



Skinner Middle School Newsletter

October 2014

*The legacy, the passion, the opportunity
Educating and motivating life-long learners who explore,
create and achieve.*

Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

An area of focus this school year for Skinner Middle School is Family and Community Engagement. Keeping our middle school children surrounded by community and family support during these formative years is critical to their emotional and academic success. We have committed to improving communication this school year so families are aware of structures and upcoming events that support our students.

We kicked off the school year with a community Back to School Night event. We had an amazing turnout and want to thank everyone who participated in the evening despite the weather. The PTO also hosted a kick-off meeting on September 9th. We had a great turnout and continue to take names of parents to help with Fundraising, Outreach, and Volunteering. Our next interactive events are Parent Teacher Conferences on 10/2 & 10/7, and our **5th Annual Fall Festival on 10/18**. Community organization information, food, and fun will be available for all at the festival!

Parent leadership opportunities are available within additional school structures. The **Collaborative School Committee (CSC)** is an area where we have four parent representatives to collaborate with staff and administration to ensure we are maximizing the Skinner budget and resources to best meet the needs of all our Skinner Scholars. Thank you to the following parents for serving on this committee for the school year: Frank Fresquez, John Michael Rivera, Clarissa Fierro, and Jeff Gonsalves-McCabe and Nicole Kazenske. **The Superintendent's Forum** is another parent leadership opportunity. The Forum is a venue to learn about DPS initiatives and learn from other schools in DPS to continue to focus on improvement for all of our students. Thank you to the following parents for serving on this committee: Clarissa Fierro, Adolfo Fierro. We are still in need of a couple additional representatives for the Forum. Please let the main office know if we can add you to this group.

Most importantly, we want to ensure all families have access to the building. Skinner has an ADA access door for families with strollers and visitors with physical disabilities. Currently there is a "doorbell" at the southeast doors (science wing) where families can get "buzzed in" during regular business hours. An additional ADA access door is located at the back northwest door. This additional access provides more appropriate parking options. We look forward to seeing you at Skinner!

Upcoming Important Dates for October

Wednesday, October 1 st	Free Dress for 95% and higher
Thursday, October 2 nd	Conferences 4-8pm
Friday, October 3 rd	September Good Standing Celebration
Monday, October 6 th	CSC 5 - 6pm
Tuesday, October 7 th	Conferences 4-8pm
Thursday, October 9 th	ELA-PAC 5:30 – 7:30
October 15 th , 16 th & 17 th	Interim Assessments for all subjects
Saturday, October 18 th	Fall Festival 10am – 2pm
Monday, October 20 th	NO SCHOOL - DPS
Tuesday, October 21 st	NO SCHOOL- DPS
Wednesday, October 22 nd	8 th Grade Career Fair – off campus
Tuesday, October 28 th	DPS School Choice EXPO 6-8pm
Friday, October 31 st	October Good Standing Celebration
Saturday, November 1 st	Fundraising Breakfast for Volleyball

Student/ Family/ Teacher Conferences

10/2 & 10/7
4-8pm

Conferences will take place three times this school year; October, February, and if needed in March/April.

It is an expectation that all students attend conferences with a family member to discuss their own academic progress and set goals for the remainder of the school year. At conferences, families will experience a student led conference or have a designated meeting with the grade level teachers.

**5th Annual
Skinner Fall Festival
Saturday, October 18th 10am-2pm**

Food - Games – Pie Eating Contest – Pony Rides -
Silent Auction and Swimming in Skinner's indoor
pool!

Family-friendly, Community Event! Open to the
Public! All proceeds benefit Skinner student field
trips, athletics, and activities.

Also available: A Comprehensive Health Fair sponsored
by Walgreens and Regis (Flu shots, BMI Testing, Lipid
Panel Screening, medication management therapy,
cholesterol readings, diabetic foot exam).

Need to do some fall cleaning? Sell your items at Fall
Festival. Spaces are \$20 and \$30 for two. Contact Skinner
to reserve your spot!

Attendance

Thank you to all families for instilling a sense of
personal responsibility to academics with each of your
children. It is evident that so many of our scholars are
setting the goal to meet our 95% middle school
attendance expectation and many students are striving
for 100%!

Attendance rate is calculated by the seat time students
are physically in class. Excused absences for medical
reasons and legal obligations do not negatively affect
the overall percentage calculation recorded in Infinite
Campus. Free Dress is awarded monthly to students
who have the 95% rate with no tardies to any classes
however, medical notes from appointments do impact
consideration for end of year awards when calculating
overall attendance rate for the school year.

Parenting Partners

Elvia Lubin, Parent Liaison & Joe Waldon, School Social worker
are pleased to present this 6 week education program around
parenting strategies for the development of Middle School aged
students. All meetings are held in the 2nd Floor PDC at Skinner
Middle School. Childcare is provided.

Session #1: Thursday, October 16th 6:00pm-8:00pm

Session #2: Thursday, October 23rd 6:00pm-8:00pm

Session #3: Thursday, October 30th 6:00pm-8:00pm

Session #4: Thursday, November 6th 6:00pm-8:00pm

Session #5: Thursday, November 20st 6:00pm-8:00pm

Session #6: Thursday, December 4th 6:00pm-8:00pm

Contact Elvia Lubin for more information and topic listings
(720.423.2285) or elvia_lubin@dpsk12.org.



**Youth programs are in full swing! Programs run
from 2:45-4:30 pm unless stated differently.**

OCTOBER

Mon: BUG (tutoring), Hip Hop Dance, Gardening, Girls on
the Run, After Hours (4:30-5:30)

Tues: BUG (tutoring), Flag Football (2nd Team), Fuel For
You (Cooking), Grossology, After Hours (4:30-5:30)

Wed: BUG, Bicycle Program (Oct. 8 & 15), Girls on the
Run, Recycled Art, Silk Screening, Soccer, Wrestling,
After Hours (4:30-5:30)

Thurs: BUG, Flag Football (2nd Team), Fuel For You
(Cooking), Lacrosse, Spelling Bee, After Hours
(4:30-5:30)

Fri: Community Connects (2:45-5 pm)-Students visit
community businesses or talk to community leaders every
Friday while creating their career portfolios. Apply now,
space is limited.

Adult Evening programs:

Mon: Zumba (6-7 pm)

Tues: Men's Basketball (7-9:30 pm)

Wed: Family Cooking (5:30-6:30 pm), Swim Lessons (Call
for times)

Thurs: Youth with Values (6-8 pm)

**Come celebrate Halloween with the entire family in a
fun, safe, yet haunted adventure at the 4th Annual
Dungeon of Terror, October 29th 5-8 pm.**

Parents & Guardians

Give Us a High Five !!!

Make a difference in your child's future by getting
involved at Skinner **at least 5 hours a year**. There
are many opportunities to lend a helping hand with
ongoing classroom activities or school-wide events.
A team of volunteer organizers will be coordinating
this effort, and you will be receiving information by
e-mail to sign up to help. To receive more
information about how to register as a Skinner
volunteer, please contact or Dirk Boden,
[Dirk Boden@dpsk12.org](mailto:Dirk.Boden@dpsk12.org), 720-424-1435.

**Mark Your Calendar for PTO Dates - these also
count toward your volunteer hours !!!**

Meetings are at 6pm
October 28th (Potluck)

January 13th

March 10th (Potluck)

May 12th

6th Grade Academy - Reflection

Another Successful Sixth Grade Academy

On August 11th, Skinner Middle School opened its doors to another round of new sixth-graders for Sixth Grade Academy. This marks the sixth year for the program, and turnout for 2014-2015 was higher than ever. Close to 200 students filed through the front doors and into the auditorium at 8:00 a.m. that morning, and were introduced to their Academy Learning Families, with whom they would spend the next week getting to know.

Teachers cheered students as they entered the building, some looking nervous and a little overwhelmed, and with good reason. The transition from elementary to middle school can be particularly challenging for children. According to the National Association of School Psychiatrists, middle school-aged students "...are adapting to hormonally-induced physical, emotional, and cognitive changes, they suddenly enter new education environments that are typically less nurturing, larger, more departmentalized, more competitive and more demanding academically." With all of these changes, students need support to adjust and become comfortable with the rituals and routines of their new school which is why we host 6th Grade Academy each year.

Sixth Grade Academy provides that support for its attendees. The week-long transition program addresses the three main areas of concern for transitioning students: academic, procedural, and social issues. Students participate in a variety of engaging and educational activities designed to acclimate them to the layout and the culture of Skinner, while building relationships with staff and peers. Students take tours of the building, are assigned and learn to use their lockers, and practice transitioning to different classes in a short amount of time.

The academy is an opportunity for students to get to know their new environment in a friendly, small-group setting, which is comforting for many children. Team-building and ice-breaker activities help develop connections and introduce kids from a variety of backgrounds to the inclusive community that is Skinner Middle School. And word around the hallways is that it works. This year, 90% of incoming sixth-graders attended. After starting the regular school year, many reported that the week of Academy helped them feel more prepared and less anxious on their first official day of school. Students were more confident making their way around the building, and were familiar with the expectations of teachers and staff.

During our Back-to-School night BBQ, many parents were overheard discussing the benefits of the extra week, claiming that their children really enjoyed the time spent getting to know the school and their peers in Learning Family groups. One parent shared that her daughter was really happy to have attended the Academy. She felt like she knew exactly what to do on her first day, and she already had "a bunch of new friends!" after attending for the week.

Before & After School Reminders

Skinner has staff on duty for morning supervision starting at 7:10am. Please do not drop your child off at school before then.

All students need to be in a supervised after school location by 3:00pm. If students are not in a designated area by 3pm, they will be scooped up in a safe location in the building until a parent/guardian physically comes to the office to sign-out the student.

Thank you for your cooperation as we work to keep all students safe.

2nd Annual Skinner Spooktacular –

Friday, Oct. 24, 8 pm – Midnight, Local46 (46th & Tennyson). Break out your favorite Halloween costume for this fun, adult Halloween Party. Suggested \$10 donation at the door. Prizes for the best costumes.

Northside Music Project

~ in partnership with the Colorado Children's Chorale.

Great **music opportunity for your 6th, 7th and 8th graders at Skinner.**

Who: 6th, 7th and 8th graders from ANY school

What: A vocal music group for any students who love to sing, regardless of their experience

When: Rehearsals are every Wednesday from 4:00-5:00pm and begin **Wednesday, 9/24**

Where: North High School Choir Room

How Much: \$30 per semester, but scholarships from the Colorado Children's Chorale are available for any student who needs assistance

Transportation: A DPS bus will pick students up at Skinner and bring them to North for rehearsals each Wednesday (families are responsible for bringing students home at the end of rehearsal). The pick-up schedule is:

- **Skinner @ 3:15**
- Bryant Webster @ 3:25
- Trevista @ 3:35
- Lake @ 3:45
- Arrive at North HS by 4:00

Contact: **Katy Lushman** (choir director at North HS) at katy_lushman@dpsk12.org or 720-423-2792. Singers can also just show up any Wednesday to join!

This group will sing all types of music (choral, world music, local music, etc.) and already has gigs booked at the Crossroads Theatre, First Friday Art Walk and the North High School Music Concert.

Help Skinner When You Shop at TARGET

Did you know there's an easy way to help us raise money for our school—for books, athletic uniforms, reading programs and anything else that can use extra funding? It's called Take Charge of Education®, and it's helping Skinner right now.

Here's how it works: Visit Target.com/tcoe or call 1-800-316-6142 to designate Skinner Middle School, then use your REDcard whenever you shop. When you use your REDcard® (Target Credit Card®, Target Debit Card® or Target® Visa® Credit Card), Target® will donate up to 1% of your purchases to Skinner.

Learn more at Target.com/redcard or stop in a Target store to apply. Grandparents, alumni, friends and neighbors are all welcome to participate in the program. The more people we involve, the harder the program works for our school. If you're already participating, thank you! Check out our school's progress anytime at Target.com/tcoe.

Attention 8th Grade Families

Plan to attend the DPS Middle & High School Expo on Tuesday, October 28th from 6pm-8pm at Sports Authority Field. The Expo is a great opportunity to learn more about your high school options and speak with representatives from all of the Denver Public high schools. Watch for special fliers which will be sent home with your child closer to the event.

In need of Chiropractic Services?

Shapiro Family Chiropractic is partnering to Give Back to Skinner. Whenever someone is referred to Dr. Shapiro through Skinner, he will donate \$20 to Skinner! The cost of an initial consult, exam and first adjustment is only \$95 for all referrals (this is a \$195 value). Dr. Shapiro has been practicing in Denver for 15 years and is the official chiropractor for the Colorado Ballet, the Colorado Symphony and the Denver Outlaws lacrosse team. He specializes in working with children of all ages, pregnant women, athletes and auto injury patients. A second location recently opened at 3456 Tejon St. Remember to mention "Skinner" when making your appointment. Call 303-504-4800 or visit <http://www.shapirochiro.com/> for more information.