



**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**

December 15, 2011

**School Funds Invested
(Strategic Communications #1 continues)
By Andy Jones, Board President**

Your Governing Board took some exciting action last Thursday. To recap, with the failure of the recent bond election in Douglas County, PRA and the neighborhood schools are facing some daunting future budget cuts because of the projected cuts to Colorado's funding for K-12 education. For example, our local high schools have each been directed to create a future budget that will cut the current year's budget by \$600,000 to \$800,000 which, in the case of Mountain Vista HS, could impact eleven teaching positions. For PRA we might well be looking at a loss of \$80,000 to \$120,000 of revenue for 2012-13. How to address this will be a major responsibility of the Governing Board and school leadership beginning early spring.

We continuously look for ways to offset future cuts with smart budgeting and frugal spending. As a result of last year's budget review process, Governor Nollsch suggested that we seek better investment of our nearly \$1.9 million fund balance. This balance is placed in three buckets or tiers: Tier 1 funds are those required by State statutes, District policy, and Bondholder requirements; Tier 2 funds are those held in reserve by the Governing Board for the Major Repair and Replacement fund; and finally Tier 3 are True Discretionary funds for contingencies like budget shortfalls. After seeking bids for financial services, we selected Key Bank Financial Services to invest \$900,000 of these funds in a "laddered" Municipal Bond account, in accordance with approved state and district policies. We will now be earning an annual interest rate of over 2% or \$20,000 per year which will go directly into our operating budget. It may not seem like much in a total budget of over \$3,000,000, but combined with other measures, we are doing everything we can to protect the quality education our children receive at PRA.

For further information on our budget or just to gain better awareness of our financial condition, please see the school website as we post this information in the effort to have full transparency. In addition, ask questions and give us feedback if you have ideas on how to save dollars or increase revenue over the months to come. Finally, as the last message of the year 2011, the PRA Governing Board would like to extend wishes for the happiest of holidays, Merry Christmas and a great and prosperous New Year for us all.

**School Uniforms and Dress Code
Dr. Gary Stueven, Principal**

From what was reported, yesterday's Dress Code Committee meeting was quite interesting with a variety of thoughts, comments, and questions. Please look for a future feature article that speaks to this principal's thoughts, comments, and questions regarding PRA dress Code.

In the meantime, it is important to restate a few expectations about dress code:

- **Shoes, laces, and socks** – It seems that when shoes are purchased the laces will often accent colors other than "white, navy blue, black, gray, dark green, tan or brown". When you buy shoes remember that it should

(Cont'd on pg. 2)

Inside this Issue:	Page
Not e from the G Board	1
Dress Code Compliance	1-2
Happy Holidays	2
Volunteer Opportunities	2
2011 End of Year Donation SS	3
Yearbook Information	3
Hot Lunch Order Schedule	4
Calendar of Events	5

Inside The E-Folder	Page
Yearbook Order form	1
YB Dedication Order Form	2
Jan. B/AC Calendar	3
Stock Show Ticket Order Info	4
Nuggets Night Ticket Info	5
MVHS Jr. Dance Camp Info	6

Attendance Line (303) 243-5210



Please check the Lost & Found rack in the front foyer of the school for any items your child may be missing.

The items are really piling up; we have hoodies, winter coats, lunch boxes, water bottles, etc.

All items that have not been picked up by the end of the school day on

TOMORROW will be donated to charity. Thank you.

- not be entirely about what kids want to wear to school. Your choice/purchase must also comply with the dress code. Dress code trumps what kids want and or the style-of-the-day. If you have to guess about your purchase meeting dress code or if you have think about it too long then most likely it won't. If you buy shoes that have laces other than these approved solid colors please replace them. As well, there is an expectation for the color of socks. These are a solid "white, navy, dark green, black, or khaki". Additionally, think about the color of the sole of the shoe. Too much color of a wrong colored sole may not meet the "predominantly one color" standard for that shoe. This will most likely be further defined by the Dress Code Committee in the future.
- **Adornments** – Students, especially girls, will probably be receiving gifts of adornment like nail polish, bracelets, anklets, earrings, hair accessories etc. Enjoy wearing these over the holiday break and weekends in the future, However, do check to see if such adornments will meet dress code.
- **Belts** – Belts are required for students in Grades 4-6 who wear trousers or shorts with belt loops. This requires no interpretation. It is easy to determine if a student has the required belt on or not.



Holiday Thanks to the Staff

On Wednesday, the Governing Board had the distinct pleasure of serving breakfast to those who serve our children each day. In addition to a monetary gift from the community, the following letter was attached:

To our finest Support Staff, Faculty and School Leadership of PRA:

We are at the midway point through the 2011/2012 academic year and the Governing Board wants to take a moment to recognize and thank each and every one of you for the tremendous dedication, enthusiasm, skill and talents you bring each day to PRA.

Without you, we could not have achieved the academic and community successes that PRA enjoys and we want you to hear from us first hand how much your efforts have been noticed and appreciated! The Governing Board has been very pleased to note how well the academic mission of this school continues to be implemented.

There is a tangible, visible sense of camaraderie, professionalism and teamwork amongst the students, parents, faculty, support staff and school leadership. All of you have had a hand in our success and your Governing Board wants you to know just how much we, representing the parents, notice how much you have accomplished in the past several months.

As we head into the holiday break, your Governing Board wishes you and yours the very best of the season and our heartfelt thanks to you for being an integral, valued member of the PRA team!

Sincerely,

THE PLATTE RIVER ACADEMY GOVERNING BOARD

Volunteer Opportunities

The First Grade teaching team is in need of one or two additional volunteers to help out in the computer lab during the first grade class Tech time.

Time needed is 9:10am-9:50am Monday-Thursday.

This is an ongoing position and will continue until the end of the school year. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer please email

rmonahan@platteriveracademy.com

Thank You.



Seeking Web Developers and Techies to Join the PRA Technical Committee

We have an amazing team of parents and PRA staff and are well on our way with 4 major initiatives for this year. Please register at

www.bigtent.com/groups/pratech

or just come and attend our next monthly meeting to see if you are interested in joining the committee. We meet the 1st Thursday of each month; 5-7pm. Next meeting – Thursday 1/5/12 in the PRA Technology

Lab. If you have any questions, please call 720.299.2811 for more information.



'Tis the Season for Generosity and Tax Breaks

For many people, this is a time of year to display your gratitude for a prosperous year. A time to give back to your community and a time for last minute tax deductions. If you are one of those people, we hope you will remember PRA's non-profit foundation, the PREA (Platte River Education Alliance, a 501(c)(3) chapter of DCEF). By contributing to the PREA you will be supporting the educational and enhancement programs that will directly benefit your children. Another option for directed giving is the ability to donate to the school (payable to "PRA" 501(c)(3) which can either go into the General Fund or to a specific program within the school. For more about the PREA or if you are interested in contributing to the PREA, you may contact Mike Rourke (mrourke@platteriveracademy.com) or **mail your check/donation to PRA (4085 Lark Sparrow St., Highlands Ranch, CO 80126) prior to December 31. U.S. Mail will be picked up on December 30 at the post office and donations received in the mail by that time will be eligible for a 2011 tax deduction.**

Best wishes for a
Merry Christmas, Happy Holiday
and a prosperous New Year!!

2011-12 Yearbooks

Order a 2011-12 yearbook for \$25! Order forms are available online in the Thursday E- Folder. After 12/30, the price is \$30. You may also order online at: <http://jostensyearbooks.com?REF=A01095757>

If you have any questions, contact: Desiree Dizon ddizon@platteriveracademy.com

8th grade Dedication Ad

Show your 8th grade student how proud you are! Purchase an ad in the yearbook. Include a photo, current or baby picture, a poem, or just a note from you and your family.

- 1/8 page ad - \$20
- 1/4 page ad - \$35
- 1/2 page ad - \$60
- Full page ad - \$110

Due date is January 31, 2012. The order form is included in the PRA e-folder. Pictures may be emailed or attached to be scanned. (Please indicate if you'd like the picture returned.) Turn in a CHECK issued to PRA, PICTURE, and ORDER FORM to the front office or Desiree Dizon ddizon@platteriveracademy.com



Thank you to all the wonderful PRA families that came out to support December's PTO Restaurant Night. It was great to see families and staff socializing with one another or zipping through the drive-thru on their way to other activities. Bottom line is that the PTO hoped you enjoyed a night off from cooking and truly we appreciate your support for these fundraising events.



DCSD 2012 Teacher Apple Awards

Five teachers received at least three nominations from our parent community for the 2012 Apple Award. These teachers are: Mrs. Brocka, Mrs. Kaze, Mrs. Martinez, Mr. Duque, and Mrs. Bowles. Congratulations to Mrs. Scharlotte Bowles, 7th and 8th grade Language Arts teacher, who has been selected to be PRA's representative for this year's DCSD Apple Awards.



PRA did an outstanding job of donating items for those in need! We made 105 stockings for the Arapahoe House.

Thank you so much for your donations and support for those in need! You all are making a meaningful difference in the lives of so many!

Student Council

Homework Club for January

The January Before and After care calendar is posted online in today's E-folder.



What a Fabulous Breakfast We Had with Santa!!

Thank you to everyone who participated in and attended Breakfast with Santa last Saturday morning. We had over 150 children attend and all seemed to enjoy themselves.

A special thank you to Santa for taking time out of his busy schedule and to Allison Filippone for taking such great photos. Their endless energy really made the picture taking a success.

Thank you also to all the wonderful 8th graders and their parents who helped make everything run smoothly. You all helped put on a terrific and fun event. And finally, a big thank you to the wonderful PRA Choir singers who gave us a beautiful roving concert!

Parents, if your child took a picture with Santa, don't forget to pick it up in the front office by Friday morning. They all turned out really cute!

Questions? Contact Stacy Stephens at stacystep@hotmail.com

Hot Lunch Ordering Schedule

Here is the 2011/2012 PRA hot lunch calendar with session order dates, check due dates, and menu served dates.

(No Later than 10:00a)

<u>Session</u>	<u>Order Dates</u>	<u>Checks due</u>	<u>Menu Served</u>
5	Dec. 1 – Dec. 6	December 6	January 3 - January 27
6	Jan. 12 – Jan.18	January 18	January 30 - February 24
7	Feb. 9 – Feb.14	February 14	February 27 - March 23
8	Mar. 15 – Mar.20	March 20	April 2 - April 27
9	April 12 - April 17	April 17	April 30 – May 23

Milk cost is 40 cents



Did you forget to order your school directory at registration? Would you like to have two? If so, we will have directories available for sale at the lobby desk for \$10. Get yours today!



School Calendars are now only FIVE Dollars! Pick one up today. You'll never miss a Hot Lunch Ordering date again!



REUSE AND RECYCLE TO HELP!!

8th Grade D.C. Trip fundraiser: Birthday Surprises

We are asking for your donations of unused unwanted items!

Wrapping paper -Birthday or solid colors
Ribbon and bows
Crepe paper AND streamers

Goody bag toys and party favors (unused)

Small toys - (unused)

Happy Meal Toys, etc.

Toys - Sales promo giveaways, freebies from the office,

Free ice cream coupons, or popcorn, etc.

Goody Bags - any plain or birthday theme

Colored tissue

Hats or tiaras

CANDY

Scotch tape

Scissors

A drop box will be available throughout the school year AT THE OFFICE.

Your donations will be put to good use!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

PRA 8TH GRADE WASHINGTON D.C. TRIP 2012

December 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	31

December Staff Birthdays

- 12/08 - Neeta Khatri (recess)
- 12/12 - Sharon Groeling (OT)
- 12/12 - Laurie Knapp (3rd)
- 12/16 - Kirstin Halpert (3rd)
- 12/18 - Kelli Boyd (4th)
- 12/19 - Paige Stecker (SPED)
- 12/19 - Nava Far (math aide)
- 12/22 - Kim Young (2nd)
- 12/25 - Hilary Price (Kindie)

December/January 2011 Calendar of PRA Events

Friday, December 16

- DRESS OF CHOICE
- 10:45a - 11:45a Holiday Party AM/PM
- 2pm-3pm -Class Holiday Parties /All Day Kindies - 6th

Monday, December 17-January 2

- NO SCHOOL/WINTER BREAK

Monday, January 2

- NO SCHOOL/Teacher In-Service Day

Tuesday, January 3

- STUDENTS RETURN FROM WINTER BREAK
- 6:30p PRA Meeting

Thursday, January 5

- 5p Tech Committee Meeting

Friday, January 6

- 6:30p-8p 7th gr. 2013 Washington DC Meeting
- Report Cards Go Home

Monday, January 9

- 11a-10p BTO Frozen Yogurt and 5p-10p Noodles & CO/8th Grade Fundraiser
- 6:30p PTO Meeting

Wednesday, January 11

- 8:30a-9:15a Award Assembly/4th-6th
- 2:15p-3p Award Assembly/7th-8th

Thursday, January 12

- HOT LUNCH ORDERING PERIOD BEGINS
- 6:30p Governing Board Meeting

Friday, January 13

- Place Scrip Orders
- DRESS OF CHOICE
- Middle School Dance

Saturday, January 14

- 8p-12p Family Work Day

Monday, January 16

- NO SCHOOL/MLK Day

Tuesday, January 17

- HOT LUNCH ORDERING PERIOD ENDS

Thursday, January 19

- 6:30 SAC Meeting

Thursday, January 26

- 8:30a-1:45p Denver Art Museum

Friday, January 27

- 8:30a-11a Fairy Tale/ 1st gr.



Have a Fun and Safe
Winter Break