



RENNER ROUND-UP

A Renner PTA Publication

Volume XVI, Issue 2

October 2009

Mission

The mission of Renner Middle School, a shared responsibility of home, school and community, is to provide education which nurtures, inspires and challenges students in their uniqueness, preparing them to be contributing members of society.

Renner Round-Up

is published six times a year by the Renner PTA.

5701 W. Parker
Plano, TX 75093

Principal :
Bill McLaughlin

PTA President :
Carolyn Keeter

Newsletter
Chairman :
Allison Choucair

Distribution
Coordinator :
Justina Cox

Happening in October at Renner...

Principal's Coffee...

Mark your calendar
for the upcoming
Principal's Coffee
with Bill McLaughlin:



Tuesday, October 13th

6th, 7th & 8th Grade Parents

9:30am - Renner Library

October Community Outreach The Family Place



See details on page 11
on how you can help
families and children
receiving services at
The Family Place,
the largest family violence service
provider in the Dallas area.

See inside for more information!

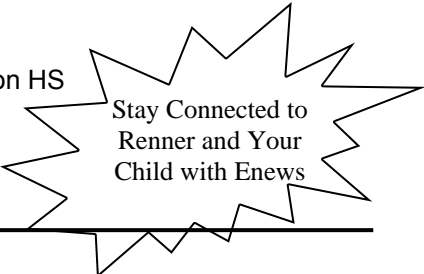
October/November 2009 Calendar

October

- 1 Teacher Treats, End of First Six Weeks
- 9 Report Cards
- 10 Speech Tournament - Armstrong MS
- 12 PTA Board Meeting, 9:15am
- 13 Principal's Coffee, 9:30am, Library
- 14 Lifetouch Fall Picture Retakes
Choir Concerts, 6th grade - 6:30pm,
7th & 8th grades - 7:30pm
- 15 Environmental Club Meeting, 3:30-5:00pm,
Mrs. Gunnels Classroom
- 16 Parent/Teacher Conferences
Student Holiday
- 21 PACE Referral Packets Due
- 23 Reflections Projects Due
October Outreach Donations Due
- 24 Adopt-A-Highway Clean-Up, Parkwood Blvd. at Cinemark,
9 - 11am

November

- 5 Teacher Treats, End of Second Six Weeks
- 9 PTA Board Meeting, 9:15am
PTA General Meeting, 10am
- 10 NJHS Meeting, 3:30 - 4:15pm
- 13 Report Cards
- 14 Speech Tournament - Shepton HS
- 25-27 Thanksgiving Holiday



Stay Connected to
Renner and Your
Child with Enews

Lunch – We Need Your Help



Parents may only bring lunch for their own child. Legislation does not allow for lunch or desserts to be brought for a table. We cannot allow this and appreciate your help in this matter.

Thank you, Bill McLaughlin

Mustang Messenger

Sign-Up today on the Renner/PISD website to receive the Weekly Mustang Messenger News Update from Renner!



Keep Up to Date with the Renner Activity Line!



The Renner Activity Line is updated every Sunday night with school and PTA events for the upcoming week. To access, just call the Renner Main number at (469) 752-5800, then press 9.



The Principal's Column

By Bill McLaughlin, Renner Middle School Principal

Why Isn't There a User's Guide for Raising my Teenager?

"There are two lasting bequests we can give our children.
One is roots. The other is wings." ~Hodding Carter, Jr

The middle school years are a time in which our kids begin to assert their independence on the path to becoming responsible, productive, and caring adults. Along this sometimes difficult path, parents are faced with the difficult choices of when to get involved and when to stand back and let their child stand for themselves. Sadly, there isn't a user's guide for parents to use that comes complete with a troubleshooting-your-child's-problems section. Parenting is not an exact science, and the most that any of us can do is look at your child and the situation, then make your best educated guess about what is the right thing to do in each case.

I read an article recently appropriately titled, "A Mom's Wild Ride Through the Tween Years, One Eye Roll at a Time" in which the author talked about an experience she had on a field trip that ended with a celebration for the kids who had worked hard and figured some things out on their own. She was proud, not just that her child had been successful, but also that "they did it without our help". We all have benefited from a mentor in our life that showed us the right way to do things. Whether it was our parents, family, teachers, or community members, we gained important life lessons and then applied them on our own. They put structure in place for us, taught us, watched closely as we did something for the first time, and then slowly over time let us take the reigns for ourselves.

At some point during middle school, kids reach that point in their life when you have taught them right from wrong, set high expectations, provided structure, and now they are ready for some independence under your careful watch. Some things about middle school are the same as they were when we were kids, like balancing school with outside activities, managing changing friendships, teenage mood swings, and handling success and failure. What has changed to some extent is the world in which they live in: cell phones, text messages, as well as access to material, situations, and entertainment that they aren't mature enough to see on the internet, TV, movies, and text messages. These topics might be good for your family to discuss as you begin to decide where you can give your child some monitored independence as they begin handling some things on their own.



The Principal's Column, continued

By Bill McLaughlin, Renner Middle School Principal

The big question is whether to stay involved or let them handle it on their own? On the issue of friendships, for the most part your child will definitely not want you directly involved here and as long as you don't see your child's personality drastically changing for the worse, or see them about to make a big mistake, they should be able to handle the smaller ups and downs of teenage friendship issues. Usually this is an area for you to have good conversations and try to guide on the side without you personally intervening. Watch closely, set boundaries and expectations, and provide consequences or intervene quickly if your child begins making poor choices around certain friends.

As children get older they are also able to handle school situations easier than in elementary school. If there is a question about something in relationship to homework, grades, or activities, see if your child can handle it on their own first. There are many ways to keep track of your child's progress and you can decide when you need to visit with your child about school issues, when they should be able to handle it, and when you should get involved. If it's a smaller issue give them some advice and then let them handle it on their own. They will grow personally from successfully handling the issue on their own. For bigger issues have conversations at home and try to keep them involved as you intervene to keep them on the right track academically. Though we never like to see our child disappointed, the truth is that sometimes tough experiences can make a person stronger and more determined. Some of the most successful individuals in our country faced disappointment and didn't get everything they wanted at some point in their life, but used these experiences to motivate them to work harder in some area of their life.

While raising children is not an exact science, you can set boundaries and clear expectations with your child and then have conversations as issues arise. There isn't a troubleshooting guide for raising kids, so hopefully discussions will provide you with a picture of what to do in each situation. For kids, remember that each step of independence should go hand in hand with some responsibility. Encourage your kids to make good choices, and then put them in situations where they can take flight.

Bill McLaughlin
Renner Middle School Principal



The President's Column

By Carolyn Keeter, 2009-2010 Renner PTA President

Welcome to another great year at Renner Middle School. I hope everyone adjusted to the new school year easily. It was fun to see so many returning faces at registration and exciting to welcome our new sixth graders and their families. Renner is a wonderful school full of dedicated and caring teachers and staff

Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time this summer to work at registration. It isn't easy to start donating time before school has even begun. We couldn't have registered hundreds of families without you. A special "thank you" to **Jill Van Mater**, who was responsible for planning, organizing, and running registration. Jill spent countless hours over the summer making sure that we were able to get our students registered. Thanks also to **Sandy Seaton, Kim Brown, and Trish Donaldson** who handled cashiers, spirit wear, and school supplies, respectively. We couldn't have done it without you. If your student needs additional school supplies or wants to purchase spirit wear, they are available at the school store in the cafeteria which is open Monday through Friday during lunch. You can send cash or a check payable to the Renner PTA with your student. If you are figuring out the cost beforehand, please don't forget to add sales tax!

Thank you also to **Julie Myers** and **Christine Platt**. They worked both days at registration collecting our student directory information and encouraging families to join the PTA, and to **Kathy Grane** for selling so many ads in our directory. Thank you to all the families who joined the PTA. Your membership supports both the State and National PTA who are advocates for all children, as well as the Renner PTA which continues to provide student and parent programs, funds for teacher grants, encourages participation in the arts, promotes the joy of reading, fosters school spirit, and provides support to the Renner teachers, staff, and students. If you have not yet joined the PTA, you can still do so by contacting Julie Myers at membership@rennerpta.org. We hope you will join the Renner PTA and show your support for our school. And don't forget that your membership entitles you to a copy of the student directory due out later this fall. Watch for details on the Mustang Messenger sent out by email on Fridays for times the directory will be available to be picked up.



The President's Column, continued

By Carolyn Keeter, 2009-2010 Renner PTA President

Before school began the Renner PTA hosted a luncheon to welcome the Renner Teachers and Staff back to school. They were treated to a Texas Barbeque catered by Dickey's. It is so nice to let them know how much we appreciate all they do for our children. Thanks to **Mary Kay Drury** for this fun luncheon.

It was great to have so many parents attend the PTA Welcome Back Coffee on the first day of school. Thank you **Ruth Kaminski** for a wonderful variety of food. Parents heard from our principal, Mr. McLaughlin, about ways to make the middle school years very successful. Parents were also introduced to the Renner administrative intern, Adrienne Hunter, and Billie-Jean Lee, assistant principal. Dr. Doug Otto spoke about some of the new items that will be implemented at Plano ISD.

The Renner PTA offers many opportunities to help out through volunteering. If you haven't turned in a volunteer form, please contact Jill Van Mater at volunteers@rennerpta.org or pick one up in the front office.

One last "thanks" to Mr. McLaughlin and all the Renner Staff for a great start this year. We are so fortunate to have a wonderful team who are passionate about preparing middle school students for the future. You will have an opportunity to ask questions about the school at the next Principal's Coffee on **Tuesday, October 13th** at 9:30am.

The PTA is looking forward to a great year. You can keep up-to-date on school and PTA happenings by visiting our website at www.rennerpta.org. There is also an activity line at Renner that is updated every Sunday night for the upcoming week. All activities are included. Just call the Renner main number (469) 752-5800, then push 9. If you have any questions or suggestions for the PTA, please feel free to contact me at cf.keeter@verizon.net or (972) 608-8713.

Carolyn Keeter
Renner PTA President 2009-2010



Support the Family Place

**Donations accepted through October 23rd
See Page 11!**

Volunteers Make the Difference...

By Jill Van Mater

It is hard to believe that summer is over and we are jumping into another school year.

While our students enjoyed basking in the sun, one lingering question was always on the forefront...Which hall will I get? Only to be followed by...Who will be in my classes?

It takes mere seconds for our children to look at their schedules and have the coveted answer. Admittedly, it takes a few more minutes to find out which friends will be in their classes. (Can you hear the "whoops" of joy ringing in the background?) However, the planning of registration takes months. (Yes, months).

The most important element of registration, volunteer solicitation, begins in the spring on our Renner campus. Ideally, the four feeder schools are also contacted in late spring and early summer. Volunteer recruitment is a big deal, begins early, and doesn't end until the last schedule is handed out and the clock strikes 4pm on the final day. We never say no to a parent or student willing to help.

250. The relevance of this number? For the 6th grade, 7th grade, 8th grade, and new student registration periods to operate smoothly, the PTA staffed 250 volunteer slots!

Please accept my heartfelt thanks – to each of you who graciously accepted the call...to the parents who took time off from work simply to volunteer...to our children who were eager to help...to the 8th graders who served as tour guides and floaters...to the PTA chairmen who worked *every day, all day*.

A huge thank you is also extended to Mr. McLaughlin and Mrs. Mitchell for their administrative help and unending support as we made adjustments along the way. Thank you to Eddie who works diligently and thoughtfully behind the scenes to make Renner the lovely school it is! Not to mention the many times he cheerfully moved table after table!

And, most of all, thank you to each and every parent who came through registration, was patient while waiting (even during that *crazy* 7th grade session), who was kind to a student helper, and who spoke an encouraging word. Your kindness did not go unnoticed.

I truly appreciate each of you taking time from your busy schedule to volunteer ~ it could not happen without you!

Renner Volunteer Opportunities

Each parent can lend support to the students, staff, and administration at Renner as a volunteer in the many programs sponsored by the Renner PTA. Please check all areas that are of interest to you and return this form to the Renner front office. Email Jill Van Mater at volunteers@rennerpta.org with any questions you may have.

Parent Name(s): _____

Home Phone: () _____ **Cell Phone:** () _____

Parent E-Mail Address: _____

Student Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Student Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Please check all areas that are of interest to you:

- Book Fair** – Assist with book fairs including set-up, sales, check-out, clean-up, etc.
- Community Outreach** – Assist in collecting and delivering items to the community
- Copy Room** – Assist with staff copy needs on Wednesdays or Thursdays
 - Wednesday AM Thursday PM Both
- Counselor’s Office** – Assist with clerical duties on Wednesday afternoons
- Environmental Volunteer** – Assist with various programs, organic recycling at lunch or club
- General Volunteer** – Assist when unexpected needs surface during the school year
- Hospitality/Newcomers** – Assist as a hostess at family social activities
- Library** – Work shifts, help with inventory & Reach for the Stars Program
- Nurse’s Office** – Assist Nurse when school screenings take place
- Reflections** – Assist with the Reflections Art Program in October
- School Store** – Sell school supplies in the cafeteria during lunch
 - Monday Tuesday Wednesday
 - Thursday Friday
- Science Fair** – Assist with Science Fair in January
- Student Directory** – Assist with data entry, proofreading and/or distribution of the student directory
- Student Socials** – Assist with decorations, food preparation, or as a chaperone
- Teacher Appreciation** – (Check any or all of the following areas)
 - Birthday Cakes Casseroles Teacher Treats
 - Staff Luncheons Teacher Appreciation Week
- Yearbook** – Assist in taking photos at Renner events

A new **CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK** filled out ONLINE at www.pisd.edu is MANDATORY for all volunteers. THANK YOU for volunteering your time and talents at Renner Middle School!



EVERGREEN ALLEY

“Renner’s Source for Environmental News”

Environmental Club

If you are interested in a wonderful year of learning about our environment, animals, recycling, and how you can help, then you need to join the RMS Environmental Club! Open to all 6th, 7th and 8th grade student, the Environmental Club will meet monthly on Thursdays, immediately after school from 3:30 to 5:00pm, in Ms. Gunnels’ Room #813.

Tentative Dates:

- Thursday, September 17th
- Thursday, October 15th
- Thursday, December 17th
- Thursday, January 21th
- Thursday, February 18th
- Thursday, April 15th
- Thursday, May 20th

For more information please contact Terri Perkins at (972) 378-1392.

Adopt-A-Highway News!

Did you know Renner helps keep Plano Beautiful by participating in the Adopt-A-Highway program?

Our next road clean-up is Saturday, October 24th from 9-11am. We meet behind Cinemark West in the parking lot closest to Parkwood Blvd. Donuts and drinks provided.

Please contact Michelle Hicks @ (214) 686-6108 or mhickshome@gmail.com with any questions.



We NEED Bags of Candy!!

Copy Room Volunteers

Mustang High Fives to Our Copy Room Volunteers!

Have you wondered how our teachers get all those copies done? Copies of worksheets, copies of information, copies of lists, copies of activities, copies of lessons, copies, copies, copies...We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our school-wide copy room volunteers. The copy room is staffed with a volunteer every Wednesday between 9 am and 12 pm and Thursdays between 12 pm and 3 pm. That is a lot of copies, a lot of time, and a lot of dedication. A big thank you to each of you. We are still in need of volunteers, if you are interested in helping out in the copy room, please contact Terri Perkins at (972) 378-1392.

Reaching out at Renner October Outreach - The Family Place



Do you have your costume ready for Halloween?

If you do, you're lucky....

Many of the 200 children who are receiving services from The Family Place do not, **but you can help!**

During October, Renner students and families will be supporting The Family Place and their Annual Halloween Carnival.

We want to make Halloween 2009 one of the most memorable for the children, but we need YOUR SUPPORT!

Please help by donating new and gently used costumes, bags of candy, face painting kits, and trick or treat bags. Donations can be dropped off October 5th through October 23rd in the silver collection bins located near Renner's main office.

Let's show The Family Place that Renner has community spirit and let's make this year's Halloween Carnival an event to remember.

Thank you for supporting Renner's Community Outreach Project!
Please contact Lori Baum at outreach@rennerpta.org with any questions.

PTA Membership

By Julie Myers

The PTA Wants You!!

Is your name missing
from our Renner PTA
Membership Roster?...



If so it's not too late to join the other 1,000+ members of the Renner PTA. We still have room for many, many more. All adults are welcome to join – parents, grandparents, guardians, aunts, uncles, and friends. For a low yearly cost, you can make a difference. Everyone is a winner with the PTA!

With your help, the Renner PTA, Texas PTA, and National PTA are working hard on behalf of our children and youth. Your membership fee includes dues for all of these, plus it allows you to receive a free copy of the Renner Student Directory. This directory contains teacher listings, family listings, and other helpful information for the school and community. The PTA also provides the agendas for every student at Renner which is just one of the many ways the PTA supports the students at Renner.

If you have not already joined, there's still time. 2-adult memberships are \$20.00 and a 1-adult membership is \$15.00. Remember this includes a copy of the Renner Student Directory. We'd like to order a copy for your family. To join, pick up a *Renner Middle School PTA Membership & Student Directory Information* form in the front office or online at rennerpta.org, and return it with your check payable to Renner PTA. Any questions, please call Julie Myers at (972) 473-2440 or you may contact Julie at membership@rennerpta.org to receive this form by email. Also, please let us know if you are a Texas PTA Life Member and would like to claim this for the Renner PTA.

The Renner PTA wants you to be a part of another great year of supporting our students, families and staff!

RENNER STUDENT DIRECTORIES

The Renner Student Directories will be distributed late in October. Look for information regarding the distribution in the Mustang Messenger.

We will also have the information posted on the Renner PTA website. We do have extra directories so, if you need an additional one, you can purchase one for \$5.00 if you are a PTA member.

Reflections 2009-2010 theme:



*****Deadline: October 23, 2009*****

Arts Areas:

Students may submit works in any of six arts areas:

- Dance choreography
- Literature
- Photography
- Film production
- Musical composition
- Visual arts

The national PTA organization does not limit the number of entries a student may submit.

Forms and rules available online at www.pta.org.

Entries will be accepted in the Reflections box in the front office starting the week of October 19th.

Questions???

Please contact Renner PTA's Arts in Education Chairman, Jill Blackwell at reflections@rennerpta.org or (214) 663-7633.

2011-12 Theme Contest - Win \$100!

The National PTA organization is looking for a theme for the 2011–2012 Reflections Program year. The student who submits the winning entry will receive \$100, and his or her theme will be presented at the 2010 PTA National Convention. Rules and directions are on the website at txpta.org. For questions call 1 (800) TALK PTA or email programs@txpta.org/2032.asp.

State deadline for theme submissions: November 4, 2009

Community Partners:

**Earn money to support
Renner Programs every time
you shop with our Partners!**



The following is a way you can help support Renner Middle School while you shop for your family:

One Cause

One Cause is an online shopping service with hundreds of stores to choose from such as Nordstrom, GAP, Pottery Barn, LL Bean, Lands End, JC Penney, Amazon.com, Barnes and Noble, Office Depot, Apple and many, many more. Renner can receive from 2% to 4% of your online purchases. Simply go to www.onecause.com and type in Renner Middle School under "Find a Cause or School" and follow the easy instructions to get started. Just think, whenever you shop at Nordstrom and your other favorite stores, Renner can benefit!

Tom Thumb

Tom Thumb's Good Neighbor program links your reward card to Renner Middle School. Stop by their Customer Service desk and pick up a registration form. Renner's number is 6266.

Target

Apply for a Target Visa card and designate Renner Middle School to receive the donation credit. To get a card, or if you already have a card, stop by their customer service counter and add Renner's number - 100524.

Renner has a number of programs provided by our PTA. By joining together to support our Community Partners, each of us can raise \$\$\$ for Renner on our shopping trips. These rebated dollars help pay for carpool police officers, agendas for students, the newsletter, parent programs, and numerous other valuable PTA programs. Let's go shopping with our Community Partners!

Please contact Sylvia Crosby at partnerships@rennerpta.org or (972) 378-5712 if you have any questions.

Technology Recycling



**Help Renner Recycle
Cell Phones Laptops, PDAs
& HP Cartridges for \$\$\$!**

Thank you to everyone who has sent used cell phones, PDAs and HP ink jet cartridges to Renner for recycling! We will continue to recycle these items throughout the school year. So keep Renner in mind when you replace or upgrade your technology.

HP Ink and Laser Jet Cartridges

Send your empty HP ink and laser jet cartridges placed in a plastic bag/baggie. Your student can put them in the designated container in the CTA Office (by the rotunda). For each empty HP inkjet cartridge we recycle, Renner receives **\$\$\$**. (Laserjet prices vary).

Cell Phones, Laptops and PDAs

We are also asking you to recycle your used cell phone, laptop and PDA through the school. When you upgrade, send your old item in a plastic bag to school. Renner will make money for everything we recycle. Visit <http://cartridgesforkids.com/pricesframe.html> to see what your item is worth in this recycle program!

Questions? Contact Tom Pittman, Renner CTA, at (469) 752-5806.



**Don't forget to collect those
BOX TOPS!!
Each one means \$\$\$ for
Renner!**

I would like to thank all of the families who have participated in the "Box Tops for Education" program and invite families who are new to Renner to participate. This is the world's easiest fundraiser. All you do is clip off the box top from participating products and drop them in a giant pink box by the front office. Each one is worth 10 cents, and they really do add up. Thanks again for your help!

Kristy Leon, 6th Grade Sea Otter Team Leader

Yearbook Pictures Needed!

Get your pictures in the yearbook! The Yearbook Advisor invites students and parents to submit photos for the yearbook. If you've got great photos of school events or you and your friends just having fun at a school event, we'd like to see them. Help us get as many photos as possible to create a terrific book everyone will want to have. The color section of the yearbook must be completed by December, so pictures submitted this fall have a better chance of being accepted.

Here is how you can submit photos online:

- Go to: <https://images.jostens.com>
- If it does not automatically log you into the site, enter username:1172394 and password:renner
- Browse to select the photo(s) you wish to upload.
- Enter information about the photo and provide contact information in case the staff needs additional information.
- Click "Save Details".

It's that easy! Submit your photos today! The last day to submit photos is March 1, 2010.

Also, feel free to put the pictures on a cd and send them to Ms. Lange in Room 416 or put them in the office box.

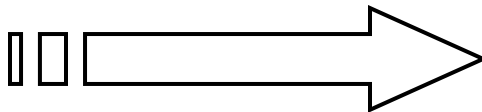
Thank you, and enjoy the school year!

Sincerely,
Cheryl Lange, Yearbook Adviser and Teacher



Ms. Lange will review all photos and determine final yearbook content. It is not guaranteed that all submissions can be used in the book.

Way to go Renner Cheerleaders!!!



NEW SPIRIT WEAR DESIGNS FOR 2009-2010

Have you seen the newest Renner spirit wear? We have new t-shirts, gym shorts, drawstring duffel bags and sweatshirts! Get your spirit wear today. All of our Renner Mustangs spirit wear items are available now in the school store. Stop by the school store anytime during lunch (11am- 1pm) to buy a new sweatshirt, t-shirt or more! All prices include tax.



T-shirts.....	\$12
Pullover Hoodie.....	\$25
Zip-up Hoodie.....	\$28
Girls shorts.....	\$12
Boys shorts.....	\$17
Gym bags.....	\$ 9

If paying by check, please make check payable to Renner PTA and include your drivers license information on the front of your check.

For more information, please email Kim Brown, Spirit wear coordinator at shirts@rennerpta.org.

Spirit Wear is a great way to show your

Renner Cheerleaders Shine at Camp!

A special congratulation goes out to the 8th grade Renner cheerleaders for their performance at the 2009-2010 NCA Cheer Camp:



Jada Allan, Kate Baumli, Jackie Falchier, Hayley Fetterolf, Alex Greinke, Mia Henderson, Elizabeth Klinger, Alexis Lassiter, Sarah Morales, Caroline Piazza, Evan Ray, Caroline Scott, Cami Seber, Nicole Stone, Sara Waterman, Shelby Waters, Haley Wilson, and Abbey York



For all their hard work and dedication, these girls were rewarded with two exemplary blue ribbons and received a trophy for Top Team during their cheer and chant final evaluation. GREAT JOB!!

Show your **RENNER PRIDE** with personalized yard signs and car decals!!

Available for all Renner activities, clubs and events, these sturdy signs and decals are designed to last throughout the middle school years.

PARENT/STUDENT NAMES _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

Band

instru-
ment



Cheer



Choir

Clubs



**Basket-
ball**

**Sign
Decal**

**Sign
Decal**

**Sign
Decal**

**Sign
Decal**

**Sign
Decal**

**Nat'l
Junior
Honor
Society**

**Orchestra
instru-
ment**



Tennis



**Volley-
ball**

**Sign
Decal**

**Sign
Decal**

**Sign
Decal**

**Sign
Decal**



**Sign
Decal**



Football



**Sign
Decal**



Mustang



**Sign
Decal**

NAME ON DECAL _____

\$12.00 each plus tax = \$13.00

total # _____ \$ _____

NAME ON SIGN _____

\$40.00 each plus tax=\$43.30

total # _____ \$ _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION _____

Make checks payable to the Renner PTA.
Return order to the Renner Office.
For questions, contact signs@rennerpta.org

SAGE - Special and Gifted Education

No matter where you may be on the path of educating your children, there are families who have traveled ahead of you and families who will follow after you. It is vital that we combine our knowledge, our experience, and our resources to benefit all our children along the way.

SAGE stands for Special And Gifted Education.

The Plano Council of PTAs established the SAGE committee to provide an opportunity for families and teachers of students who learn differently to share resources and friendship. If you or someone you know has a child who participates in Special Education, the PACE (Gifted and Talented Program), or simply is an exceptional diverse learner, this is your chance to come together with others! **IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO SIGN UP** to be on the SAGE email list! Fill out the SAGE Enrollment Form on the next page (p. 21) and turn it in to the Renner office.

Education

SAGE sponsors various classes and seminars throughout the year to provide families and educators the latest information. These classes are usually free of charge. **Popular topics include:** Managing the IEP Process; Advocating for your Child; Study Skills for Gifted Students; SENG (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted) Clinics; Special Needs Trusts; and the Summer Camp Vendor Fair to name a few.

Support and Communication

SAGE facilitates the formation of special interest groups so that families can share the information that is most relevant to their needs. Support group listings by interest and/or campus can be found on the SAGE website at: **www.planopta.org/sage.htm**. The primary objective of SAGE is to promote dynamic communication between educators, families, and the community. It is through cooperation that we help ensure that all diverse learners derive the most from their education. The SAGE website is communication central with event calendars, updates, resource links and contact information for local school chairpersons.

Contact the local PTA SAGE Chairperson, Rose Taper, at sage@rennerpta.org with any questions.

Plano ISD Council of PTAs Special & Gifted Education Committee
SAGE ENROLLMENT FORM

This form is for parents and educators whose children are in the special education program, gifted and talented, or who are interested in joining our database for information regarding the diverse learner. This enrollment enters your email into the SAGE database only for announcements of speakers, school, and community events relating to diverse learning.

UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION IF YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS HAS CHANGED WITHIN THE PAST 3 YEARS

DATE: _____ Circle one: New Member Member Info Update

SAGE DATABASE REGISTRY

Contact information for SAGE Communications only:

PARENT NAME: _____

Email: _____

HOME PH: _____ ALTERNATE PH: _____

Family Information:

Child's Name Grade School Special Needs/Gifted & Talented

I want to receive emails regarding PISD and community events for:

_____ **Special Education** topics only

_____ **Gifted and Talented** topics only

_____ **BOTH** special needs and gifted and talented topics

SUPPORT GROUP INQUIRY/REQUEST

If you are interested in meeting other parents/teachers for a support group, please go to the SAGE website (listed below) to see what groups are available to date. If no group is available in your interest area, we suggest resources such as www.meetup.com. The SAGE committee can assist you in creating a support group if desired.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are always welcome! Please contact your local PTA SAGE Chairperson at sage@rennerpta.org or your PTA President to ask how you can get involved. Or, contact us at our website www.planopta.org/sage.htm

Please return this completed form to your local PTA SAGE Chairperson or President (by bringing it in to the Renner front office).

Legislative Update By Antoinette Anz

New Laws Passed Regarding Teen Drivers, Child Booster Seat Usage, and Cell Phones

Parents need to be aware of recent new laws that went into effect September 1 regarding driving and child passenger safety!

- HB 339 prohibits teens under 18 from texting or talking on a cell phone while driving.
- HB 537 requires that everyone in the car, regardless of age and regardless of where they are sitting, wear a seatbelt.
- HB 61 requires that all children younger than 8 years and less than four feet nine inches tall be in a child safety seat system.

Teen Drivers

Traffic accidents are the leading cause of death for teenagers in America. Inexperience, driving while distracted by cell phones and other teen passengers, and failure to wear seatbelts are all contributing factors.

Parents can help their teens become safer drivers by taking an active role. Supervise practice driving and be a good role model by practicing safe driving yourself. Remind teens of the new laws regarding cell phone use and texting while driving. Remind them that they and all passengers are required to wear seatbelts.

Booster Seats

Car crashes remain the number one killer of children ages 2-14 in the United States. The Safekids Buckle Up Campaign recommends the following safety tips:

- Use a booster seat correctly in a back seat every time your child rides in a car.
- Use a booster seat until your child weighs between 80 and 100 pounds, and is about 4 feet, 9 inches tall. For most children, that will be between ages 8 and 12.
- Tell all drivers who transport your child that booster seat use is a must when your child is in their vehicle.
- Booster seats are not installed the same way car seats are. They sit on the vehicle seat and are used to properly position the adult safety belt for an older child. Always use a lap and shoulder belt with a booster seat.
- Never place the shoulder belt under the child's arm or behind the child's back.
- Be sure all occupants wear safety belts correctly every time. Children learn from adult role models.

Legislative Update Continued...



Cell Phones in School Crossing Zones

Texas has also passed legislation addressing the use of cell phones in school crossing zones statewide.



Effective Sept. 1, all drivers in Texas school crossing zones were banned from talking on hand-held phones and texting.

Some cities and counties have already posted warning signs to alert motorists on the new ban on the use of cell phones in school crossing zones. Violators are subject to a fine up to \$200. The amount of the fine would depend on the number of offenses prosecuted for that particular driver.

HB 55 amends the state Transportation Code Section 545-425 making it illegal to use a wireless communication device while operating a vehicle within a school crossing zone. Exceptions to this law include use of a hands-free cell phone, or if the driver has stopped the vehicle. Also, emergency calls to law enforcement agencies such as police, fire departments and EMS will be allowed.

Cities or counties wanting to enforce this law must post a sign at the beginning (both ends) of each school zone to inform drivers that using a wireless communication device is prohibited and the operator is subject to a fine.

According to district officials, the counties that maintain the roadways are in charge of placing the signs and not the school district police department. The new law also prohibits bus operators from using a wireless communication device while operating a passenger bus with a minor passenger unless the bus is stopped.

We are already accustomed to driving in school zones with reduced speed limits. But the rapid expansion of cell phone use including texting has presented additional distractions and potential hazards for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

The **National Safety Council** reports that people who use cell phones while driving are four times more likely to be in a crash.

Teachers & Staff New to Renner



Sue Boisvert 7th & 8th Grade Spanish

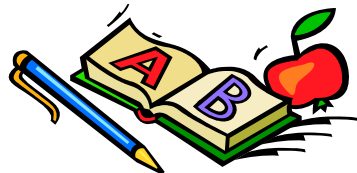
I'm very excited to be joining the Renner team this year as a 7th and 8th grade Spanish teacher! I grew up in Newton, Massachusetts and New Canaan, Connecticut and spent three years as a teenager living in Barcelona, Spain with my parents and younger sister, Diane. After graduating from Simmons College with a BA in Spanish and a Master of Arts in Teaching, I went on to teach high school Spanish in Massachusetts. I taught for seven years before starting a family, and now that my kids are getting older, I am looking forward to getting back into the classroom!

Sherri Doss Special Education Dept Head

I am very excited about being on the staff at Renner. I grew up in Dallas but moved to Conroe, Texas shortly after graduating from Stephen F. Austin State University. After 20 years with Conroe ISD, my husband's company relocated to Plano. We settled in McKinney with our two teenage sons. Our sons are very involved in sports and FFA at McKinney North HS. We enjoy attending sporting events with our youngest son and livestock competitions with our oldest. It is going to be a great year for Renner Mustangs!

Jennifer Mason 8th Grade Math

My name is Jennifer Mason and I am excited to join the staff of Renner this year! I am originally from England but have lived in Plano for almost 14 years. I graduated from the University of Kent with a Bachelor of Arts (Honors) in Economics. I am certified to teach Grades 8 – 12 Mathematics with my favorite type of Math being Statistics. I'm especially looking forward to the Unit on Samples & Populations that we study in 8th Grade! In my free time I like to play games - any kind of games - electronic, board games, and card games. I also love spending time traveling with my husband, Paul, and two children, Pippa (16) and Joe (11). I am looking forward to getting to know your children this year – we are off to a great start already with lots of enthusiasm and participation in my classes!



New Teachers & Staff Cont...



Wade Reck 8th Grade English

This will be my second year of teaching 8th grade in Plano. I am originally from Dallas but lived elsewhere for many years. I graduated from high school in Germany, received a B.A. in political science from Duke University, and earned a Master of Divinity degree from Emory University. After leaving school, I worked in Missouri and New Hampshire for quite some time. A few years ago, I got an itch to return home and be closer my family, so here I am! I am very excited to be a part of the Renner community! A little random trivia about me: I am addicted to running. I wake up to ESPN seven days a week, three hundred sixty five days a year. I enjoy playing my Xbox 360 a little more than I probably should as an adult. I look forward to meeting you and your teens!

Claire Taglioli 8th Grade Math

I grew up in Dearborn Heights, Michigan. I moved to Texas in the 80's and graduated from UTD. I taught 8th grade math and algebra at Renner Middle School from 1991-1998. I stayed at home from 1999-2004 to raise my daughter. In 2005-2007, I taught geometry part time at Shepton High School. This year, I am thrilled to be back at Renner teaching 8th grade math and algebra. My hobbies are reading and spending time with my family.



Jessica Ruiz Speech Pathologist

My name is Jessica Ruiz and I am so excited to be Renner's new Speech and Language Pathologist. I grew up in Plano and went to Plano schools from the time I was in preschool at PSHS's Early Learning Center until the time I graduated from PSHS. After high school I went on to get my Bachelors Degree from Texas A&M University and my Masters Degree from The University of Texas at Dallas. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, spoiling my dog Roxy, and reading books. I look forward to a wonderful and exciting year at Renner Middle School!

6th Grade Dolphins



In **Science**, the Dolphins started out the school year learning about safety. We are enjoying drawing pictures and taking Cornell notes in our journals. In our first lab, *Is it Hot in Here*, we'll investigate the relationship between body temperature before and after exercise using the Data Harvest Easy Sense Probe. We'll soon be studying the digestive system and doing many exciting activities and labs. Be on the lookout for the Beano Advertisement the students will design toward the end of the unit.

We are off to a great start in **Language Arts**. Our students have finished their first diagnostic writing, and will continue to work in our first unit, *Communicating Personal Experiences*. We will be discussing and reading several memoirs and applying what we have learned about interesting writing to our own work. Your child will also be reading silently from a self-selected chapter book several times throughout the week. Your support is so appreciated; please check the agenda daily and contact either Mrs. Tedlock or Mrs. Adams with any concerns. Spelling quizzes will be on Fridays. Greek roots quizzes will be on Thursdays. In PACE language arts, the students are beginning their Art History and Biographies Unit. They will be creating their own original works of art to reflect each era we study. Learning their first Greek roots and exploring the structure of different kinds of sentences round out our beginning -of-the-year curriculum.

The Dolphin **Math** class have started the year with a bang. It's been fun meeting all my wonderful new 6th graders. We spent the first week of class learning organization and procedures that will help each student be more successful in class. We will practice these skills all year. Our math curriculum began with *Shapes and Designs*. In this book the students are working with polygons and angles. It's great to start the year with a fun math unit. **Honors Math** will also be working on their enrichment activities and projects. We have already completed a few enrichment days, and I have been excited to see the enthusiasm in my class on these days. Our Honors Math students will also be competing in Math Olympiad this year. The Olympiad days are regular school days, and all the honors students will be participating.

In **Social Studies**, the Dolphin Team will begin the school year by learning about the various land forms which cover our world. We will extend that knowledge by creating salt maps. What fun! Then we will start traveling the globe stopping first in the Middle East and North Africa. We will explore the cultural relationships we have with one another and increase our understanding of how cultures develop. The next stop, Greece and the Olympics!

6th Grade Penguins



The teachers on the Penguin Team are impressed with the good citizenship and organization of this year's Penguin Team students! Although sixth graders have to work to adjust to the fast-paced middle school routine, they always comment on how much they like the freedom of moving from class to class and the feeling of independence. We are looking forward to a successful and memorable year.

Social Studies: The first unit, cultural relationships, begins with a study of what elements define a culture. The students are learning about the geography, religion, and differences in cultures in the countries of the Middle East region of the world. They are also learning to keep their work organized in their Social Studies binder section.

Science: We're off and running in Science. All classes have been trained and tested on lab safety issues. That means it's time to start having some fun. Over the next few weeks we'll be doing a lot of labs. The majority of these will be on the digestive system. Later on we'll be exploring the respiratory and circulatory systems.

Math: Penguin Math students are beginning the year with the book *Shapes and Designs*, which focuses on polygons and on the side and angle relationships of regular and irregular polygons. Students should be working throughout the week to complete their weekly practice sheets. The practice sheets are an important tool in helping students to review and maintain knowledge and skills previously taught! Be sure to check your student's agenda to see what we're doing each day in class as well as any homework they need to complete.

Language Arts: In our current unit, Communicating Personal Experiences, we focus on the personal narrative (memoir) style of writing. Biographies and studies of authors known for the memoir serve as models for students as they learn to write their own personal narratives. Their memoir is the Culminating Assessment Project (CAP) for this nine-week unit.

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is a frequent activity in Language Arts, so students will need to be responsible for bringing a novel to class each day. A book can be checked out of our library on Wednesdays, our library day, or students may bring a book from home. We also offer an optional daily double reading grade of 100 for 100 minutes of reading. Log sheets for this optional assignment are due every Wednesday. (No partial credit is given for fewer than 100 minutes.) Please encourage your child to read at least 15 minutes per night.

Cont. pg 28

6th Grade Penguins—continued

In addition to the memoir and author studies, **PACE** Penguins will be introduced to the five periods of art history. Other content areas of all language arts classes include spelling, Greek roots, and grammar.



7th Grade Cougars, Jaguars and Tigers



English: What are the traits of good writing? How can reading influence me as a writer? How can I become an effective writer? These are a few of the essential questions our seventh graders will be contemplating during our first unit of study, “Becoming an Effective Writer”. The lessons in this unit teach the key elements of effective communication through writing. Students will develop several narrative compositions. The elements of good writing such as voice, organization, punctuation, capitalization, focus, pacing, and word choice will be taught during the course of study. Several short stories and poems from our literature textbooks will be utilized to support the understanding of how authors sharpen their skills.

Please reinforce good organization skills by asking your child to walk you through his/her binder and show you what we are studying. The English binder should be well organized in sections and contain only English assignments and handouts.

Two important spirals are placed in the front of the binder. Take a moment to read the spiral in the binder that contains daily journal writing. After each date students write ten lines in response to a prompt. The STAR spiral binder (Stuff To Always Remember) will be utilized for writing and literature. The sections included are: topic inventory (writing ideas), author’s palette (word lists and phrases), sneezes (free-writes), writers’ secrets (exploring writers’ grammatical craft), and literature.

We anticipate a year full of reading, writing, and thinking! Thank you for your support!

Texas History: We are off to a great start in Texas History. The students began by working on their body biographies and presenting them in class. This 6 weeks we will be learning about the effects of geography on the development of Texas. The content begins with an emphasis on the regions of Texas and their characteristics. Native Americans and their relationship to geography is the next unit of study. We are excited about teaching your students about the great state of Texas!

8th Grade Comets, Stars & Suns



Science: Why is Iceland green and Greenland icy? What's in the air that we cannot see? How is energy filtered, reflected, and refracted on this unique planet we call Earth? 8th grade Science students have been exploring these questions while studying the Earth's atmosphere, weather patterns, and climate by gathering weather data and researching sunspot cycles. The students then use Excel software to organize data and generate graphs to compare results of their research. Parents, as science teachers we are no longer giving the students review packets, please make sure your child studies the information in their Cornell Notes, the activities covered for the unit, and the study guide for the unit. Science tutorials are always available for students, please check times for each teacher.

Honors Science: The Honors students' independent research projects are underway, and they have completed their research plans along with their science fair forms for their project and should begin their experimentation. The target date for completed experiments and data organized is listed in their SF packet.

English and Honors English: In English classes, students are busy reading and writing. The regular classes are reading selections from the literature book, and the Honors students are reading *And Then There Were None*, an Agatha Christie mystery novel. These units include vocabulary study, journal responses, characterization techniques, and the elements of fiction. We are looking forward to a wonderful year with your sons and daughters as we prepare them for the "big time" of high school.

History: In U.S. History classes, we have begun to study the reasons for exploration and colonization of the thirteen colonies and the geographic influences on the development of the three colonial regions. An emphasis is placed on geography in the first unit to help students have knowledge of the geographic factors that influenced the Native American cultures and the economic, political, and social development of the colonies. A free-response essay on the effects of geography on the economic development of colonial regions is placed in the unit as a level three writing assignment. I look forward to having a great year!

Math and Honors Math: Welcome to 8th grade Math! After a mini-unit review of fractions, integers, and rational numbers, we began our first

Cont. pg 30

8th Grade Comets, Stars & Suns - continued

Connected Math book, *Moving Straight Ahead*, which is about linear relationships and connections between linear equations, tables, and graphs. We look forward to working with you and your child to make this a fantastic year!

Honors Algebra: Welcome to Honors Algebra! In the first six weeks, we will lay the foundations for a strong algebra background. We will study algebraic expressions, real numbers, powers, exponents, equations, proportions, and percents, and apply this knowledge to real-life situations. We look forward to working with you and your child to make this a fantastic year!



Renner PACE Program

PACE students and parents, welcome to Renner Middle School PACE! Humanities students can look forward to a year of thinking creatively, experimenting with ideas, reading challenging literature, developing writing skills, and learning about art, architecture, and theater. PACE teachers Ms. Leon, Ms. Tedlock, Ms. Harbin, Ms. Eckert, and Ms. Polly will be helping students develop their full potential.

PACE Testing: The mission of Plano Academic and Creative Education (PACE) is to provide a challenging learning environment that nurtures the unique potential of gifted and talented students so that as citizens they can contribute ethically and productively in ways commensurate with their abilities.

Students who wish to be considered for the program must be tested. Referral packets may be obtained and returned to Mrs. Polly in Room 921 by the October 21st deadline. Testing will occur during the school day between November 3rd - 5th. Students can be referred by their parents or teachers, or they can refer themselves. Students are eligible for testing annually.

Destination Imagination: Destination Imagination (DI) is an international organization for students that teaches life skills and expands *imaginations* through team-based creative problem solving. Teams of seven members work together with the support of a team manager, a parent, to solve one of 5 challenges in a skit format. While this competition is open to all Plano students, it is particularly fun for the creative, gifted, and talented student. Parents who enjoy guiding and watching creative children solve problems in unexpected ways may participate as team managers in the Destination Imagination program. Contact Mrs. Polly for further details.

Counselors' Corner...

The Renner Counseling Department is looking forward to a successful 2009-2010 school year. Each grade level counselor and our registrar have been busy with registering new students, adjusting schedules, and getting reacquainted with returning students.

Fall testing will take place in the months of September and October. Seventh graders will take the CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test). Plano ISD requires grades 3, 5, 7, and 9 to take this test which measures reasoning ability. Parents may obtain test results through their grade level counselor in November.

The MAP (Measurement of Academic Progress) is an achievement test that will be taken by newly registered students and students being served through the special education department. Students will be tested in several content areas; Reading, Math, and Science.

All students in grades 6-8 will be taking the MAP test in December/January, mid-year, and again in April/May, end of the year. MAP is designed to show academic growth.

Data collected from the CogAT and MAP tests is evaluated and analyzed providing teachers with crucial information needed to help understand a student's strengths and weaknesses.

The counselors are here to help with questions and concerns throughout the year. Counselor grade level and contact numbers are listed below.

6th Grade - Angie Novak (469) 752-5817
7th Grade - Brad Allcorn (469) 752-5815
8th Grade - Carol Frank (469) 752-5816



**Report Cards
October 9th!**

RENNER CHOIR



The Renner Choir Department is up and running! The kids are singing everyday. They sound great! We are really looking forward to our Fall Concerts.

We still have a few choir t-shirts for sale. Please check charmsoffice.com for a picture of the t-shirt design and an order form.

Remember to check the charmsoffice.com website for updates and upcoming events. Additionally, our choir handbook, permission slips, and all other choir information throughout the year will be posted on the website. It is especially important for the student information section to stay updated so you won't miss out on essential choir information. We will use the contact information that the students entered into charms to communicate with you throughout the year. So remember to update those if you have made a change in your email address or phone number.

Upcoming Choir Events:

- 10/11/2009 - Six Flags - 7th and 8th grade, Optional
- 10/14/2009 - Fall Concerts at Renner - 6th - 6:30pm, 7th & 8th - 7:30pm, Required
- 10/24/2009 - Plano West - Syncopation & Rhapsody Show at PWSH - A Cappella Girls, Required
- 11/7/2009 - Solo & Ensemble at Robinson - 7th & 8th Grade, Optional
- 11/21/2009 - Spectrum of Harmony at Custer Road United Methodist Church - 7th & 8th Grade Boys, Required

Janet Hatcher



Theater News - By Paulette Van Atta

Auditions for the Renner Theatre Department's fall production of The Brothers Grimm: Out of Order were held on September 15th. The cast and crews are working hard in rehearsals preparing for the upcoming performances.



When brothers Jake and Will Grimm can't agree on a script, they end up in a fight – pages are swapped, plots intermingled...It's a complete mess! The intermingled storyline now has Hansel and Jorinda on the way to meet the stage mother and her two evil step daughters, Gretel and Jorinda. Meanwhile, Rapunzel wants her son Prince Charming to go to the Gingerbread Castle for a ball to meet his true love, the evil witch Cinderella. What's worse is that the principal is coming to see a production of the show in less than 30 minutes! With a lot of name-calling, finger-pointing, and "I quits," the entire show collapses just as the principal arrives. Come see how it all turns out.

Performances will be held on Thursday, November 5th, at 6:30pm, and Friday, November 6th, at 6:30pm in the cafeteria. The admission is \$4.00 at the door.

Speech Team News - By Paulette Van Atta

Debaters from the Renner Speech Team attended a Debate Clinic at PHS. We learned a lot of new ideas for the upcoming tournament season. The resolution for this school year is **Resolved: That the United States government should implement universal health care modeled after the French system.**

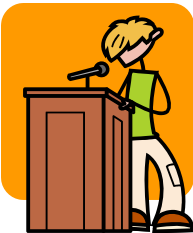
The dates for the 2009-10 Tournament schedule are:

October 10 – Armstrong M.S.

November 14 – Shepton H.S.

February 20 – Wilson M.S.

April 10 – Vines H.S.



Coaching for these tournaments will be available from Ms. Van Atta in Room 603. Please stop by her room for more information, to sign up, or to make an appointment for coaching.

Renner Middle School Health Services

Nurse's Notes...



Lessons Learned About the New 7th Grade Immunizations

Advice for 6th Grade Parents

The new immunization requirements for all students entering grade 7 were announced early last March by the State of Texas. While that gave us almost six months to inform parents and get everyone's shots on file, many parents were left trying to find last minute sources for the immunizations their children needed. The new law requires 7th graders to have a DPT booster within the last five years, a second Varicella (Chicken Pox) vaccine, and a meningitis vaccine. These must be on file before the student enters grade 7.

Here are some suggestions for 6th grade parents to make your transition to grade 7 less stressful at the last minute.

1. If you have a copy of your child's shot record, check to see if these vaccines have already been given. If they have, be sure to provide a copy of that record to the school nurse. Some of you may have already done that in 5th grade.
2. If you do not have a shot record or are not sure, check with your child's doctor to see if he / she needs the new vaccines.
3. If it turns out that your child hasn't gotten the shots yet, be sure to discuss this with the doctor at the next regular check-up during the sixth grade year. Once the shots are given, provide a copy of the updated shot record to the nurse. Be sure to keep a copy for yourself.
4. If you do not have a regular doctor for your child, consider getting established with a doctor that you will use routinely. Having a "medical home" assures better care.

Nurse's Notes - continued

5. If you do not have health insurance for your child, please consider applying for the free or low cost health insurance that is offered by the state through the CHIP Program. Income guidelines apply, but special circumstances are considered. The school nurse has the applications and access to a local professional that can help you with the process.

6. With or without insurance, you can find free and low cost immunizations through local clinics and the Collin County Health Department. The school nurse has information about these local resources. If you are planning to use these resources, make a plan to do this as soon as you can during the 6th grade year.

7. **DO NOT WAIT!** Students who have not submitted an updated shot record will not be able to pick up their schedule for 7th grade. They will also not be allowed to attend school until the shots are given and a copy of the shot record received by the school. That may not seem important in October, ten months before it will happen. But, trying to take care of this at the last minute before school starts may lead to stress and disappointment.

If you have any questions at all about the vaccines or where to get them, contact Miss Grace at (469) 752-5809 or judith.grace@pisd.edu.





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