

# Clinton Courier

A Publication of the Clinton Parent Teacher Association  
Issue 7, March 2008

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Spring is in the air and just around the corner. How exciting to witness nature so gloriously come alive once again. This is a great opportunity for us to share with our students, and you with your children, this cyclical process that occurs year in and year out and which helps make this region such a special place to live.

Just as springtime ends the hibernation period for many of our furry friends, so too comes an end to the indoor hibernation of our students who begin to renew their vitality in the great outdoors (some call it the blacktop). This renewed energy sometimes brings with it behaviors which are more physical/hurtful than what is acceptable and appropriate. These behaviors may cause harm and/or consequences for students involved.

Knowing how much you want your child to run around and play so he or she will come home calm and ready to pay attention to you, it is here that I ask you to chat with your child to reinforce what is appropriate behavior and what is not. We request that all students keep their hands and feet to themselves, play games other than tag, and enjoy one another's company without pushing, shoving, tripping, name calling, bullying, or fighting.

As you chat with your child, you may think to yourself, "I would like my child to really enjoy recess, perhaps I should volunteer to help during this time." Well, lo and behold, we would be happy to accommodate your wish to become a recess volunteer. Simply email our incredible PTA who will grant your wish in no time. You see, Clinton community, the greater the adult presence on the playground, the more likely everyone will enjoy the great outdoors and all it has to offer.

With barely enough time to sleep let alone hibernate, let's take some time this Women's History Month to honor not only the extraordinary achievements of the women of the world, but more importantly, the achievements of the women we are surrounded by. Loving and caring mothers, grandmothers, foster mothers, guardians, sisters, aunts, cousins, friends, teachers, and many other women devote their lives to the good health, welfare, and success of the children and adults in their lives. Let's celebrate them and each other as we strive to continue what they have modeled for us.

So, you may be asking yourself this month, just who was St. Patrick? Well, to begin with he was not Irish. He was born in Roman Britain. He did not eat corned beef and cabbage, tell embellished stories all day, nor take a day off to march in a five-hour parade. He was captured at 16 and taken as a slave to Ireland where he remained for six years before escaping. He returned to Ireland as a missionary and in the eighth century, became its patron saint. Hence, the countrymen and women of Ireland honored him by giving him his own holy day or holiday. And so it became

## MARCH-AT-A-GLANCE

- 1-31<sup>ST</sup> WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH
- 6<sup>TH</sup> AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT BEGINS
- 7<sup>TH</sup> SCHOOL PRIDE DAY
- 8<sup>TH</sup> TRICKY TRAY/SILENT AUCTION, 6 PM
- 10<sup>TH</sup> COOKIE DOUGH/CHEESECAKE FUNDRAISER ENDS
- 12<sup>TH</sup> PAC MEETING, 6:15 PM  
PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, 7:15 PM
- 17<sup>TH</sup> ST. PATRICK'S DAY
- 21<sup>ST</sup> SCHOOL CLOSED – GOOD FRIDAY
- 27<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL DINNER, 6 PM



## TRICKY TRAY'S A HOT TICKET!

Make your reservations now for **Clinton's 5th Annual Tricky Tray/Auction**, which takes place on **Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 to 10:30 pm, at the Maplewood Woman's Club**. The entrance fee of \$20 includes dessert, wine, beer and 25 tricky tray tickets. Reservations can be made in advance. Get your friends together and bring your own food. We will reserve a table for you if you send reservations and payment for ten people.

Some of the amazing prizes we have include a **Garmin GPS System** (purchased with money donated by our wonderful teachers), a **Las Vegas vacation accommodation**, a **Spa Relaxer package from the Short Hills Spa** (valued at \$288), an **Apple iTouch, the labor of a master carpenter from Finishing Touches Unlimited for one full day** (\$630 value), **three-month membership to CAN DO Fitness Club**, a **Brite Smile gift certificate and Philips Sonicare toothbrush** (\$750 value), and many, many, more!

Please call Claire Sinclair if you have any questions at 973-763-0088 or email her at [hifromclaire@yahoo.com](mailto:hifromclaire@yahoo.com).

an honor and a duty to celebrate the work of this great missionary. In closing, I leave you with the following Irish saying: *May you live as long as you want, and never want as long as you live.*

Slainte,  
Patty

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## FROM THE PTA PRESIDENT

Hello Clinton Families,

What a month we've had! Our Clinton School community has received so many accolades from so many people—the Mayor of Maplewood, the South Orange Village President, Board of Education members, incoming families, National and State PTA representatives, and that's just naming a few. All of those people were amazed with what Clinton School accomplished with Walk Around the World. I, too, was in awe of the final product, but not surprised. I've known for a long time what a wonderful, talented, supportive, and collaborative school community we have, and now many other people do too!

Some might ask what else the Clinton School community can do this year after a night like Walk Around the World? And the answer is...a lot! On **March 27<sup>th</sup>** our very popular and delicious **International Dinner** happens! **April 22<sup>nd</sup>** is **Earth Day**, and at Clinton School April is going to be Earth Month! We'll go "paperless" beginning in April (see page 3), and our **April 17<sup>th</sup>** general PTA meeting will focus on "Green School, Green Home" initiatives. Flyers will be coming home soon with more details. **May 17<sup>th</sup>** brings our Clinton School Fair, which will have fun new rides and an exciting Medieval theme this year. And **June 12<sup>th</sup>** will be our annual outdoor picnic on the front lawn. Write these dates in your calendar and keep on coming to Clinton School. It wouldn't be the same without you!

Thanks for all you do!

Best,

Leah

## COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS MENTOR CLINTON 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS

If you happen to notice some oversize students at Clinton School lately it's likely that you've encountered an "elementor," one of the Columbia High School students who has volunteered to spend his or her lunch hour reaching out to fifth grade students. Tested last year at Jefferson, Tuscan, and Seth Boyden schools, the mentoring program proved so successful it was expanded to all of the district elementary schools this year. Once a week Columbia High School students are brought via bus to one of the elementary schools where they spend time teaching fifth grade students a sport or game. Sponsored by the Parenting Center, the program is focused on creating role models for the younger students.

## IT'S TIME FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DINNER!

Get ready for the **7th Annual International Dinner, "A Taste of Clinton,"** to be held on **Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> from 6:15-7:45 pm** at Clinton School. This wonderful event brings together the culturally and ethnically diverse families that make Clinton School so very special. For those of you who have attended the dinner in prior years, you can attest to the scrumptious array of international dishes prepared by our own Clinton families. As a special feature for the kids this year, there will be a festive hot dog stand. Of course, children are welcome to sample some of the other delicious gourmet cuisine as well.

We hope all Clinton families will take advantage of the opportunity to sit and socialize with each other over a fabulous meal. In order to make this event a success, we need your help. Please let us know if you are willing to prepare a dish for the dinner or volunteer a bit of your time by aiding with set-up, clean-up, or other miscellaneous tasks. Please contact Anne Klein (973-762-5699 or kleins.nj@comcast.net) or Robin Davenport (973-763-9165 or rdavenpo@caldwell.edu).

Thank you and Bon Appetit!

*Robin Davenport and Anne Klein, A Taste of Clinton Co-Chairs*

## CLASSROOM NEWS

This feature provides a wonderful opportunity for everyone in the Clinton community to learn about all the innovative and inspiring activities that engage students during the school day. If you would like to have your child's classroom experiences and stories included in next month's *Courier*, please send an email to Bob Hugel at [bhugel@scholastic.com](mailto:bhugel@scholastic.com).

### FIRST GRADE

The students in Mrs. Motz's first-grade class celebrated the arrival of the 100th day of school by creating independent projects, each composed of 100 pieces. Their fun, original creations included buildings of Legos, stacks of pennies, 100 buttons sewn on sweatshirts, and 100 animals in a zoo. In other news, students have been working in groups to complete tasks—without the help of their teacher. The purpose of this activity is to introduce students to the idea that they can learn without an adult on hand. Students also participated in the annual music program, and they thoroughly enjoyed performing a song in a different language for their families and friends. They would like to thank Mrs. Eames for all her hard work!

### FOURTH GRADE

The fourth graders got into the spirit of the Walk Around the World event. Led by Mrs. Dunsavage, students made brightly colored patterned dragons, which were hung in the hallways. For the annual music concert, students celebrated music from Ireland and the Caribbean by singing "Oh Danny Boy" and "Limbo Like Me." Members of the fourth-grade choir, together with the fifth-grade choir, sang in rounds and led the school in a rendition of "Light the Candles Around the World."

### FIFTH GRADE

Ms. Kirkland's fifth-grade class celebrated Chinese New Year on February 11<sup>th</sup>. Maggie H.'s mother brought in dumplings and other traditional treats to celebrate the Year of the Rat. Some of the students were proud to participate in the PTA's Walk Around the World event on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Claire E. and Maggie H., along with their friends and sisters, danced the Handkerchief Dance to represent China. Kaiyn C. played the drums for Ghana, while Ashlyn S., Ciara B., and Jana H. danced. And Haiti was represented by Whitney A. and Leo J.

On Valentine's Day, the fifth graders had a breakfast hosted by the fabulous fifth-grade teachers: Ms. Kirkland, Ms. Fleming, and Mr. Drechsel. It was a terrific way to celebrate Valentine's Day!

Nina K.'s stirring piano performance was a huge highlight of this year's Winter Concert. The fifth-grade voices were in excellent form and the music was enriched by the percussion efforts of Denroy G., Tyrone W., Joshua T., Avery C., and Jonathan H-F., as well as the excellent recorder played by select fifth graders. The entire performance made us all proud!

Fifth-grade students recently traveled to the State Theatre in New Brunswick to see the Spanish Flamenco Performers. The superb production featured world-class Spanish dancers, singers, and musicians who performed numbers reflective of a region in Spain called Andalusia. This presentation allowed Clinton fifth graders to experience an authentic rendering of this proud, elegant, and passionate tradition.

## COOKIE DOUGH FUNDRAISER

Our popular cookie dough/pretzel fundraiser has begun. Materials were sent home in backpacks last week. The deadline for returning orders is Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, and we expect the products to be delivered by Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. If you have questions, please contact Karen Bethel at [kbethel@verizon.net](mailto:kbethel@verizon.net).

## THE SPRING FAIR IS COMING!

The Clinton School Fair will take place on **Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 11 am–3 pm**, in the Clinton parking lot. This year it will have a medieval theme. To make the School Fair the huge success it is every year, we need your help. Volunteers, we need lots of volunteers! All we ask is that you give one hour of your time. The rest of the day can be spent enjoying the fair's fun activities, which include games, rides, music, food, and prizes! To volunteer, please contact Deb Yohannan, Volunteer Coordinator at [deb1105@verizon.net](mailto:deb1105@verizon.net) or 973-761-4055. Please provide a time slot during which you are available (set up, 11-12, 12-1, 1-2, 2-3, or break down). Your participation makes this event an awesome one every year. Please volunteer!

## GOT THE WINTER BLAHS?

Send your child on a free trip to an island this winter—**Study Island!** Study Island is a safe place on the web that reinforces the subject matter taught in class and the skills necessary for taking multiple-choice tests. Study Island is open to all third, fourth, and fifth grade Clinton students. To request a username and password, e-mail your child's name and grade to Colleen Broderick at [brodericks4@verizon.net](mailto:brodericks4@verizon.net).

**The South Orange Maplewood School District has started an E-Newsletter. You can subscribe to the newsletter by visiting the district website, [www.somds.k12.nj.us/](http://www.somds.k12.nj.us/). The newsletter sign-up is on the bottom right side of the home page.**

## CLINTON GOES PAPERLESS

In honor of April, which we're calling Earth Month here at Clinton, we will be cutting down on the number of backpack flyers by going paperless. Beginning next month, we will no longer distribute a copy of every community flyer in backpacks. Instead, we will send out a monthly email with a link to the Community Digital Backpack ([www.somds.k12.nj.us/digital-backpack](http://www.somds.k12.nj.us/digital-backpack)) on the SOMA School District website, where these flyers will be listed and available for downloading. **This will not affect flyers and notices that pertain to Clinton School or Clinton School PTA events and news.** This is only for the community flyers we receive monthly for activities such as youth sports, exercise programs, plays, etc. Please note: We will have copies of these flyers on hand in the PTA front hallway display rack for families who do not have internet access.

Accessing these flyers electronically will save a great deal of paper since they are usually distributed to all 485 of our students. To be sure you receive the monthly email with the Digital Backpack link, please be sure you are on the Clinton PTA Email list by sending your email address to [ccancellaro@verizon.net](mailto:ccancellaro@verizon.net).

This paperless initiative is just one of many green initiatives we have planned for our school. In fact, our PTA General Meeting, which is scheduled for Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, at 7:15 pm, will have an environmental theme. We will have more details soon.

## CLINTON COMMUNITY SHINES AT WALK AROUND THE WORLD

As anyone who attended knows, **Walk Around the World** was a smashing success. We are in awe of what was accomplished on February 13th, and it far surpassed anything we could have imagined. We are lucky to have such an inspired, committed, and giving school community. Of course it would not have been possible without the hard work, creativity, enthusiasm, and generosity of a very large group of people.

Our amazing design team worked very long hours for weeks designing passports, entry ways, posters, customs stations, Tap Tap buses, Chinese dragons, Haitian landscapes, and much, much more. Our school looked like a very well-designed museum thanks to the hard work and talent of **Kevin Henegan, Heather Kern, and Jeremy Moss** (and Jeremy was responsible for the awesome music as well).

Our customs agents really looked the part. They were efficient, welcoming, and ran our customs station like a well-oiled machine. Thanks to **Patty O'Connell, Janet Trzaska, Robin Davenport, and Odette Cordner**. And a special thanks to Odette for coming up with the quiz idea, to Patty for writing the questions and coordinating the quiz, and to **Rosanna McCrear's mother** for getting us the airline pins!

Our China exhibit, chaired by **Emni Audet**, was fabulous. Many talented people made that display as awesome as it was, including **Helen Chen-Trumbull, Laura Whitmire and Greg Benson, Francine Anderson-Campbell, Kathleen Morrow-Reilly, Joyce Hart, Colleen Broderick, and the Evans-Winters family**. And a special thanks goes to the **Yeung family** (a Clinton family and owners of #1 **Chinese Restaurant in South Orange**) for supplying the food at a greatly discounted price. Thanks, too, to our Chinese Yo Yo performer, **Derek Lee**, and to the **South Orange Maplewood Dance Troupe** featuring **Melanie B., Hannah H., Lienne H., Ariana W., Claire S., Cara-An H., and Clinton's own Claire E., Maggie H., and Anna W.**

Our Ghana exhibit was chaired by our great friend **Katherine Hilaire** of **Children of the Sun Cultural Programs**. Katherine set up a wonderfully rich display and we thank her, master drummer **Cedric Miller**, the **Children of the Sun drummers**, and the extremely well-prepared and passionate parents who guided visitors through Ghana: **Liz Athos, Kim Chambers, Tammy Haynie, Deidra McLaughlin, Rivka Nelson, and Jonai Sullivan**.

Our Haitian committee transformed our cafeteria into a Haitian village and marketplace. For that we thank committee chair **Rosanna McCrear** and the very talented team of **Lorraine Labonne-Storch, Jackie Lahey, Moya Titus, and Sandra Tomlinson**. We were also extremely lucky to have Haitian artist/storyteller/performer **Nadine LaFond** with us for the evening. Her charismatic presence and her many talents graced the Haiti exhibit and made for an inspiring performance at the end of the evening.

**Liz Herring**, chair of the Spain committee, and her Cracker Jack team of **Jung Lee Masters, Sheryl O'Connell, Victoria Lorino, Karen Bethel, Eric Zinner, Amy Paternite, Amy Rubel, Senora Seltzer, and Senora Leyva** created a brilliant interactive display in our gym. Special thanks to **Arlene and Carlos Aguirre** for supplying so much

food, and to Flamenco dancers **Antonia Messina, Stephen Carberry**, and guitarist **Mike Moroch**, for leading students in Flamenco throughout the evening and for putting on an inspiring Flamenco performance in our auditorium.

The performance portion of our evening was top-notch. The performers representing each country (named above) were a huge hit with our visitors, and we are extremely grateful for their time and talents. A very big and special thank you goes to our emcee for the evening **Lori Brown Mirabal**. Lori was, as always, brilliant. She inspired us with her two songs and with her eloquent and substantive introductions to each performance. Her accompanist, **Richard Alston**, also deserves a big thanks. Mr. Alston is an extremely talented and well-known pianist and we were fortunate to have him with us. We also owe a special thanks to our stage managers for the evening **Liz Salituri and Kat Lozynsky**. There were many people to shepherd on and off the stage, and Liz and Kat kept things running very smoothly. And where would we have been without the patience and skill of **David Gomberg** who set up all the necessary sound equipment and ran the sound board for the duration. Being the husband of the PTA President is work enough, so taking on this task was really above and beyond!

Our ESL teachers **Arlene Aguirre** and **Sonia Decker** were on board from day one. Their ideas and enthusiasm were invaluable. They also provided amazing outreach efforts to our English as a Second Language families, personally inviting them to Walk Around the World and letting them know just how important they are to the Clinton School community.

We thank **Elizabeth King** for getting the word out about Walk Around the World in a big way. The evening was very well-attended by local politicians, Board of Ed members, and other dignitaries. We thank Elizabeth for making all of that happen and for liaising with the press to get us such positive coverage.

For documenting our evening in photos, we thank **Claire Sinclair** and **Jeremy Moss**. We are lucky to have such talented photographers in our midst.

For jumping in and helping when we needed help, thanks to **Tricia Bloom, Rachel Vidal, Chris Kensler, and the Cokorinos family**.

For staffing our PTA Table and offering other kinds of support, thanks to **Robyn Birdsong Frazier, Erica Dussman, and Regina and Derek Romanoux**.

Parent **Joe Lemonnier**, a professional cartographer, made the gorgeous, age-appropriate maps that adorned our walls. Joe also donated copies of the *Time Atlas for Kids* (which includes his maps) as a prize for our evening's raffle. Thank you Joe!

We'd like to thank **Jackie Rhinehart** for her brilliant African American Heritage Month display in our front hallway.

The Clinton School custodians were patient, accommodating, and thorough before, during, and after the event. We appreciate the hard work and kindness of **Miss Bessie Medley, Mr. Mike Settles, and Mr. Samad Mobley**.

We're also grateful to Columbia High School staff **Deb Gomer** and **Anthony Campiglia** for their support and ideas, and

*Continued on next page*

## WALK AROUND THE WORLD

*Continued from page 4*

to our district's Communications Director **Judy Levy** for all she did to help spread the word about our event and for supporting us throughout the planning.

Finally, we could not have pulled off this event without the patience, skill, care, support, and enthusiasm of the **Clinton School teachers and staff**. Without the leadership of **Patty O'Neill** and **Ann Bodnar**, this event could not have happened. They were supportive, excited, and ready to rock from the moment they heard the idea. These two women work tirelessly on behalf of our school and students, and they never flinched at the extra effort that was required on their part to make the night run smoothly. With their leadership, anything is possible.

Our amazing teachers and staff also played an integral role. **Arlene Aguirre, Sonia Decker, Kate Fearon, Marlene Cutrufello, and Beth Frascella** are the guardians of one of our most precious resources—our international students. We are constantly inspired by their commitment, expertise, and generosity. Their commitment to Clinton's international community served as a tremendous inspiration for Walk Around the World. Additionally, their outreach efforts were responsible for making our ESL families aware of WAW, and making them feel welcome and eager to attend. **Meta Johnson** provided a great deal of wise advice and encouragement.

**Irene Dunsavage** led our students in an awesome multicultural art extravaganza which not only made our school look beautiful, but also bolstered the meaning of WAW in the classroom. **Barbara Eames** taught our students an impressive array of international songs, providing context for Walk Around the World, and preparing them for the amazing winter concert we all witnessed on February 14th. **Senora Seltzer** and **Senora Leyva**, our much-loved Spanish teachers, make our children excited about world languages on a daily basis and for Walk Around the World they generously shared their considerable knowledge and creativity.

**Brenda Allen** and **Robin Wiggins** always greeted us with a smile through the weeks and weeks of detailed planning and interruptions. **Joann Harrigan** put up with numerous intrusions and the borrowing of many staplers and scissors, all the while providing words of encouragement and support. **Jeff Lehman** and **Mike Iannella** generously let us into their already limited space so we could set up our elaborate displays on the day of the event and worked around us heroically. And **Mrs. Bennett** and her **ASP crew** also vacated their usual space so we could set up our China and Haiti exhibits, and did so with the warmth, generosity, and community spirit for which they are so well known.

Finally, we offer a big thanks to our families and the families of all of those who worked so hard to make this event happen. WAW would not have happened without their patience, support, and willingness to part with us for many hours.

Cecelia Cancellaro and Leah Gomberg

As part of its **Winter Parenting Workshop Series**, the **Parenting Center** will present *All Kinds of Families*, a workshop by Aimee Gelnaw, on **March 27 and April 3**, and *Parenting Children During and After Divorce*, a workshop by Craig Podel, LCSW, on **March 10 and 17**. Both workshops will take place from 7:30-9 pm at the Parenting Center, 525 Academy St., and the fee for each workshop is \$10.

## BOX TOPS CLIPPERS

February was a good month for Box Tops! We collected \$68. I want to thank all those sending in their Box Tops cut out along the dotted line and for including their child's name and teacher. It is very much appreciated! Please keep sending and collecting Box Tops and don't forget about Campbell's Soup UPC codes. To see a full list of eligible products, visit the websites: [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com) & [www.labelsforeducation.com](http://www.labelsforeducation.com).

—Stephanie Mosé

- Kindergarten:** Shelffo- **Brian J. Swan- Wyatt A., Ethan M., Lila Z., Molly O.**  
Cutrufello- **Daniel O.**  
Johnson- **Ceci M., Emanuel D.**  
Motz- **Joshua R., Juliet A.**  
Wittig- **Christopher T., Jack K., Miranda L.**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade:** Hall- **Jason B., Daniel F., Bailey T.**  
Frascella- **Christina R.**  
Froelich- **Nathaniel B., Max O., Nicholas B.**  
Poutre- **Miles J., Jack O., Adam F., Shannon O.**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade:** Kent- **Nathan A., Steven K., Matthew H., Marissah M.**  
Pomares- **Ruby Z.**  
Banks- **Stefen R.**
- 4<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Johnson- **Alaina B., Dalilah R.**  
Schwarz- **Grant K., Gabriel B.**

## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

This month our first-floor display case honors the accomplishments of women in various fields. Among those celebrated are Clinton School graduate and Grammy-award-winner Lauryn Hill, Columbia High School graduate and Olympian Hazel Clark, and Debra Martin Chase, the producer of *Cinderella*, *The Princess Diaries*, and *The Cheetah Girls*. There is even a modern-day "Queen" from Newark, New Jersey. Bonus prizes will be given to those who guess her real name. So come out and enjoy the display, enter the raffle, and celebrate the fabulous women in our lives!

Congratulations to the winners of the African American Heritage raffle and thank you to all who participated.

—*Jacqueline Rhinehart*  
Cultural Heritage Month Coordinator

## AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT

Our spring After School Enrichment session begins on **Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup>**. One class, Telling Stories Through Drawing, does not begin until Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. Confirmation letters will go home in backpacks by Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. Please remind your child to report to the gymnasium at 3 pm dismissal on Enrichment days. Attendance will be taken there. Parents are to pick children up directly from their Enrichment classrooms at 4:15 (the classroom assignment is listed on the confirmation letter). **Please do not be late.** Proctors are parent volunteers and late pick-ups create inconvenience for them and anxiety for the students. If you have questions, please contact Cecelia Cancellaro at [ccancellaro@verizon.net](mailto:ccancellaro@verizon.net) or 973-763-1730.

## NEWS FROM PAC (FEBRUARY '08)

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) provides a forum for interaction between the principal and parents. Every meeting will have a set agenda comprised of items submitted by committee members. Parents not on the committee may submit items for discussion through any committee member. A list of members and any actions taken by the PAC will be published in the *Courier*. PAC meetings are intended to focus on Clinton School issues, as this is where the most impact can be made. District-wide issues, though certainly relevant to the school, are generally beyond the scope of the PAC. The goal is to develop action plans to address concerns of the Clinton community when necessary. Each month, the *Courier* will run a summary of the PAC meeting agenda and discussion.

The following topics were discussed at the February meeting:

**1. TV Turn-off:** Addressed some confusion expressed by 1<sup>st</sup> grade parents regarding movies shown to students during recess for students participating in TV Turn-off. TV Turn-off is a home activity not an in-school activity. Participation is purely voluntary. Children will go outdoors for recess, weather permitting. Movies are utilized in school on days when weather prevents the children from going outdoors or if class curriculum dictates. Parents with specific concerns should direct their questions to Principal O'Neill.

**2. Physical Education Substitutes:** A question was brought to the membership about children doing non-physical education activities during gym when there is a substitute present. Due to various state requirements—a shortage of certified physical education substitutes, and liability—non-certified physical education substitutes are not permitted to engage in physical education activities with students.

**3. Standardized Testing:** Principal O'Neill discussed the upcoming standardized tests for each required grade and was specifically asked about a new 2<sup>nd</sup> grade assessment that will be given this year called NJ PASS. This decision was just made by the district and more information will be forthcoming. Parents will receive information on when these tests will be administered. The data derived from these tests provide an accurate assessment of student performance and drive curriculum development. Parents will receive specific information on their child's test scores when they become available.

**4. Language Arts Audit:** A district-wide independent audit is underway to evaluate the language arts curriculum. The information obtained by this audit will prove invaluable in determining the strength and weakness of the language arts curriculum in the district.

**5. E-Newsletter:** The district has an e-newsletter that users can subscribe to via the district website—[www.somds.k12.nj.us](http://www.somds.k12.nj.us). The newly redesigned website has a wealth of information on various district-wide initiatives along with school-specific information.

**6. Boiler System:** There have been a number of heat-related complaints. Principal O'Neill has asked maintenance to turn off the boiler at 9 am and to resume its use at 2 pm. This should help in addressing the excessive amount of heat produced during school hours.

**7. Bathrooms:** Urine in the garbage can and on the floor of the second floor boy's room has been reported several times by the custodians. They are working with school staff to locate the offenders and cease this unsanitary behavior.

The PAC Membership for the 2007-08 school year is as follows:

**Kindergarten:** Claire Sinclair (hifromclaire@yahoo.com)

**1st Grade:** Keli Anthony-Tianga

(thetiargas@comcast.net)

Tammy Dandino (tdandino@gmail.com)

**2nd Grade:** Chrishan Trojian, Secretary

(ctrojian@yahoo.com)

Ruth Lowenkron (RLowenkron@edlawcenter.org)

**3rd Grade:** Heather Spencer (semskee@verizon.net)

**4th Grade:** Sharon McHale (sjkmchale@verizon.net)

Laura Whitmire (gregandlaura@verizon.net)

**5th Grade:** Stephanie Williams-Jenkins

(stephanie.a.williamsjenkins@citi.com)

**Member at Large:** Nancy Friedman

(nancyfriedman@verizon.net)

**Principal:** Patty O'Neill

**Asst. to Principal:** Ann Bodnar

**PTA President:** Leah Gomberg

**PTA Vice-President:** Cecelia Cancellaro

Please remember that the PAC members are your representatives; if you have any issues you would like discussed at the next meeting, please contact one of the members listed above or your child's class parent(s). Dates for the 2008 PAC meetings are: March 12<sup>th</sup>, April 9<sup>th</sup>, May 14<sup>th</sup>, June 4<sup>th</sup>.

## CALLING 4<sup>TH</sup> & 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADERS!

The Maplewood Public Library's Hilton Branch is starting up a book club for fourth and fifth grade students. The first meeting will be held on Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, from 4-4:45 pm at the Hilton Branch, 1688 Springfield Ave (by Maplecrest Park). There will be fun activities and food (probably pizza) as we make plans to set up the club and choose our first book.

## GIRLS ON THE RUN PROGRAM RETURNS TO CLINTON!

Clinton school will once again be a site for the spring season of Girls on the Run.

Girls on the Run is a national organization whose mission is "to educate and prepare girls for a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living." We combine character lessons (how to listen, avoid gossip, resolve conflict, handle difficult emotions, show good sportsmanship, and address bullying behavior) with physical fitness. While we are not competitive, we do emphasize that girls are to always do three things when they attend our sessions: 1) be themselves, 2) have fun, and 3) try their best. Girls on the Run is open to girls in 3rd through 5th grades.

Our season begins in late March and continues through June. We will be meeting on Wednesdays from 3:30-5 pm. Registration is underway. Please register for the program online or via mail. Program cost: \$175. Some scholarships are available. For more information, please contact Anne Klein at 973-762-5699 or [kleins.nj@comcast.net](mailto:kleins.nj@comcast.net) or visit our website at [www.girlsontherunnj.org](http://www.girlsontherunnj.org).