

Hempstead School District
SEPTA NEWS
Special Education PTA
Volume I, Issue 1 –Spring 2010

Dear SEPTA Parents and Community,

The school year is winding down. Can you believe it! I can't. It's a poignant one for me because my daughter will walk down that aisle at Hempstead High in a cap and gown in June and into another chapter of her life...but right now I want to talk about **your** children's lives and how SEPTA can help make a difference. Here in Hempstead, parents and community members need to pay attention to what is happening all around them. We want to applaud the accomplishments of our youth while at the same time demanding that our children get the best education they deserve. They deserve better classroom resources, better facilities, topnotch instruction, a strong curriculum, visionary leadership. Our mission at SEPTA is to help parents learn more and better ways to help their children. How many of you have met your child's teacher – not just on Meet the Teacher night, but during the school year to touch base and ensure your child is making progress? How many of you know your rights as parents? How many have carefully read your child's IEP to ensure they are receiving all services outlined in the IEP plan? This is the minimal that you should do. You want your child to do as well as she/he can, and for that to happen, we need to have a supportive team in place – you, as the parent, the teachers, the PPS staff, the principals and administrators, and yes, all the way up to the superintendent. If there is something you are not comfortable with, you have to speak out....don't feel you have no voice or that no one cares about what you think. You're the parent, you matter...your child matters! Speak up....and keep on talking. And, by the way, **you can let your vote speak for you...Two Board of Education seats are up for election...Know who the candidates are and how they stand on the issues you care about...And ALSO....don't forget to vote on the School Budget...let your important voice be heard at the ballot box. You can make a difference!**

We are continuing to try and help parents better understand how the special education program at Hempstead works so that they can ensure their children are getting an optimal education experience. Does your child look forward to coming to school? Are they happy with their placement? Are they learningare they being challenged? Have you looked into summer options for your children – such as the **FREE OASIS Summer Camp** at the High School for middle school (those entering 6 grade) and high school students. This camp is part of Hempstead's 21st Century Learning Communities program and it's a great opportunity for your child. If your child is registered at HSD, they are eligible. If you are concerned because your child has particular special needs, you can speak to the 21st Century community liaison Ron Simpkins (516/292-7111 ext. 1423) and he will share your concerns with the OASIS camp managers. Other 21st Century summer programs include a Hempstead PAL program at the Middle School, Adelphi University's Life Guard training, a Hempstead Boys & Girls summer session and Hempstead CAP has a summer soccer fundamentals camp. Check with Mr. Simpkins or his assistant Ann-Marie (x1417) for more details.

In the past we've had Djuana Wilson, Coordinator for Special Education Direct Instruction, answer parent's questions. This month we invited Joy Nelson, who works with the Committee on Special Education (CSE) to speak to us and take questions. If you don't know what the CSE is, please ask Ms. Nelson to explain. Next month, SEPTA will welcome Debbie DeLong, who has kindly agreed to address parents at our next SEPTA meeting in May. Ms. DeLong is the newly re-appointed (she used to run PPA in the past), Assistant Superintendent, for Pupil Personnel Services and Allied Services. We hope you will come and ask her questions since she will be the one in charge of your child's education. *Our volunteer High School homework helpers are returning to assist students with homework while our SEPTA meeting is in session: We welcome back: Shanita Ray, Khalif Chaplin, Ernest Petion, Terrance Uzamere, Abby Uzamere, Scott McMillan, Geordy Garcia, Tito Pazmino and Henry Pazmino.* Let's keep hope alive....for our children's education!!! -- *Ms. Sandra Nichols*, Co-President, SEPTA, 2009-2010

¡Permítanos mantener esperanza viva.... para la educación de nuestros niños!!!



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER!

May 11: Budget Hearing ... May 18th: School Board Elections and BUDGET vote at ABGS Middle School, 7am-9pm....

May 20: School Board Meeting at High School, 7pm.... May 24: SEPTA Meeting (Special Guest Speaker, Ms. Debbie DeLong; Elections.)... **June 7: Parent Recognition Night, 6pm...(place to come)**...June 17: Regular Board Meeting, 7pm, Jackson Annex.....June 28: Last day of school.....July 6th: Annual BOE Reorganization Meeting.

2009-2010 SEPTA OFFICERS:

Malcolm John: President	Sandra Nichols: Co-President
Emma Walker: Vice-President	Monica Webb: Membership Chairperson
Charmaine McClain: Fundraising Chairperson	Gypsy Jefferson: Recording Secretary
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