

The Mathews Messenger

Celebrating Austin's Award-winning Public International School

September 3, 2008

"We Educate the World"

Amy Kinkade, Principal

Welcome Back!!

Principally Speaking...

What a terrific start to the 2008 school year!! It is such a privilege to work with the Mathews Community. I look forward to another spectacular year! Our staff has been enthusiastically preparing to provide all students with rigorous, meaningful, and enriching learning experiences. Thanks for being flexible during the first week of school while construction projects in and around the school were completed. Our cafeteria is now open for service. In addition, streets around the side and back of the school are now open to through traffic.

We welcome several new teachers and staff: Anna Seals, 1st grade teacher; Christy Gates, half-time literacy teacher and half-time technology teacher; Gail Pitchford and Amber Contrerau, nurse and health assistant. Mathews Fun Club staff members Lauris Blackwell, Liza Feldkamp, Armida Galvan; cafeteria staff member Dora Contreras; and lunchroom supervisor, Linda Baylor have also joined us.

I am thrilled to inform you that Mathews has earned the Recognized rating from the Texas Education Agency. Our students made significant gains in all areas on the TAKS tests. Over 50% of our students scored in the Commended range of the tests, indicating that they earned close to a perfect score. The Texas Business and Education Coalition has recognized Mathews for our steadily increasing numbers of commended students over the past three years. The TBEC announced that just 4% of Texas public schools have earned this top recognition.

In order to keep our children safe, please follow our drop-off and pick-up procedures.

- Arrive by 7:40; in class 7:45.
- Drop-off/pick-up on West Lynn
- No parking from 7 - 8; 2 - 3
- Students will wait in front of school for pick-up.
- No U-turns; cars facing south

Thanks for your cooperation!



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Upcoming Events

9/4 5:30-7:15pm 3rd-6th
Grade Back to School Night

9/8 8:00am PTA Board Mtg.

9/8 3:00pm CAC Mtg.

9/9 6:45pm OWANA Mtg.

9/11 5:30-7:15pm PK-2nd
Grade Back to School Night

9/19 8:00am Homeroom
Parents Meeting

9/19 Prime Time
registration due

9/26 8:00am AM with Amy -
Gifted & Talented Info.

Exploring Foreign Languages

Our school is embarking on a language adventure!

Due in part to a Mathews Fund for Excellence Award and in response to longstanding requests from families for foreign language instruction, classes began the week before school.

Spanish and Chinese are being offered this fall and we hope to offer French and German in the spring. Both K-2 Grade and 3-6 Grades classes are filled and have waiting lists.



There will be an opportunity to register for the spring semester in December.

ARTiculations

News from the Art Room
Sara Jo Belknap, Art: 841-1517

This is my 6th year of teaching art at Mathews and I am very happy to be working in this community. I feel obligated to make art engaging, challenging, vigorous, and fun. Please call if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's experience in Art. The direct number to the art room is 841-1517. Please feel free to visit the art room whenever you wish.

There was a collective decision to take a break from the "Card Project" this year, (our usual fall fund-raiser for the Art Department involving block prints created by all Mathews students going on sale at Octoberama, as well as the Austin Farmer's Market). Our 2008 booth at Octoberama will be selling 100% Organic Cotton t-shirts with a design created from a compilation of drawings submitted by students during the Spring semester of last year. The new Mathews t-shirt will be printed with a simple black outline that can be customized

Music Notes

News from the Music Room
Jean Lopez, Music: 841-1497

Welcome to all new and returning students. Music classes have been plenty busy as we settle into our new year.

Kinder - Students are being introduced to steady beat through songs and games.

1st and 2nd grades - Students are learning the song, "America". We are also reviewing steady beat and rhythm and applying those terms to songs and playing of non-pitched percussion instruments.

3rd, 4th grades - Composers and their major works are being introduced in music class. Classes are also learning some patriotic songs as Veterans Day and Election Day are both in November.

5th grade begins working on their fall musical, Rock! A Celebration of the History of Rock and Roll. Info will be forthcoming.

Mathews Choir - Wednesday, September 24th, 3:00-4:00pm begins weekly choir rehearsals. All students, grades 3-6, *who love to sing*, are encouraged to participate. Notes and permission slips will be sent home soon.

by patrons at Octoberama, at home or where ever permanent markers can be used (with adult supervision). A flyer will be sent home naming design contributors and pricing as soon as the t-shirts are available (well before November 1st Octoberama date).

Everyone is happy to be back in the Art Room. **Sixth graders** are starting "inside-outside" boxes, emblazoning metal lunch boxes (*donated by Crescent Realty*) with reflections of self and popular culture while **Fifth graders** get to start their legendary tube sculptures, (macquettes of public art installations based on the art of American sculptor David Smith). **The Fourth and Third graders** start the year with clay projects tied to classroom discussions of Texas Indians and personal heritage. **Second graders, First graders, and Kindergarteners** dive into projects that involve discovering ways to express their individuality through crayons, paint and collage. You really should stop by and see the Art Room before we mess it up!

Needed: Choir Accompanist - Last year's choir accompanist, David Johnson, moved so we are looking for someone who is willing to replace him. Please contact me at your earliest convenience if interested.

Zilker Park Trail of Lights - Each of the past three years, the Mathews Choir has performed at the Zilker Park Trail of Lights. The choir and their families have a blast! This year, however, I must submit an audition video by September 12 of the Mathews Choir before we can be invited back to the Trail of Lights. I think in the past years some of the entertainment hasn't been so family/holiday friendly! Soooo - if anyone has a DVD/videotape of last year's fall musical or Trail of Lights performance, please contact me ASAP. **OR** if anyone knows the 'powers that be' for the Trail of Lights entertainment, inform them we are a group of innocent elementary students who are 'out to have a good time' while performing family friendly traditional holiday music. We even throw in some selections from the fall musical!!

Join Us in The Office ...

Do you have an hour to spare once a week?

The Mathews Office Staff is looking for volunteers who are able to help on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday or Friday mornings from 7:30 - 8:30.

Duties include helping with tardy slips, making copies, and sorting mail. If you'd like to sign up for a shift, please contact Susan Bell or Maria Ramirez at 414-4406.



Cover to Cover

News from the Library
Laurie Harwell, Librarian: 414-0900

Ice Cream Sundae reward party will be held on Sept. 10 for all students who have returned their reading lists from the Summer Reading Challenge. If your child participated in the summer program, please have them return their lists by Friday, Sept. 5.

Magazine Sponsorships

Once again the Mathews library is asking for help funding our magazine subscriptions. Currently we subscribe to 15 magazines for children and 5 professional magazines for teachers. By having parents sponsor these subscriptions, we have more money to purchase library books.

If you are interested in helping with this, please come by the library or call 414-0900.

We are looking forward to another great year in the library!

PTA News and Updates

GREAT NEWS!

Soon you can help Mathews PTA purchase 6 digital projectors to improve math instruction without it costing you ONE PENNY.

Details will follow soon about our grocery card program. By purchasing an HEB grocery card from the PTA, you will get your full value in groceries and the school will receive a 1-5% rebate.

The greater the participation, the higher the percentage we will earn. We all buy groceries, so please watch for information and sign up right away.

Important Reminders:

Students in grades K-6 need to bring \$1 to cover the cost of computer headphones.

Additionally, students in grades 3-6 need to bring \$3 to cover the cost of agendas.

Thank you for your support!

Octoberama!

Just a reminder that Octoberama is on **Saturday, November 1st, 2008**, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This PTA fundraiser raises money to support many school programs. There will be food, games, music, and a silent auction! You can make Octoberama a big success by getting involved.

Your homeroom parent will be contacting you with opportunities to assist.

OR e-mail Emily Johnson at octoberamachair@yahoo.com to find out how you can help. For the latest updates go to www.octoberama.org.





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Remember...

**We're on the
Web!**

[www.austinisd.org/
campus/mathews](http://www.austinisd.org/campus/mathews)

Prime Time (Prime Time Information)

Mathews is fortunate once again to offer outstanding after-school enrichment programs FREE OF CHARGE through the Prime Time grant. There are two aspects of Prime Time:

Homework Center

Begins Monday September 22nd

Runs Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from 3 P.M. to 4 P.M. Staffed by Mathews teachers and community volunteers and coordinated by Tiffani Allison, it meets in the library to provide a supervised environment for students in need of extra help in completing assignments. Teachers will notify parents of students they feel should attend when Progress Reports go home September 17th.

Recommendation is based on academic need; we are not able to offer childcare. To maximize success, we are asking that the commitment be for every Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of the

entire grading period for which the student is recommended. Please note that this might necessitate not being able to sign up for enrichment classes if they conflict.

Enrichment Classes

Begins Tuesday, October 14th

Classes are held once a week for 6 weeks, from 3 - 4 p.m. on either Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday. Information on class offerings and registration forms will go home in the Wednesday folders on September 17th. Registration forms are due back to the school office on Friday, September 19th. Class confirmation slips will go home Wednesday, September 24th. Please consider either teaching a class or assisting a class instructor as it takes many people to offer these classes. Parent volunteers can pre-register their children for classes. Call Ruthann Rushing for more information at 841-1516.

Mathews Fund For Excellence (MFE)

Please help us spread the word that the annual gathering of former students and staff hosted by the Mathews Fund For Excellence Committee will be held on September 25th from 5 - 7 PM at the Lozano-O'Hanlon home at 1200 Lorrain Street.

This is an opportunity to celebrate Mathew's 92nd Anniversary and visit with old friends.

Homeroom Parent Fun!

Join a dedicated group of volunteers and serve as a Homeroom Parent in your student's class this year. We promise to train you well so you will know exactly what to do and how to do it without spending too much time on the job! We plan to have at least 3 homeroom parents per classroom to share the work and keep the load light. You do not need to be available during the school day to volunteer as a homeroom parent. Your student's teacher will love you!!

If you want more information or would like to volunteer to be a homeroom parent, contact Lynn Rubinett at lynnrubinett@mac.com or 750-1071. Or sign up with your teacher at Back to School night. Mark your calendar for a Homeroom Parents' Training Breakfast on Friday, September 19 at 8:00 a.m. in the library.