



The Bell Tower Times

Newsletter of
Trabuco Mesa Elementary School and PTA

Trabuco Mesa Elementary



Trabucomesapta.org
PTA President: Laura Smith
Editor: Danielle Tuohy

Principal: Caryn McGrew

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News From the Principal's Desk

Teacher of the Year

We would like to extend our congratulations to Barbara Kowalczyk, Trabuco Mesa's Teacher of the Year. Barbara has been elected by her colleagues to represent our school in the district recognition program. She will be honored at a special recognition dinner, along with other Saddleback teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week, on Friday, May 4th. Mrs. Kowalczyk is a *stupendous* teacher! She is our 6th Grade GATE Teacher and teaches math to all of our 6th grade students. Barbara is an outstanding educator and colleague, and is also our school's certified trainer in data teams. She helps guide our grade-level teams through a data analysis cycle to analyze student achievement data to help meet the needs of all of our students.



Congratulations Mrs. Kowalczyk!



Caryn McGrew
Principal

STAR Testing

It is that time of year already, when teachers and students begin preparation for the CA Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program. All students in grades 2-6 will be tested in the areas of Language Arts and Math, and 5th grade students will also be tested in Science, during the weeks of May 7 – May 18. Please avoid making doctor and dentist appointments during this two-week time period. Scores on these tests will be reported to parents this summer, sometime prior to the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.

STAR Testing scores are used to assign our school an Academic Performance Index (API) Score, which ranks all schools throughout California. Trabuco Mesa ranks in the top 10, with an API of 924. The goal of our staff is to have test scores that accurately reflect the quality of the teaching and learning that is taking place at our school. These tests are used to measure student achievement and the scores help us to continually evaluate our curriculum and school programs to raise your child's academic performance. They are just one of the many tools we use to assess the skills and abilities of our students. **Encourage your child to do their best!**

Trabuco Mesa Elementary School

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[www.svusd.k12.ca.us/
schools/tmesa](http://www.svusd.k12.ca.us/schools/tmesa)

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7:30am -3:30 pm

Phone: (949) 858-3338
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**Absentee Children
Phone-In Message Line:**
(949) 589-1923

PTA Email Blasts and Website!

Much of our information is posted on our website or sent via email. Please make sure you're receiving our emails so you won't miss important due dates, event dates and surveys!! Visit trabucomesapta.org to sign up!

Trabuco Mesa Elementary PTA, Saddleback Valley Council PTA, Fourth District PTA, California PTA, National PTA



STAR Testing Continued

You can help prepare your child for STAR Testing by helping them feel confident, well prepared and ready to succeed on these important tests. You can boost your child's performance on standardized tests by:

Making sure your child is in school every day. Teachers can't teach students who aren't in school. Research shows that regular school attendance can result in significant test-score gains. So remember:

Make sure your child is in school every day.

Don't schedule medical appointments during school hours.

Don't take your child out of school for a family trip or activity.

Don't allow your child to be tardy. (Have your child get things ready the night before so he/she can get to school on time.)

Reassure your child that test scores are only one measure of his or her abilities, not the whole picture. Don't judge your child on the basis of his or her test score.

Talk with your child about what is happening in class and ask what he or she is reading and learning. Studies show that kids who talked with their families on a weekly basis about school and what they were reading scored higher on the national standardized reading test, than kids who talked with their families less often about school.

Express a positive attitude about the test and confidence in your child's ability to do well on it. Research shows that parents' and teachers' attitudes influence children's attitudes. *(So if you're upbeat and encouraging about the test, your child is likely to feel good about it!)*



IMPORTANT DATES



April 3rd - Ballpark Restaurant Night 12-9

April 4th - PTA Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Library - Mrs. Lennertz (TM Librarian) Guest Speaker

April 4th - Cookie Dough order pick up in the MPR from 2:20-4 p.m. or at 6:30 p.m. at the PTA Meeting in the Library.

April 6th - Yearbook Preorders Due & Pop Tabs from Aluminum cans are due for our outreach project.

April 9th-13th - Spring Recess (no school)

April 18th & 19th - Ability Awareness Days (April 18th Grades 4-6 & April 19th Grades K-3)

April 20th - Class Act Family Night at 7 p.m. in the MPR

April 30th - May 4th - Teacher Appreciation Week

May 2nd - PTA Meeting at 2:30 p.m. in the MPR

May 11th - Bingo Night in the MPR 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. (\$5.00 per player)



Transitional Kindergarten

SVUSD will offer a Transitional Kindergarten program for children whose birthdays fall between November 2, 2007 and December 2, 2007. If there is space available, children with earlier birthdays may apply to participate in this program. Sites where the program will be offered and registration details are now available on the SVUSD website and in brochure form at your school of residence. Applications should be returned to the school office or District office by March 30, 2012.



Raising a Reader

How do you raise a child to be an enthusiastic and consistent reader? TV, videogames, computers, and other modern distractions sometimes make it difficult for children to focus on reading. Here are some strategies that the diligent parent can use to help motivate a child to read. Try them all -- what doesn't work one day may work well the next.

- Visit your local library often. Get your children their own library cards. Try a story hour or other free event at the library.
- Check out the local bookstore. A book or gift certificate always makes a terrific gift.
- At the library, let your child choose some of the books.
- Let your child see you reading, whether it's the newspaper, a magazine, or the latest bestseller.
- Encourage older children to read to their younger brothers and sisters. Or have the whole family set aside some time to read together!
- Show your child how people use reading all the time. Read aloud street and store signs, maps, billboards, menus, and labels on packages.
- Create a library for your child of new or used books. Look for affordable books at yard sales, secondhand book stores, and library book sales.
- Set up an area in your home where a variety of reading materials are within easy reach. Encourage writing by including paper, crayons, pens and pencils.
- Subscribe to a children's magazine. Read it with your child every month.
- Carry books to read to your child wherever you go - at the doctor's office, in line at the store, or on a long car ride. (You can also listen to stories on tape.)
- Encourage a love of words by playing rhyming and word games, singing silly songs, or writing poems and stories together.
- Talk about daily activities or tell stories about your family or culture to help children develop their language skills.
- Visit the *Between the Lions* web site (www.pbskids.org/lions) for more on children and reading.



-This article was reprinted from the CAPTA "The Communicator", January 2012

Comments, Questions, Suggestions?

Please feel free to email President@trabucomesapta.org if you ever have any comments, questions or suggestions. If you would like to remain anonymous, there is a PTA comment box located in the PTA corner in the office. The box will be in the office for the next few months.

The PTA is a noncommercial, nonsectarian and nonpartisan organization.

Special Education News

Special education services provide educational support to many of our students at Trabuco Mesa Elementary. Students are identified as having individualized and unique learning needs through an evaluation and eligibility determination process. When students are eligible to receive special education services, individualized goals are developed and interventions are implemented to meet the student's specific learning needs. There are a wide range of special education support services available at Trabuco Mesa Elementary to meet the needs of our preschool population as well as the K through 6th grade students.

The preschool program on our campus continues to change and grow. It is the largest of all our special education programs at Trabuco Mesa Elementary. The Special Day Class (SDC) program consists of three morning classes and three afternoon classes. Their teachers are Kim Brown, Joann Dubiansky, and Kyna McCaskey. The IBI Small Group class, whose children require smaller teacher to student ratio, is taught by Linda Gillespie with the help of multiple Instructional Assistants. Finally, the IBI Tutoring class provides continued, small group support for children within the Special Day Class program and is currently taught by Jordyn Bennett with the support of her team of Instructional Assistants. In addition to working closely with their classroom teachers, our preschoolers also receive intervention from a variety of specialists such as Speech/Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists as well as an Adapted Physical Education teacher. Our Preschool Speech/Language Pathologists are Dianna Contino and Robyn Maynard. The Occupational Therapists are Anna Berezin and Shelley Berg. The Physical Therapist is Mary Pat Halonen and the Adapted Physical Education teacher is Rob Beckwith.

Special Education at Trabuco Mesa also includes programs for our Kindergarten through 6th grade students. Education specialists work with identified students to meet the goals written into their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Brenda Ridenour and Bonnie Brunner, our Resource Specialists, work with children in grades K through 6th grade. They support students working towards the general education curriculum through a collaborative model. Barbara Williams is the Speech/Language Pathologist that works with our K through 6th grade students on improving speech or articulation and building specific areas of language. Our School Psychologist, Kathryn Jaronczyk, is on campus to help and support personnel, students, and assess related learning, social, and behavioral concerns. Mrs. Jaronczyk supports all staff and parents from preschool through sixth grade.

Trabuco Mesa PTA Board Officers and Chairs

Officers

Laura Smith - PTA President

Jessica Leyva - Executive VP

Faith Dumke - VP Membership

Melody Henderson - VP Fundraising

Becky McCarthy - VP Programs

Caryn McLain - VP Volunteer Development

Marilyn Sullivan - VP Reflections

 **Chelsea Rowe** - Secretary

Amy Meier - Financial Secretary

Vanessa Braaksma - Treasurer

Georgiana Ruiz - Auditor

Marianne Porter - Historian

April Ryan - Parliamentarian

Chairs

Trisha Meyer - Legislative Representative

Carolina Montes - Special Education

Laura Gilliland - Class Act

Danielle Tuohy - Newsletter

Georgiana Ruiz - Book Fair

Shannon Carlow VanDyck - Teacher
Appreciation Week

Geneva Giddens - Yearbook

Cindy Kluger - Anti-Bullying

Sarah Handler - Marathon Club

Faith Dumke - Adopt A Book

Summer Reading - Tracy Peterson

 **Principal Caryn McGrew** - Advisor

Contact information for Officers and
Chairs is posted on our website
under the Contact Us Tab. Please
visit our website
www.trabucomesapta.org.

PTA President's Message

At our March General PTA Meeting, elections were held for the 2012-2013 TMPTA Board. **I am happy to report that all elected positions have been filled.** Even though the elected positions have been filled, the board wouldn't be able to run as smoothly or offer programs, events and activities if not for our chairmen. **We have quite a few chair positions open for next year and I hope we can fill these positions before the year ends.** (A listing of open positions can be found on the next page.)

We are currently planning for next year at our Board-Elect Meetings. We'll have several Board-Elect Meetings over the next few months to ensure that everyone on the 2012-2013 Board has input on the budget, events, activities and programs offered next year. Besides their input, we incorporate parents and teachers input into our planning by way of survey results. **This month a Board-Elect survey will be sent via email to those on our email list.** The survey will be quite different from the Board-Elect Surveys over the last 5+ years, but rest assured, even though we aren't asking you to rate programs from highest to lowest priority, **the questions posed and your responses will allow us to better plan for the coming year.**

While we're starting to plan events for next year, we still have events to look forward to this year. **Events for this month include: Ballpark Restaurant Night, PTA Meeting, Cookie Dough delivery and pick up, Ability Awareness Days, Class Act Family Night and the start of Teacher Appreciation Week.** You can find these events (and a few more) with specific dates and times, listed in the Newsletter under Important Upcoming Dates or on the homepage of our website www.trabucomesapta.org. You can also view the monthly calendar by clicking on the Calendar Tab. **Please be sure to read the Upcoming Dates to not only see when events and activities are occurring, but you will also see when items are due!**

I hope you can join us at our **April 4th PTA Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Library.** We have a special guest speaker! **Randee Lennertz, our new librarian at Trabuco Mesa, has volunteered her time to talk about the status of our library.** She will discuss the recent update of Accelerated Reader, the Adopt a Book program, and Destiny Quest, our school's online catalog that students can access from home. Mrs. Lennertz will also share an analysis of our library collection, how it compares to other schools, and ways we can update our collection so that it can better support our curriculum.

(Continued on next page)

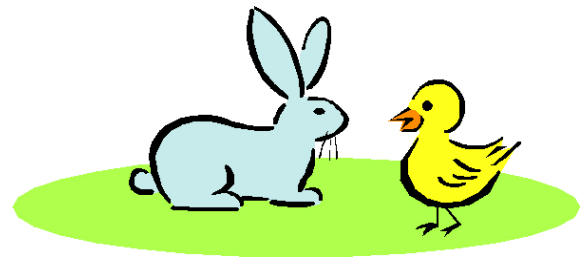
PTA President's Message Continued

At the March 7th PTA Meeting, the 2012-2013 PTA Board was elected. I would like to thank the following volunteers for dedicating their time and for working tirelessly to continue to provide programs, events and activities that enrich the lives of all TM Students!

Executive Vice President: **Shannon Carlow-VanDyck**
Vice President of Membership: **Ranju Char**
Vice President of Ways and Means: **Melody Henderson**
Vice President of Programs: **Becky McCarthy**
Vice President of Volunteers and Outreach: **Caryn McLain**
Vice President of Reflections: **Marilyn Sullivan**
Secretary: **April Ryan**
Treasurer: **Vanessa Braaksma**
Financial Secretary: **Amy Meier**
Auditor: **Georgiana Ruiz**
Historian: **Chelsea Rowe**

I would also like to thank the following volunteers for accepting appointments for these positions:

Parliamentarian: **Jessica Leyva**
Newsletter Editor: **Danielle Tuohy**
Accelerated Reader: **Tracy Peterson**
Summer Reading: **Cindy Kluger**
Legislative Representative: **Trisha Meyer**
Yearbook: **Geneva Giddens**
Box Tops: **Gina Hummel**
Teacher Appreciation Week: **Shannon Carlow-VanDyck**



I will be continuing on this journey as your **PTA President** for one more year. I encourage any current PTA Member to consider chairing an event, program or activity next year. [The open chair positions include: Adopt A Book, Book Fair, Class Act, Rummage Sale, Special Education, Tile Painting, Website and 6th Grade Promotion.](#) If you're interested in learning more about these positions, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have or provide you with more details. Please feel free to contact me via email at President@trabucomesapta.org or 949-742-1875.

Thank you!

Laura Smith



Class Act Family Night - Friday, April 20th 7 p.m.- 8:30 p.m. in the MPR
We hope you and your entire family will attend this free evening concert! It will feature music by Aaron Copland performed by our school's musician and musicians from his/her instrument "family". Refreshments and a meet and greet to follow the event. Questions, please contact our Class Act Chairperson, Laura Gilliland via email at laurag724@gmail.com.

Special Education - Carolina Montes



Join Autism Speaks in celebrating World Autism Awareness Day on April 2nd and Light It Up Blue to help shine a light on autism.

Whether it's your front porch, local city hall or office, the whole world is going blue to increase awareness about autism.

Autism affects 1 in 110 children, 1 in 70 boys.

For more information please visit:

www.autismspeaks.org

www.autism-society.org

www.worldautismawarenessday.org



It's ok to be different!

On Wednesday April 18th and Thursday April 19th we will have our 3rd Annual Ability Awareness Event!

Activities scheduled for Trabuco Mesa students:
Grades 4, 5, 6

Socks (Cerebral Palsy)
Disability in the media
Identify (symbols)

Grades K, 1, 2, 3

Say What? (Learning disabilities)
Learn the song "The More We Get Together" in sign language.
Meet Kody, a three legged dog who helps people with disabilities.

If you are interested in helping out, please contact me special@trabucomesapta.org

**CAC event coming up on
May 16, 2012**

**Join us for a parent
education night.**

**"INCLUSION,
BRIDGING THE GAP
BETWEEN SDC AND
GENERAL
EDUCATION"**

**At Saddleback School
District Boardroom**

**More information coming
soon...**

Thank You to Our March Volunteers...

Thank you to Geneva Giddens and Melody Henderson for organizing the Yearbook preorders!

Thank you to Sarah Handler, Chelsea Rowe, Shannon Carlow-VanDyck, Caryn McLain, Jessica Leyva, Georgiana Ruiz, Leah Handler, Katie Plesac, Melody Henderson, Becky McCarthy, Tracy Bowie and Martha Cassarubias for being coaches and helpers at the Marathon Club!

Thank you to Jessica Leyva for chairing a successful Rummage Sale and for securing donations from the high school!

Thank you to Melody Henderson for picking up the donations from the high school!

Thank you to Vanessa Braaksma for helping to coordinate the donation delivery on Saturday!

Thank you to Mrs. McGrew for opening the MPR on a Saturday in order for us to deliver the high school donations!



Thank you to Faith Dumke for creating the fantastic Adopt A Book display in the library!

Thank you to Caryn McLain, Jessica Leyva and Melody Henderson for helping to set up the Distinguished School Validation Visit Luncheon!

Thank you to Science Wizard Wenzel for running an amazing Science Fair!

Thank you to the hard working Science Fair Judges! We appreciate your help and volunteer time!



SAVE THE DATE!!

Bulldog Round-Up

Friday, June 1, 2012

5-8pm

Join us on the playground for Food, Games, DJ, Prizes, and FUN!

Interested in volunteering for this fun event?

Email Marianne Porter Momto3qts@gmail.com