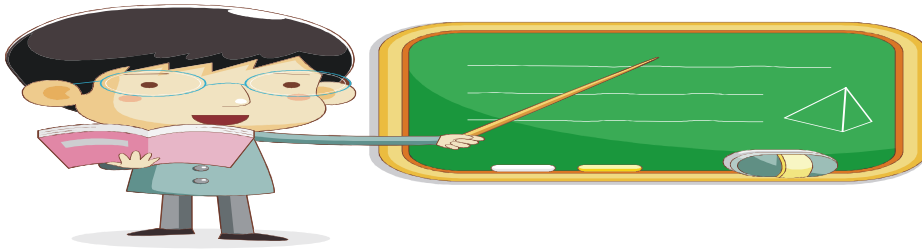




**Platte River Academy  
Mission Statement:  
Provide a content-rich,  
academically rigorous education  
with a well-defined, sequential  
curriculum in a safe, orderly and  
caring environment**

**August 18, 2011**



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**ARE YOU READY FOR SOME... LEARNING?!!**

**By Andy Jones, Board President**

If you are like me, football is big in your life. My son Ethan is in his first year of tackle football, with four practices a week and having to learn offensive and defensive plays. Of course there is the NFL season kicking off after fears of a lost year due to labor issues, but much to my wife's chagrin, everything came together at the last moment to produce what promises to be a fantastic season. Yet isn't it amazing to see these players come together with only a few days of practice, and off they go to full contact. Well, isn't that much like our professional teaching team?

The flurry of activity leading up to day one of the school season was a sight to see. Classrooms that had to be moved and unpacked, curriculum that had to be prepared, and rosters that had to be filled by the scouting team in the front office. I watched in amazement during the off-season, as the head coach, in a whirlwind, went to the free agent market to fill open positions on our teaching roster. And what a job he did! The new Assistant Coach is phenomenal and like a second string quarterback, with mentoring and experience could step in and be the starter of the future (well that was a mixed metaphor).

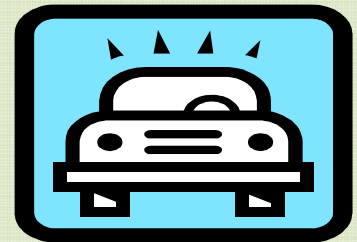
We just finished our first round of Back to School nights and coming out of the tunnel were the new starters on our Special Team. These rookies are raring to go and their excitement is infectious, the crowd was doing the wave during their presentations (ok an exaggeration there) and our kid's enrichment will attain new heights. Returning veterans have a new sense of joy and are at the top of their game. General Managers (the Governing Board) are very pleased with all that is taking place: the stadium is in great condition, we have the highest confidence in the coaching staff, the players are in top form, and the playbook is a proven winner. Yes, ticket prices are up just a little, but that is what it takes to field a championship caliber team. I am excited! Are you ready for some learning?



**Attention Parents**

In order to avoid unnecessary disruption to the classrooms during school hours, we ask that all parents stop at the front desk when requesting your child's dismissal.

Please do not proceed to your child's classroom on your own. We will be happy to call the teacher and have him/her send your child to the lobby. Thank you for cooperation.



**Carpool Etiquette**

When dropping off or picking up your children during carpool, please be sure to pull forward as far as traffic will allow. Do not let your children out of the car before you reach the front of the school. This will assure a safe and more even traffic flow.

Thank you.

## **Information on Severe Weather**

The following article is a reprint from our May 3, 2007 newsletter. It will be followed by an update based on our experience with the severe weather dismissal this past Tuesday.

### **I. The Beautiful Color of Orange**

Oh the weather outside is frightful... while this may be a great song, it is not very good when it comes to carpool dismissal. Severe weather is an unfortunate occurrence in Colorado and, on occasion, comes at a time while we are ready for afternoon carpool dismissal. When the weather conditions prohibit a normal release of students during carpool, we will display a bright orange flag (trust me – you will not miss it) on our flagpole. When you see this flag, it means that we will be initiating a severe weather dismissal for carpool and will not allow students outside until the weather conditions are safe. When you see this flag, your options are:

1. Park your car in the parking lot or on Lark Sparrow and physically come into the school to sign your child(ren) out. Please do not leave your car while in the carpool line.
2. Enter, stay, and move with the carpool line until your child(ren) are released directly to you in front of the school.
3. Wait it out wherever you are until the weather passes and walkers are released.

Please understand that while this procedure will take longer than a regular dismissal, but it will ensure the overall safety of our students. Thank you in advance for your support and understanding in the event of a severe weather dismissal.

### **II. Update/Feedback from Tuesday's Experience**

Well, first we had to find the orange flag and then we realized that there were a number of parents who did not know what it meant which is understandable. Here are some more points:

- A decision to do a "Severe Weather Dismissal" won't be made until 3:10pm. This gives us a much time as possible to see if the severe weather passes.
- Severe weather includes: lightning in the area; heavy rain or snow; tornado-like conditions in the area.
- Please do not make a call to your child's cell phone asking him/her to exit the building. Your physical presence or that of another adult friend/family member, in the building or in carpool is required to release your child.

### **III. Notification of Severe Weather Dismissal**

- The orange flag is the indicator when in sight of the school building.
- We will also email to all parents an Ennouncement that announces that a severe weather dismissal is in effect. We will try to do this between 3:10pm and 3:15pm. Does your homeroom teacher have your current email address?
- Please talk to your child about a contingency plan that will come into play if and when a severe weather dismissal occurs.
- Please know that your child will always be safe by waiting at school until you arrive.



### **Attendance Line (303) 243-5210**

This message line is available 24/7. We ask that you use this line to call in all absences or late arrivals. Please leave the necessary information as requested by the voice prompt. Parents need to provide written documentation/notification of an absence only if the absence is expected or pre-planned to be three (3) days or longer in length. A form for the 3+ day absence is available from the office. If less than three days, please call the attendance line.

### **Tardy**

Seventh and Eighth Grade Students are expected to be in class by 8:10am. If your student is not past the front lobby desk by 8:08am then he/she will be tardy. All students in grades K-6 must be in the lobby by 8:13am in order to not be marked tardy, since class begins at 8:15am. Bad weather days are the exception. However, it would be best for you to start your journey to PRA earlier on these days to ensure an "on time arrival". Please remember that the front doors open at 7:55am for students to go to their respective classrooms.

## Will there Be a Mill Levy Override and Bond Issue Election in November?

The Douglas County Board of Education will be making this decision by the end of the month. From my position as your Principal, K-12 education in Douglas County needs your support to increase the funding that all schools in Douglas County receive. Budget reductions and deficits (including PRA) will continue due to the cuts/rescissions in state education funding these past three years.

Teri Aplin, Director of Parker Core Knowledge Charter School, and I made a public statement to the DCSD Board of Education at its meeting this past Monday. The BoE is deliberating the pros and cons of asking the Douglas County voters to raise property taxes with a mill levy override and bond issue. If an election occurs, you will be called on to support your child's education at PRA and beyond. Below is the statement that was read:

*Good Evening, Mr. Carson, Board Directors, Dr. Fagan, District Leaders, and those in attendance this evening:*

*In the past Teri and I have come to many Board meetings in our mission to champion a level of equity in funding for Douglas County Charter School students. I have to say that it is refreshing that past questions and issues with equity have begun to be addressed openly and fairly. Thank you!*

*So, what's different about tonight? We are here to make a clear statement of support for the proposed mill levy override and bond issue election. By proxy seven other charter school and program leaders are standing with Teri and me tonight. They are: Academy Charter School, American Academy, Ben Franklin Academy, Challenge to Excellence, DC Montessori, Hope Online, and STEM Charter.*

*We are keenly aware that a future financial resolution to our current budget dilemma cannot wait or depend upon the state and federal governments. The effort and responsibility of Douglas County residents to maintain and expand the quality that Douglas County Schools are known for and what our communities have come to expect must not be delayed. Accordingly, we stand ready to do our part in a district-wide and community partnership to ensure success in November.*

*Thank you for listening.*

## **Volunteers Opportunities**

### **Library Help**

The library hours: Monday through Friday 8:15AM – 3:15PM.

Volunteers will assist librarian with:

- Monitoring student behavior,
- Helping students in using library look up stations and finding books on shelves,
- Shelving books,
- Special projects,
- Reading to primary grade students,
- Helping students with library skill activities

### **Vision and Hearing Screening**

- 7 Volunteers needed for 8:15am shift on Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>
- 7 Volunteers needed for 11:55am shift on Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>
- 7 Volunteers needed for 8:15am shift on Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup>

Volunteers will be helping with actual hearing or visions screenings, but do not need prior experience. They will undergo 20-30 min. training and practice session prior to working with the students.

Because of the technical nature of some of our screening procedures, we request that volunteers not bring children with them, Please contact Rochelle at 303-221-1070 ext. 2045 or at [rmonahan@platteriveracademy.com](mailto:rmonahan@platteriveracademy.com)

## Core Knowledge Seminar

August 31, 2011

Time: 6pm

Location: PRA Library

Please join other parents and SAC (School Advisory Committee) members for an evening dedicated to Core Knowledge. Come learn what Core Knowledge is and how the Core Knowledge philosophy is applied at Platte River Academy

We hope to see you there!



### PRA Fall Book Fair – Mon. 9/26 thru Thurs. 9/29

A great Book Fair can never have too many volunteers! Our school is conducting a fantastic Fair to encourage students to read. Join our volunteer group to host a fun and creative Book Fair event if you:

- \*Like to organize and put things in place
- \*Bring creative flair to signs and decorations
- \*Enjoy offering a helping hand, setting up, or packing up
  - \*Like to donate food and refreshments
- \*Want to help shoppers of all ages find the perfect book

We appreciate your support in whatever form it takes.

Please use the following link to sign up.

<http://tinurl.com/prabookfair2011>

You may contact Ute Meyer at [umeyer@platteriveracademy.com](mailto:umeyer@platteriveracademy.com) with any questions.

### The following library rules were established for the 2011-2012 school year:

- Each student can check out up to 2 books at a time.
- Additional books can only be checked out if needed for classroom projects or at the request of the teacher.
- Books are due on student's assigned library day.
- To renew a book, student needs to bring book to library.
- In order to check out a new book, previously checked out books have to be returned.
- Students are encouraged to return books in the library book-drop before the start of the school day.
- Books with loose or torn pages should be returned directly to the library staff. We will repair them. Please do not mend library books at home.
- Books need to be kept away from water bottles and food. Water damage or food residue will cause mildew in books and requires books to be replaced.
- Students and parents are responsible for damaged or lost books. If a book is lost or damaged, please contact the library staff. We will inform you of the replacement cost of the book.

Please visit the library website at <https://sites.google.com/a/dcsdk12.org/pralibrary/home> for other useful information.

## Volunteer Opportunities (cont'd)

### Technology Lab Help

The First Grade teaching team is in need of one to four volunteers to help out in the computer lab during their first grade classes Tech time. Time needed is 9:10am-9:50am Monday-Thursday beginning as early as next week, if possible, and continuing until the end of the school year. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer please email [rmonahan@platteriveracademy.com](mailto:rmonahan@platteriveracademy.com)



Get Back to School at the Douglas County Library—Thursday, Aug. 25th 4 to 8pm— Make this school year a success with tools, services and programs offered at the Highlands Ranch Library. Participate in a library scavenger hunt with prizes. Recommended for parents, students, and teachers. No registration required.



### Wacky W Cycling Event

Do you like riding a bike? Do you like supporting your child's school?

Then check out the flyer posted at the front desk for information on the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Wacky W Cycling Event sponsored by the DCEF. This is a fun way to get some exercise while supporting PRA.



Celebrate your child's birthday with a **SCHOOLDAY  
BIRTHDAY SURPRISE!**

- \* *Decorated:* Your child's desk or locker will be brightly decorated by 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- \* *Serenaded:* A group of 8<sup>th</sup> graders sing "Happy Birthday" to your child in front of their classmates.
- \* *Treated:* A goody bag for the birthday child

How do I order?

Pick up your order form from the folder outside the office window, fill out and return to anyone in the office at least 3 BUSINESS DAYS prior to the birthday.

\**Cost:* \$10 per child (checks payable to PRA Middle School)

This fundraiser supports the PRA 8<sup>th</sup> graders' Washington DC trip 2012

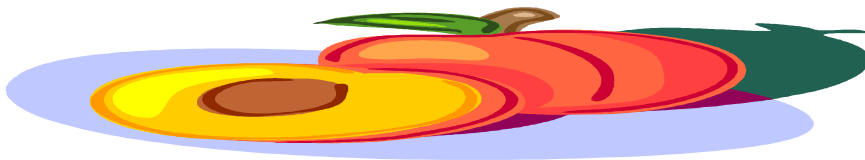
(Forms available throughout the school year)



**Spirit Wear**

All spirit wear orders are due no later than Friday, August 26th. The spirit wear will be delivered around mid September to your child's homeroom class as indicated. Due to cost issues, spirit wear will only be ordered once this year. We will not be having a second ordering period like we have had in the past, now is your only opportunity to order the hoodies, shirts and fleece items. Don't miss out! Order forms and size examples are available at the front office.

Please contact Susan Robinson if you have any questions  
303-789-5237 home/303-921-6425 cell



**PRA Peach Orders:**

We still have a little time left to order peaches. All orders are due no later than Sept. 2nd. All orders that have not been paid for in advance cannot be guaranteed, they will be considered "extra boxes" and can be sold on request, so please pay for your order in advance to guarantee you receive a box.

Peaches will be delivered on the 9th of September and can be picked up between 3:30 and 6:00 pm (only!). If you cannot pick up your peaches during those hours, please make arrangements to have them picked up for you. We would hate for your peaches to be left at the school over the weekend.

Order forms are available at the front office.

If you have any questions, please contact: Susan Robinson  
303-789-5237 home/303-921-6425 cell



**Fall Pictures Tuesday,  
August 30**

Fall Picture Day is coming to  
Platte River Academy on  
Tuesday, August 30, 2011

These photos are taken in your school uniform. School portraits by Lifetouch offer casual, studio-style photography. Not only are the pictures top-quality, but it's a great fundraiser for our school

## August 2011

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



## September 2011

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

### August Birthdays

8/02- Ellen Cain (Aide 3<sup>rd</sup>)

8/13 - Kathy Kaze (1<sup>st</sup>)

8/11 - Jim Barstad (4<sup>th</sup>)

8/15 - Brandy Broeka (Kindies)

8/31 - Becky Erickson (5<sup>th</sup>)

8/12 - Gary Stueven (Principal)

8/30 - Chris Hecker (Art)

## August/September 2011 Calendar of PRA Events

Wednesday, Aug. 24-Friday, Aug.26

- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Ed/Estes Park

Thursday, Aug. 25

- Hot Lunch Ordering Period Begins

Friday, Aug. 26

- DRESS OF CHOICE

Tuesday, Aug. 30

- Hot Lunch Ordering Period Ends
- Picture Day
- 6:30-9pm PTO Fundraiser/Cold Stone Creamery

Wednesday, Aug. 31

- Core Knowledge Seminar

Thursday, Sept. 1 and 2

- Vision and Hearing Screenings

Monday, September 5

- LABOR DAY/ NO SCHOOL

Tuesday, September, 6

Thursday, September 8

- 6:30p Governing Board

Saturday, September 10

- 8a-12 noon/ Family Work Day

Monday, September 12

- 6:30p PTO Meeting

Tuesday, September 13

- 11a-10p PTO Fundraiser/CiCi's Pizza

Thursday, September 15

- 8:30-11:30a Westward Expansion/ 2<sup>nd</sup> grade
- 6p SAC Meeting

Friday, September 16

- 6:30p-9p 8<sup>th</sup> grade Movie Night
- Midterm Reports



Have a great Weekend