

springer pta

FALL
2011-2012



Dear Springer Parents,

Welcome to the 2011 -2012 school year! We hope you had a relaxing summer and are as energized as we are to spend another great year in the Springer community.

We have been encouraged by the news from Superintendent Baier about the progress made toward preserving our school district's exceptional program. Through the cooperation of the employee groups, the Los Altos Education

Foundation (LAEF), and PTA, the district was able to minimize program reductions in our schools, and we are looking forward to another outstanding year at Springer.

Please read on to find out what PTA has planned for the upcoming year and how you can get involved. We can't wait to get started.

Sincerely,

Kelly Toshach and Brooke Schiller
Springer PTA Co-Presidents

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Starting Friday, August 26th, your PTA officers will be available for office hours. Find co-presidents Kelly Toshach and Brooke Schiller, as well as other PTA board members, at Starbucks in the Safeway Shopping Center Fridays from 9:00-10:00 am. This is a great opportunity to get to know more about the PTA at Springer School, ask questions, express interests, voice concerns, and brainstorm new ideas and solutions. So, head over after drop-off, grab your coffee or tea, and let us know what's on your mind. If you can't make it to Starbucks, no worries! Catch us on campus or send an email to SpringerPTA@gmail.com. We look forward to chatting with you.

Upcoming Events

Mark these important events on your calendar! Look for more information in the Springer Star Newsletter in the weeks ahead. Also, see the full Springer School calendar on the Springer School website at www.springerschool.net.

August

20 Weed-N-Feed

Our first Campus Beautification Work Day—from 9:30-1:00.

September

1 Back to School Night

Come meet your children's teachers, who will review curriculum and classroom protocols. Come early for a New Parent Orientation.

2 Minimum Day

Gr 1-6 — 12:15 Dismissal
K (AM/PM) — 8:15-11:35

5 Labor Day—No School

7 PTA Meeting

7 pm in the Springer Staff Rm. Please join us for the first meeting of the year. We will vote to approve the PTA goals, programs, and budget.

October

4 Minimum Day

Gr 1-6 — 12:15 Dismissal
K (AM/PM) — 8:15-11:35

15 Walkathon 2011

10-3 on the Springer Field. This year's theme: Oceans in Motion. One of the PTA's most important fundraisers, Walkathon elicits nearly 100% participation from Springer students. Most families stay for the entire event, coming early and leaving late.

28 Fall Costume Parade

Stay tuned for more information on this fun tradition.

Weed-N-Feed Campus Beautification Day

This Saturday, August 20, 9:30-1:00

Please come join us at our Campus Beautification Work Day, on Saturday, Aug. 20, from 9:30-1:00. Food trucks will arrive midday, so we will have a chance to socialize over a yummy and convenient lunch after sprucing up our campus.

Drop in any time during the event. Even an hour will make a difference. Bring gardening gloves and weeding tools, if you have them. Sun protection and refillable water bottles are highly recommended. Children are encouraged to attend, but please note that there is no prearranged playground supervision.

The scheduled food trucks are Speedy-Panini, providing

delicious panini sandwiches, and the KaraVan, selling well-deserved cupcakes after a productive morning. See the side bar for more information on our featured food trucks.

PTA will provide tubs full of ice with cold drinks, and a place to chill your refillable water bottle.

Let's show our spirit with a good turn out, and earn the reputation that our "gourmet" volunteers are numerous, so that we may secure the stops of more food trucks on future community-building events.

Please direct questions or comments to Donna Murphy, Springer Beautification Chair, jcdrm@yahoo.com or Karen Eichstadt-Coy, Social Committee Chair, eichcoy@yahoo.com.

"Speedy-Panini" is the creation of Graziano and Vittorio, two southern Italian friends that came to this country with a dream of serving people authentic Sicilian & Neapolitan family recipes. Graziano & Vittorio create delicious Paninis on homemade Ciabatta bread, baked fresh daily. Some choices of Paninis are the signature Salsiccia (homemade Italian sausage roasted bell peppers & spicy Pecorino cheese), the Polpette (Mamma's meatball, marinara sauce, provolone cheese & basil), and the Prosciutto (Prosciutto di Parma, tomato, mozzarella & figs confit). There are vegetarian options too. View the full menu at www.speedypanini.com. Each Panini is \$7. Portions are large, great for sharing. "Speedy-Panini" is equipped to handle cash or credit.

For dessert (the kids will love this!) the mini, mobile bakery dubbed "KaraVan," will serve fresh-baked Kara's cupcakes. There is tremendous hype surrounding this bakery, and if you had not savored these delectable cupcakes before, then here is your chance. Requested flavors are Sweet Vanilla (vanilla cupcake with sweet Madagascar vanilla frosting), Chocolate Velvet (chocolate cupcake with a velvety chocolate buttercream) and Kara's Carrot (it is after all a gardening party). Each mini-cupcake is \$2, and rich, also ideal for sharing. Cash only for cupcakes.

First PTA Meeting of the Year.

CHARTING THE COURSE.

The first PTA meeting of the 2011–2012 school year is on Wednesday, September 7, at 7 pm in the Springer Staff room. This meeting is one of the most important of the year as we will vote to approve the PTA goals, programs, and budget for the 2011–2012 school year. Planning began last spring, and these items have been refined over the summer with Mr. Spenader. We include the proposals and budget in this newsletter so you can review them and provide feedback before our vote.

As you peruse the Summary Budget, you may recognize many returning programs. There are some new items to point out, however. Starting Arts will be replacing the Music for Minors program for Kindergarten through 3rd Grade. Read the article on Starting Arts for more information about the program. Also, we are expanding the Arts in Action program to Kindergarten this year, which explains an increase in cost for that program.

The included budget is preliminary. We are expecting a few more changes before our meeting to account for additional bills or refunds from the district after they close their books on last school year.

Not yet included in the budget is a proposal to purchase a new laptop cart for the school. Please see the technology page for more information on this proposal.

New in K–3: Starting Arts

This year, thanks to funding by PTA, we are very lucky to have music instruction provided to our Kindergartners through 3rd graders by an organization called Starting Arts. Starting Arts is already at a number of our district schools and it has been very well received. Starting Arts will be replacing the docent led music program run by Music For Minors. Music For Minors is a wonderful organization and we've had an amazing team of volunteer docents working in our K-3 classrooms over the years. Starting Arts is just a better fit for our school and volunteer model going forward.

Starting Arts employs skilled instructors who are gifted in their field. Mrs. Diana Torres-Koss will instruct our students in music theory, rhythm, melody, exposure to instruments, and a musical exploration of the world and its' cultures—all using a Standards Based approach to music instruction. Springer's partnership with Starting Arts will mean students will have 18 weeks of vocal music lessons (30 minutes per classroom per week) culminating in a grand performance on March 9th. Starting Arts music begins on September 6th!

Beginning on March 26th, students will begin a 6 week unit of dance. Mrs. Kelly Valasquez will introduce our students to the beginning concepts of dance, exploring the different styles and cultures of dance. We are looking forward to this exciting new approach to vocal music and dance instruction at Springer!

Springer PTA Goals 2011–2012, Proposed

The following goals are proposed for 2011–2012. We will vote to approve them at the first PTA meeting of the year on September 7. We welcome your feedback.

Contribute to Core Academics and Student Enrichment

- Continue to supplement LASD funding to provide Springer students with quality education.
- Participate in district- and site-level program planning
- Continue to support and fund student enrichment programs.
- Continue to support and fund noontime activities.

Support Staff

- Demonstrate sensitivity to the increased demands on school staff and administration.
- Continue the open dialog with staff about how to meet their needs.
- Continue to provide funding to support teacher training and purchases made for classroom instruction.

Provide and Maintain Technology & Facilities Needs

- Maintain, evaluate, and purchase all technology equipment for Springer.
- Continue to fund long-term technology plan.
- Prioritize facilities needs and develop purchase plan.

Build Community

- Create opportunities to promote inclusiveness and strengthen the Springer community.
- Continue refining our communication strategy to reach a larger percentage of the Springer population.

Increase Knowledge of the Funding Structure for Springer and the School District

Preliminary Summary Budget

<u>(updated Aug. 16, 2011)</u>	Net Results: Jul'10 - Jun'11	Net Preliminary Budget 2011/2012
Income, Net		
Auction	87,974	83,000
Hot Lunch	29,964	27,500
Walkathon	56,310	55,000
Direct Appeal	30,605	30,000
eScrip	11,521	10,000
Membership	4,138	4,292
Interest	544	500
Other Fund Raising	18,584	6,970
Expenses, Net		
Supplement to LASD Budget		
LASD Grants	62,720	74,341
Supplies Overage Cost	1,527	10,000
Teacher Classroom Supplies	11,692	13,450
Grade Level Grants	4,124	
Teacher Training Days	3,350	7,100
Technology		
Technology Plan	26,805	44,000
iPad purchase	8,688	-
Enrichment		
Art	15,535	19,500
Starting Arts (K-3)	5,650	14,800
Lunchtime Programs	4,562	5,650
Garden Docents & Classroom	2,101	3,100
Science Supplies	1,992	1,500
Junior Olympics	328	800
PE Supplies	1,496	1,500
Assemblies	-	1,000
Project Cornerstone	1,128	1,250
Facilities		
Facilities	33,050	23,000
Landscaping & Garden	1,714	1,000
Community Building		
Parcel Tax Campaign	5,000	-
Community Building	260	2,000
Directory	1,137	1,400
Hospitality	50	600
Ice Cream Socials	392	500
PTA Awards	566	1,200
Sixth Grade Fund	772	900
Staff Appreciation	744	1,400
Student Assistance	894	2,000
Unallocated Funds	-	2,000
Yearbook	(1,787)	-
Health & Safety		
Emergency Prep	849	500
WOW	760	750
PTA Overhead Expenses	2,215	4,400
Other Misc (Income) Expense	1,920	1,600
Net cash increase (decrease)	39,405	(23,979)

Technology at Springer

THE TECH COMMITTEE, THE TECHNOLOGY FUND, AND FUTURE PROJECTS

Have you ever thought about where all the technology at Springer comes from? Not just the 30 or so Apple Macintosh computers in the lab, but also the document cameras, projectors, laptops, and printers that our teachers use in the classroom every day. And also the projector bulbs, ink jet cartridges, cables, and other miscellaneous items needed to keep everything humming along. And also new technology like WiFi hotspots. Even ubiquitous "old tech," like the classroom TVs and VCRs, which needs the occasional maintenance or replacement.

It may come as a surprise to many of us, but ALL of the equipment mentioned above is financed locally, by the Springer PTA and parent donations, not by the school district or other entities.

Springer Technology Committee

The Springer Technology Committee (Tech Committee for short) is a group of parent volunteers, teacher representatives, the school's technology specialist, and Principal Spenader, who are all volunteering their time and talents. We meet once a month for an hour before classes to discuss and provide input on issues relating to technology at Springer.

To give you an idea of what the Tech Committee is involved in, here are some recent purchases benefitting the school and our students that were discussed in our meetings:

- Purchase of a Mac Mini for the office clerk
- Introduction and purchase of HP black&white all-in-one laser printers
- Printer cartridge purchases throughout the school year
- Bulk purchasing of supplies: finding providers, taking advantage of deals and discount programs

The Technology Fund

As you can imagine, the cost of replacing a set of 30 computers all at once (such as all of the lab's iMacs or the 30 computers in a laptop cart) would be prohibitive for any one-year PTA budget without additional funding. For this reason, the Tech Committee took a good look at our technology needs, modeled the replacement cycle of the various pieces of equipment the school maintains (computer lab, laptop carts, teacher laptops, printers, etc.), and devised a long-term funding plan. By putting money aside in the Technology Fund every year (at funding levels determined by our cost model), we enable the PTA to accumulate sufficient funds over the years to buy new hardware when the time comes.

Proposal for New Technology A Third Laptop Cart

PTA is considering a proposal for the Springer PTA purchase a third laptop cart in the 2011-2012 school year using the large carryover accumulated over the previous years.

The school district has focused on differentiation the past few years, and has been making strides toward better accommodating the range of abilities and styles of students in a classroom. One of the most promising tools for differentiation is technology. Khan Academy is one example of this. It will be coming to Springer in 5th and 6th grades this year and will allow students to progress through math lessons at their own speed.

With three classes of 5th graders and three classes of 6th graders, a third cart will solve logistical problems. Our first laptop cart is entering its 6th year of service and is scheduled for replacing next year. Having a third cart reduces our exposure if the older laptops fail sooner than expected. Additionally, a

third cart allows us to deploy laptops into 4th grade classrooms.

Other schools have been ramping up their technology, while Springer has held steady. We wanted to get a good handle on maintenance and replacement costs. Now that we have a long term technology maintenance and replacement plan, we understand the financial implications of adding new technology.

A new cart would cost \$35,000. It would be funded from the unallocated cash reserves carried forward from last year. The acquisition would raise the annual Technology Fund contribution by \$6000 (roughly \$12/student) in subsequent years to fund the replacement cost.

The Tech Committee will review and discuss this proposal at their first meeting this year. Look for an update soon.

Call for Participation

If any of the topics detailed above have peaked your interest, we cordially invite all interested parents to join us at our first meeting of the school year on September 22nd at 7:30 am in the computer lab.

Participation in the Tech Committee does not take a lot of time or effort since it is simple. It will largely be up to you how much time you want to invest, and we welcome any new contributors.

We are especially looking for parent volunteers with kids in lower grades or just entering Springer. As you can tell from some of our longer term plans and initiatives, their kids are the ones who are actually going to benefit most from the initiatives supported by the Tech Committee and who would have most of a chance of influencing the direction technology is heading at Springer.

Los Altos Educational Foundation (LAEF)

LAEF has pledged to grant the district \$2.35 million to ensure that class sizes do not exceed 25 students in grades K-3 (with a district-wide average of 22) and 30 students in grades 4-6. LAEF will also pay for staff so that our children will continue to benefit from library, physical education, and music.

Make your tax-deductible donation to LAEF from the final page of the Springer Back to School online form. The suggested annual donation for LAEF is \$1000/child, which can be spread across the year in a \$100/child/month payment plan. LAEF strives for 100% participation – please contribute any amount that is right for your family.

Funding both the PTA and LAEF is critical to maintaining school programs and school functions. Your contributions will help us meet our fundraising goals and enrich the educational experiences of all children at Springer.



Your participation is critical to maintain the excellence at our school.

The Springer PTA needs your time, talent, and financial assistance to sustain the strong academic, enrichment, and social environment for our students.

Volunteering

PTA volunteers will donate upwards of 25,000 hours to the school this year, averaging roughly 50 hours a student. There are jobs large and small to fit any schedule and every interest. If you haven't already, please visit our 2011-2012 Volunteer Opportunities form and consider how you can help in a fun and rewarding way. Look for a link to the form in this week's Springer Star Newsletter or type the following address into your browser window:

https://fs12.formsite.com/Springer/2011_Interests_Avail/secure_index.html

Donating

PTA will spend nearly \$250,000—roughly \$450 per student—in the 2011-2012 school year. This money pays for:

- School operating expenses
- Instructional supplies and materials
- Technology maintenance and replacement
- Enrichment programs and lunchtime activities
- Facilities improvement and maintenance
- Community building and outreach

Our PTA fundraisers are expected to raise 83% of expenses, or \$375/student. We request that you donate the remaining \$75/student to our Technology Fund, which is the cost to maintain the level of technology we have at Springer School. If your budget doesn't permit you to donate the full per student cost, please donate an amount that works for your family. Every donation is appreciated and helps us to meet our commitments to the school.

To make your donation, complete the Springer Back to School online form. Look for a link to the form in this week's Springer Star Newsletter or type the following address into your browser window:

https://fs12.formsite.com/Springer/2011BacktoSchool/secure_index.html