2012.

Congratulations to the **Fourth Grade** class for winning top prize in the Class Basket competition with their outstanding “Health & Fitness” Basket which included a bicycle, memberships at two fitness clubs, a facial, a massage and much more. These hard-working Eagles have won a pizza party for their class. Second prize went to the **First Grade** for their one-of-kind “Race Car Experience” Basket and Third Prize went to the **KindergartenClasses** for their bountiful “Cooking Basket.” These two teams win an ice cream party. Thanks to all the class parents who so generously gave of their time and effort to prepare these baskets for our auction.

Congratulations also to our five **Mystery Bag winners**, Jeri Slavin, Karen Seeman-Pinn, Robin Erichsen, Yadira Figueroa and Alicia Warburton who went home with goody bags filled with over \$150 worth of merchandise. These bags sold out in just a few minutes and continue to be an extremely popular part of our event. Look for the new 2012 Elysian Charter School bag on the shoulders of Elysian parents at pick up and drop off.

We will be thanking our more than 125 sponsors and donors in upcoming newsletters and on the Friends of Elysian Website . Please remember to support these important friends of Elysian as they helped make a difference at our event.

To see a gallery of photos from the event, please visit the Elysian Charter School Facebook page at www.facebook.com/elysiancharterschool.com .

And, finally thank you to the Friends of Elysian Event committee who planned another great night out for our school: Diane Imus, Donna Olah-Reiken, Kelly Naughton, Eileen Griffin O'Brien, Kim Demopoulos, Frances Jennings, Jennifer Hartshorn, Mitzi Joss, Nishant Amin , Grace Leong, Gene Steinhart and Deb Lewis.

2011-2012 Annual Appeal Donors

Thanks to this week's 2011-2012 Annual Appeal donors. These generous contributors have joined a long list of Friends of Elysian in supporting our Appeal. It only takes \$1 to participate in this year's Appeal. Please send in your donation by May 15, 2012 to be counted in this important fundraiser. Our goal is 100% participation from the Elysian community of staff, parents and teachers and we can't get there without your support. Thank you!

Natasha & Zoran Kanlic
Harry Laub, Ph.D.
Ann & Tim Mooney
Joan Thompson
David Naumann & Debra Pelto
Monika Nemeth & Zsolt Szerdai
Marcia & Drew Wholf

8th Grade Improve a Life Project

Did you know that children in developing nations lose 433 million school days because they are suffering from water-related illnesses? Children who suffer constant water-related illness carry the disadvantages for the rest of their life. The poorest children in the world are trapped in a cycle of poverty simply because they don't have access to clean drinking water. But, this does not have to be the case.

As part of our 8th grade "Improve a Life" fundraising project, we'd like to introduce you to The Water Project and ask that you join our fundraising efforts for this worthy organization. The Water Project is a non-profit organization that's bringing relief to communities around the world who suffer needlessly from a lack of access to clean water. The Water Project funds water wells, rain catchment systems, latrines and community mobilization in Africa and India.

Please join us in the fight for access to clean water by meeting us in the Rue Courtyard on Thursday, March 15, 2012. We will be hosting a fundraising bake sale and also unveiling our fundraising buckets. Filled with sweet treats, each bucket will sell for \$3 and all proceeds will be donated to The Water Project so more wells can be built and the good work of The Water Project can continue.

For more information about The Water Project please visit www.thewaterproject.org or to simply make a cash or check donation please contact us at the email address below.

Thank you for your support.

Erin Leong and Jalisa Musumici
For The Water Project
erinleong@verizon.net

Update on Books for Peace Corps

A few weeks ago the eighth graders counted and packed up the books for shipment to our Peace Corps volunteers in Turkmenistan and the Philippines, who are in the process of building up English language libraries in the schools in which they teach. In all we've collected 1,505 books to ship! We would like to extend a thank you to those who donated

to our book drive throughout the Fall (and a thank you to The Hudson School as well who assisted our drive in collecting just over 200 books). Both Geri and Laura, our volunteers, are very excited to receive the books and have already made space and acquired shelving with which to make the books accessible to their students.

-Joe's eighth grade humanities classes

WaterBotics Summer Camp

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am very excited to be facilitating our WaterBotics Summer Camp, 2012. WaterBotics is not your everyday robotics program! Campers will be working together to design and build underwater robots. Whether they're new to robotics or seasoned professionals - this is a great opportunity for any middle school student with interests in engineering and science. Two one-week summer camp sessions will be held in late July and August at Stevens. The camp will run from 9AM to 5PM daily.

Registration is now open. We are accepting only 24 campers per week so we are anticipating the camp to fill up quickly.

Part of the National Girls Collaborative Project, our WaterBotics Program, and this summer camp, is geared for both boys and girls.

All other information and an FAQ page can be found on our website: <http://www.waterbotics.org/about/opportunities/summercamp/>

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

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201.216.8975

Penny A Page Winner!

Dear Elysian community,

We finally have a Penny For A Page winner! Clara Jordan from Megan's fourth grade has earned the most money for the fundraiser: \$55.00! Congratulations Clara! Keep Reading!

Food Service

If families have experienced a change in finances, for any reason, please be advised that you are eligible to apply for Free and Reduced Lunch at any time during the year. All calls and inquiries are completely confidential. Call, 201-876-0102, or email me, suzgilbertson@yahoo.com. The application can also be downloaded from our website at www.ecsnj.org - go to Parent Involvement, then forms.

Susan Gilbertson

PTSO Corner

Upcoming PTSO Events: Topics	Date	Chairpersons and Speakers-
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Annual Meeting	3/13	
Spring Fling Kleckner)	3/16	Middle School Spring Fling (Kim Demopoulos and Melissa)
PTSO Meeting	4/4	Middle School Info Night (Esp. recommended for 3-8)
PTSO Meeting runs	5/2	PTSO Elections! Have a say in who events and works with next year's chair.
PTSO Meeting	6/6	Review and plan for next year
End of Year Picnic chair)	6/14	Melissa Kleckner (2012-13 PTSO)

Kittens and a Cat Looking for Homes

Cheryl Tricoli has six kittens, and an adult cat, in need of good homes. Come see her in the kitchen, Rue building.

Autopay Now Available

The school now has the ability to automatically debit your credit card or bank account for regular monthly payments such as afterschool. Please let me know if you would like to go on autopay. We will be able to refund you if you decide not to use a month, or discontinue billing if you drop our services. Please let the Business Administrator (Kathy Mone, 201-876-0102 or office@ecsnj.org) know if you would like to go on autopay. We will be able to refund you if you decide not to use a month, or discontinue billing if you drop our services.

Lunch on Tuesdays

Send in a bag lunch for the Hoboken Shelter. We collect lunches every Tuesday. Contact: Jennifer Giattino, 201.780.6779

Donate By.... Shopping ...or Matching Gift Program!

A fabulous Target REDcard receives a 5% discount at www.target.com and in stores. [Register and](#) 1% of Target purchases are donated to Elysian.

Campbell's Labels for Education: A&P doesn't participate, but Shoprite does, [register](#) your participating store card. Each product you purchase earns 1 point for Elysian.

Amazon: Yes, Virginia, there is a new Amazon widget on our [Donate](#) page and if you use it, up to 10% of each purchase is donated to us.

[Innisbrook](#) donates an incredible 50%! Use code #120231.

General Mills Box Tops from your home purchases are gladly received at the office at Rue. www.boxtops4education.com

iGive.com Shop at 900+ stores on the web or add the new iGive App to donate up to 26% of each purchase to Elysian.

Matching Gift Programs: Some companies will double, or even triple, individual tax-deductible contributions made by their employees to non-profit organizations. Friends of Elysian Charter School is a 501/C non-profit association whose sole purpose is the support of the Elysian Charter School. All donations to the Friends are tax-deductible. Check with your company's human resources department to find out about your company's program. They can give you a form to fill out and send to the Friends with your contribution.

Thank you for your continued support year round.

March Calendar

Tuesday, March 13

Absentee Ballots for Board of Trustees must be cast by 4:30 today.
Annual Meeting/Board of Trustees Election., voting begins at 6:00 PM, Rue Gym.

Thursday, March 15

Second Grade to New Victory Theater to see *Lucky Duck*.
8th grade water project bake sale/fundraiser in the Courtyard.

Friday, March 16

Community Meeting in the Rue Building, 8:30 AM, all families invited, all children should be dropped off at Rue - EVERYONE SHOULD WEAR THEIR ELYSIAN TEE SHIRTS
Middle School Spring Fling
4th grade goes to Tenement Museum, New York City

Monday, March 19

7:00 PM Board of Trustees meeting, Rue Building

Wednesday, March 21

Half-day of school, 12:30 dismissal, for staff development.

Please note: Parent -Teacher Conference Week will be April 16 - 20th

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