



# THE MLC ALTERNATIVE

Portland Public Schools  
Metropolitan Learning Center  
2033 NW Glisan  
Portland, OR 97209

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE METROPOLITAN LEARNING CENTER

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/schools/mlc/>

A K-12 Portland Public School ♦ Pam Shelly, Principal ♦ January 2011



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Suns reproduced in this  
newsletter, ctsy. Avril and  
John's 1 x 2 students.

## FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

“The only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars and in the middle you see the blue centerlight pop and everybody goes “Awww!”

-- Jack Kerouac, *On the Road*



Dear Families,

I was visiting classes in December and feeling quite in awe of our students. From the little ones, who were working in earnestness on the most creative art project, piggy banks for collections of money to support schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan (they have been reading *Three Cups of Tea* and learning about Greg Mortenson's work with the Central Asia Institute). Our middle graders were assembling a chicken coop, our high schoolers waxing philosophical about a latest dream... they were impressive. One of my New Year's resolutions is to make sure we notice and cherish our students' vitality. They are our very own “mad” ones. They are grand.

Happy New Year to you all. Did YOU make time for resolutions? Might any of them have children and schools at their core? I'm hoping you committed to continuing volunteering. We love your help with electives, in our library, and with classroom activities. It's the perfect time to think about designing an elective class to begin in the Spring, or volunteering with the PTSA to help with Literacy Week activities (January 31-February 4). Our PTSA is endlessly exuberant, and they would love you to join them to work on the MLC Auction on March 4. Call or email Mary Franklin...she will rope you in for sure! You will be glad she did because you'll love working with PTSA and other involved families.

The Hand in Hand Project is in full swing! It appears that we'll have at least 16 students going on this international field trip to Israel, to visit a school established for Jewish and Arab children in Jerusalem. (They will also be visiting other geographical areas and sites.). Two students from the Hand to Hand school visited here last month, and talked about what it is like for Israeli Arab and Jewish kids to study side by side, learn each other's language and cultures, and forge lifelong relationships. Their belief is that their common humanity unites and is more important than divisions within the community. I am deeply moved that our students have this opportunity to visit the school. It will be life changing.

I left town over Winter Break and will be gone the first two weeks of January. I look forward to the new year here at MLC, to hearing New Year's resolutions and seeing how we will all make our dreams and plans come true.

Fondly,  
Pam





# JEFF'S C

# O R N E R

**I hope** this message finds you well-rested and ready to tackle the rest of trimester two. The week before break was a bit hectic getting ready for Solstice and then the superb performance. As a first time participant of Solstice, I felt the energy was very positive and joyous. Dancing around the fire was one of my highlights. Congratulations to staff, students and parents for putting together a wonderful celebration that involved all of our kids.

### OAKS Testing

Starting in January and lasting till May, students in grades 3 thru 11 will be taking the Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (OAKS) testing in mathematics, reading, science and writing. The 10<sup>th</sup> and some 11<sup>th</sup> graders will be testing on Fridays in the afternoon. For any questions regarding the state testing please contact your son/daughter's teacher and/or refer to the PPS website: <http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/research-evaluation/1487.htm>.

### Visitors' Days

Visitors' dates for prospective parents and students to hear and see what MLC has to offer are January 19<sup>th</sup> @ 10:00 a.m. and January 26<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 p.m. Refer to MLC's website for applications and other details: <http://www.pps.k12.or.us/schools/mlc/205.htm>.

In the next couple of months, MLC 8<sup>th</sup> graders will have opportunities to visit other PPS high schools to see what program best fits their learning style. Before the end of this month, our 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be able to see and hear about the 9x12 program.

### Shadow Days:

Students are welcome to visit to see what MLC is all about. Several dates have been posted on the MLC's web calendar:

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/schools/mlc/343.htm> for January and February. Please contact Barbara Witter at [bwitter@pps.k12.or.us](mailto:bwitter@pps.k12.or.us) or call 503-916-5739 to make arrangements.

### High School Portfolio Panel

Have you ever participated in "portfolio panel"? Every year, seniors and sophomores present their portfolios to a group of adults. It is truly a wonderful experience to see and hear the accomplishments of young people. The only qualification is to provide feedback to the student. You don't need to have a son/daughter in high school. If you are interested, please contact Barbara Witter at [bwitter@pps.k12.or.us](mailto:bwitter@pps.k12.or.us) or Jeff Spalding [jspald@pps.k12.or.us](mailto:jspald@pps.k12.or.us).

*Jeff Spalding  
Vice Principal*



## IMPORTANT YEARBOOK ANNOUNCEMENT

Hello MLC families!

This year our yearbook will be **bigger** and **better** than ever!

We are working hard to include the younger grades more!

We are working hard so that this year's yearbook can shine brighter than ever!

We are working hard to make an amazing book of memories for all to enjoy!

**This year's yearbook is only \$33!**

So what are you waiting for?

Start your memories now by turning your money, in an envelope, into the main office.

Mark the envelope with your full name, grade, and teacher's name.

**Hurry and buy a yearbook!**



# Lego Robotics

FIRST Lego League is an international robotics program designed to get kids ages 9 to 14 excited about science and technology. Teams participate in an annual challenge by programming an autonomous robot to score points on a themed playing field and by developing a solution to a problem they have identified. The annual challenges are based on real-world scientific topics. This year's challenge, Body Forward, explored biomedical innovation.

Although we started this year without our original leadership, we were able to regroup and to expand our involvement. Last year two teams participated; this year we were able to support three teams. We raised over \$2,500 for new equipment and obtained a donation of laptops to the program.

This year's teams were:

**Flaming Nitrobots** with students from Jennifer's 3rd grade, Susan's 4/5 class and Caryn's 4/5 class

**Toast the Flaming Bald Eagle** with students from Caryn's 4/5 Susan's 4/5 and Ned's 6th grade

**Fluffy Man-Eating Toasters** with students from Ned and Kelly's 6th grade classes.

The teams competed in two tournaments and **Toast the Flaming Bald Eagle** won the Robot Performance award. This is the fourth year of FLL at MLC and the fourth year that teams have brought an award back to the school!

A new Lego Robotics season (FOOD FACTOR: Keeping Foods Safe) will start next fall. We hope to see many new faces among team members and parent-coaches as we continue and expand our program. The program's success depends on parents to volunteer as coaches and mentors! This is a wonderful opportunity to get involved with kids in a fun, educational project. Rookie teams, which must have all-new team members and coaches, can compete for a special Rookie Team award.

*Carl Wolcott, parent  
MLC FLL organizer*

# LEND A HAND

## One Day Job Shadow Opportunities Needed

This year the high school team is requiring juniors to do a one day job shadow. If you or your employer would be willing to host a junior for a day, please let me know. You can email me, call (503/916-5738 – MLC's #), or stop by my room, 303. I will be trying to arrange the job shadows for late winter/spring. Thank you.

*Chris Snyder*

[csnyder1@pps.k12.or.us](mailto:csnyder1@pps.k12.or.us)

## Carpenters Needed!

Help your Speech Language Pathologist create an optimal listening environment! I need three sound absorption panels which will be hung in the speech therapy room. They can be made from 1"x4" boards and 4" pink insulation. I can give you the specific measurements and dimensions for each panel.

*Carly Neerman, SLP*

[cneerman@pps.k12.or.us](mailto:cneerman@pps.k12.or.us)

503/729-2965

## Pet Supplies

During the month of January, the Roots and Shoots Elective (4x6) is collecting items for a local animal shelter. Please drop off quality dog and cat food, toys, leashes, etc in the bin by the office. Thank you!

*Susan Beard*

[sbeard@pps.k12.or.us](mailto:sbeard@pps.k12.or.us)





## DONATIONS NEEDED

Please consider procuring items from your circle of businesses, family and friends! Here are some ideas for donations:

- ⊙ Restaurant gift certificates
- ⊙ Art and craft items
- ⊙ Specialty items from local stores
- ⊙ Kid baskets with games or craft projects
- ⊙ Bake a “bread of the month” for a year
- ⊙ Babysitting by your MLC teenager
  - ⊙ Pottery
  - ⊙ Jewelry
- ⊙ House cleaning
- ⊙ Coffee shop gift certificates
- ⊙ TRIPS, cabins, beach houses and more!

The sky is the limit for ideas. All proceeds support our children and enrich their learning experience. Join the fun and spread the word about this fabulous upcoming event! Check the hall by the library for committee sign-ups. This event needs your time and support to be successful. Let’s all make this year’s auction amazing!

Questions? Contact Tasha Pacheco – 503/267-6144, [tasha@pachecocreative.com](mailto:tasha@pachecocreative.com) or Lauren Nathe – [lnathe@msn.com](mailto:lnathe@msn.com).

**MARCH 4th – 6:30-10:00PM**  
**HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX**  
**CHURCH**

**3131 NE GLISAN STREET**  
**TICKETS: \$10 EACH (SUGGESTED DONATION)**  
**AVAILABLE AT SCHOOL OR ONLINE:**  
**WWW.MLCAUCTION.COM**

# MLC Site Council

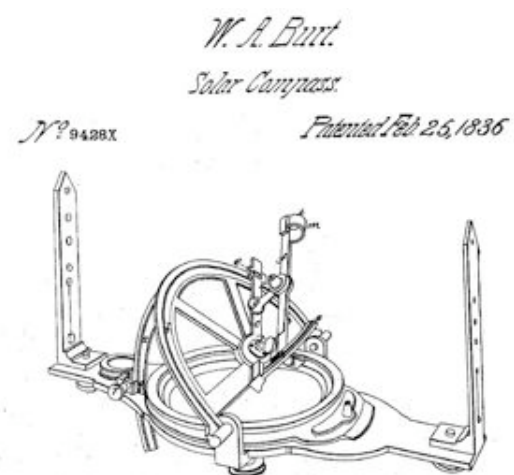
The MLC Site Council is a cross-stakeholder group composed of the school principal, assistant principal, teacher and parent representatives from each of the four grade clusters, non-teacher staff representatives, and high school student representatives. We meet once a month (usually on the first Wednesday) during the school year. Meetings are open to the public, and are listed in the school calendar. The Site Council’s official mandate includes developing and approving the ongoing School Improvement Plan. Less formally, Site Council is a unique occasion for representatives of the different groups that make up the MLC community to meet each other and talk about issues that affect our school - from urban renewal proposals, to how to support the 1x8 elective program, to guiding the upcoming process for hiring our next principal (watch your email and the MLC website for more details about principal hiring). Families are welcome to contact Council members for more information or any other reason. The current parent representatives are:

Kx3: Katherine Kondylis - [breezekondylis@yahoo.com](mailto:breezekondylis@yahoo.com)

4x6: Brandee Grider - [brandeegrider@yahoo.com](mailto:brandeegrider@yahoo.com)

7x8: Adam Reitzes - [gullyfoyle4@yahoo.com](mailto:gullyfoyle4@yahoo.com)

9x12: Kathy Couch - [couch.kathy@gmail.com](mailto:couch.kathy@gmail.com)



# MLC PTSA NEWS

## Thank You

What a busy December we had! We started with the delivery of our beautiful wreaths and poinsettias. **Vanessa Mathis** once again did a great job on this fundraiser for PTSA.

Next, we had MLC's day of volunteering at the Portland PTA Closet. This facility provides clothing for students throughout the Portland district; each PTA volunteers to staff it twice a year. Many thanks to **Jennifer Fleenor** for organizing the MLC volunteers.

Then the entire community showed its love and appreciation for our wonderful staff with overflowing baskets of goodies. Thanks to all that contributed and thanks to **Kristin Cole** and her crew for organizing all the donations and distributing them to the staff.

After Solstice we had our Winter Craft Faire. The gym was filled with wonderful crafts and gifts from our community. Many thanks to **Buff Medb Neretin** for chairing this wonderful event again.

## Literacy Week

MLC PTSA will also host **Literacy Week** from **January 31-February 4<sup>th</sup>**. This event is designed to raise money for the MLC Library and bring families to MLC to celebrate reading, writing and books. We will begin with a school-wide **Read-a-Thon**, which will begin on **January 18<sup>th</sup>** and run through February 4<sup>th</sup>. The Read-a-Thon is open to all students and community members. Participants will get pledges to sponsor them for the number of minutes they read. And participants can choose to have their pledges support the library or their team's activities. This fundraiser is not just for students – parents and other community members may participate, be sponsored, and read all those great books you received as holiday gifts... for a good cause.



## Dates

**Wednesday January 19<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 - PTSA Meeting**  
The first event of the year will be the January PTSA meeting, which we will move to Wednesday, January 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm. This will allow us to have the PTSA meeting immediately before the District's meeting on a new principal for MLC. Free child care will be available for the PTSA meeting and for the Principal's meeting. Please join us at 5:30, for pizza.

**Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-10:00 - MLC Auction**  
And while you're checking that new 2011 calendar, make sure to add the MLC PTSA Auction on Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup> at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church. This is PTSA's biggest fundraiser. The success of the auction is vital to our continuing ability to support the wonderful programs at MLC. We need the entire community to help gather donations of items to be auctioned as well and to come to the auction, bring your friends and family, and support our school. Check out the website [www.mlcauction.com](http://www.mlcauction.com) for more details on how to donate an item and to see what has already been donated. We look forward to seeing you there!

During our Literacy Week we will have a week-long **Scholastic Book Faire**, a **Family Writers Marathon** for the whole community on Wednesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00pm lead by 4x5 Teacher Caryn Cushman, and on Friday, February 4<sup>th</sup> each team will celebrate reading and the end of the Read-a-Thon. More details to follow on Friday's events. We are hoping to have the bookstore A Children's Place hosting a book fair on Wednesday evening. It should be a fun and engaging week so please put it on your calendar and plan to attend events on Wednesday evening and Friday morning.

Best Wishes for a wonderful 2011!

*Mary Franklin*  
*MLC PTSA President*  
[marycafranklin@gmail.com](mailto:marycafranklin@gmail.com)



# MLC PTSA MEETING MINUTES: DECEMBER 2010

## Welcome & Introductions

Mary started the meeting at 7:15. In attendance were: Leigh Anne Scherer, Jacquelyn Martin, Mary Franklin, Pam Shelly, Siri Shetty

## Review of November Minutes

Jacquelyn moved to approve the minutes from the November meeting, Pam seconded. The motion was approved.

## Treasurer's Report

Jacquelyn presented the budget P&L and balance. Wreath Sale: income = \$3,282, expenses = \$2,091.90, net = \$1,090.10. Still haven't tracked down the US Bank balance; Mary and Jacquelyn will go to US Bank and get it resolved.

## Old Business

### Paddle Item

\$1,470 was left over from two years ago. There is no need for document cameras, Tom suggested cable covers – \$610; we can use the remainder for mats. Siri moved we purchase the cable covers and use the remainder for mats, Jacquelyn seconded, the motion passed. We are still formulating ideas for the Paddle item for this year's auction – Pam is going to ask teachers for more suggestions.

### Facilities Committee Report

No report, we will check in again in January.

### Winter Craft Faire

32 vendors, almost 1/2 MLC student tables. After discussion about the reason for an entrance fee, Leigh Anne moved that we waive the entrance fee, Siri seconded. The motion was approved. Income: \$1,150 in table rental fees, \$120 still to come = total \$1,270. Expenses: \$225 in rental fees; the catalog printing was donated; \$25 miscellaneous; \$30 volunteer appreciation.



## Auction update

Will begin selling raffle tickets for two Solstice seats; they will be \$5 each. We will have early sign-ups for the auction; \$10 is the suggested donation. A contract from the church is coming. <http://www.MLCAuction.com> has some things posted already.



## Literacy Week - January 31<sup>st</sup> - February 4<sup>th</sup>

[More on Literacy Week on the previous page of this newsletter.]

## Read-a-Thon – Tentative start January 15<sup>th</sup>

Mary spoke with Kiva. Anyone may be sponsored to read. The Read-a-Thon can help raise money for the library, though the 4X6 team Read-a-Thon will still be used to raise money for their trips

## Book Faire

A Children's Place may come to an evening event. Scholastic Book Fair will be at school all week. Teachers can make a wish list. Evening Program – Wednesday Night. Everybody Writes was successful last year, we would like to do this again. Friday Morning Day of Reading. Pajama Day. Snacks – maybe popcorn and cocoa. Read-a-Thon awards.

## New Business

### MLC Principal Search

At 6:30, Wednesday January 19<sup>th</sup>, there will be an evening event for community and staff to provide input into what we want in a new principal. People can also email their input.

### Hand in Hand

A group of students are going to Israel to participate with Hand in Hand Schools; a group from Israel visited MLC last spring; they are doing a variety of fundraising activities to help pay for the trip.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59

# CONSIDER BUYING SCRIP

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL [LBULLOCK@PPS.K12.OR.US](mailto:LBULLOCK@PPS.K12.OR.US)



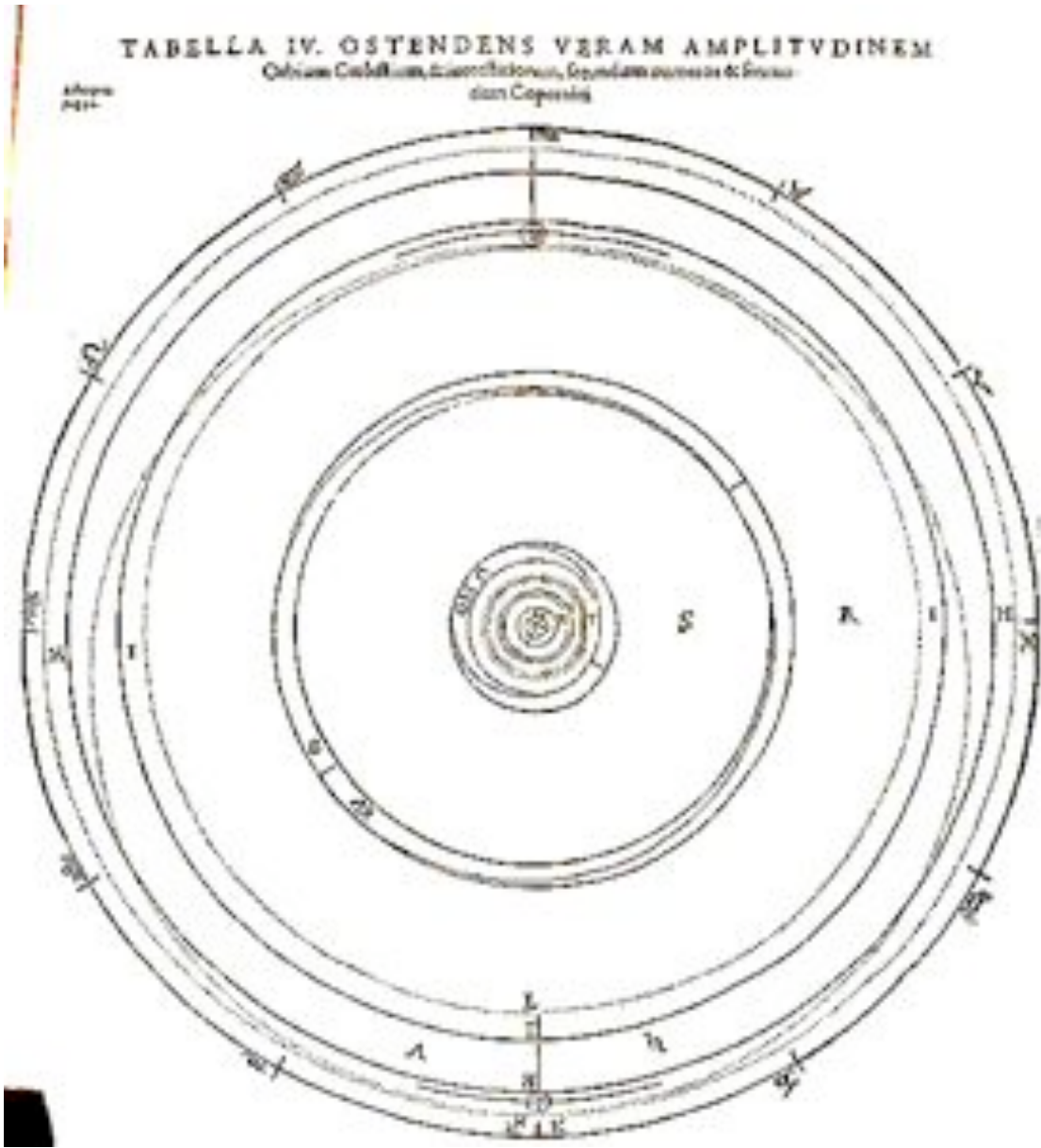
# Events & Opportunities

## EPGY Education

### Programs for Gifted Youth UPDATE

In November, an article was posted about Stanford's online math program: EPGY. This program allows a group of students at a school where EPGY is not officially in place to benefit from K-7 math courses by forming a learning community of at least 8 students (any age, any level). Students work at home and are supported by their parents, who have access to monitoring capabilities, and an array of self-support tools. The "Individual Program" courses offered through EPGY are typically \$495 for a 3-month term. Through "Open Enrollment", the same courses provided by Stanford (minus math tutors and transcripts) are offered for \$135 for one child per year. However, **if you would like to try out online math (set your own pace and level, from K through pre-algebra), but not apply for the full traditional tutor-supported EPGY distance-learning program, the online math program is offered for three-month enrollment periods at \$45,**

<http://epgy.stanford.edu/openenroll/index.html> . For further questions <http://epgy.stanford.edu/district/faq.html>; If you would like to register, email [mcfarlanefridley@earthlink.net](mailto:mcfarlanefridley@earthlink.net)



Astronomer Johannes Kepler's table of the solar system's celestial spheres. Johannes Kepler, *Mysterium Cosmographicum*, (Frankfurt, 1621)  
<http://www.library.illinois.edu/rbx/exhibitions/Plato/Archival%20Images/Large%20jpg/Q.%20521.3%20K44p%201621,%20tab.IV%20L.jpg>

## Invitation to Parents from the Eco-School Network

**What:** Eco-School Network Informational Meeting

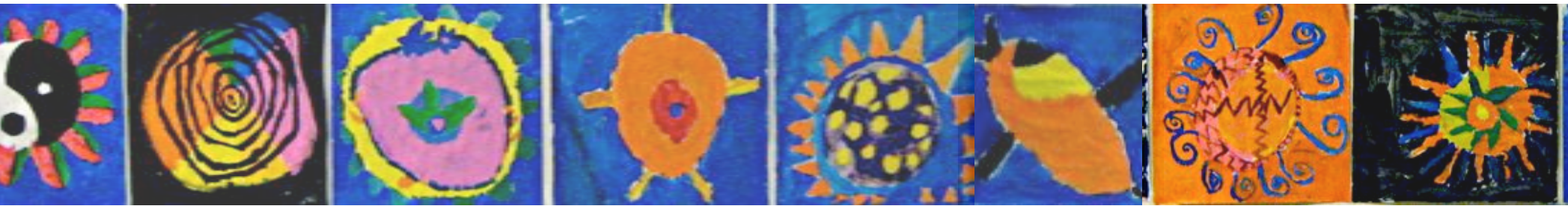
**When:** Tuesday, January 25, 2011, 7:00pm – 8:30pm

**Topic:** Eco-School Network parents will describe how they work within their schools and how interested parents and teachers can get involved.

The mission of the Eco-School Network is to introduce sustainable practices and increase eco-awareness to enrich the lives of children at school. The Network includes parents from over 30 schools who come together in person and online to share ideas, experiences, and project how-tos, as well as offer each other motivation and inspiration.

For location, directions, and general information please call Emily Klavins at 503-227-2315 or [emily@earthleaders.org](mailto:emily@earthleaders.org). The sponsor of the Eco-School Network is the Center for Earth Leadership, [www.earthleaders.org](http://www.earthleaders.org).





# January 2011

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
2	3 Classes Resume	4	5 Site Council Meeting 3:15 Library	6	7	8
9	10	11 2 <sup>nd</sup> Trimester Electives Begin	12	13	14	15
16	17	18 Read-a-Thon Begins	19 Visitors' Program 10-11:30 (Prospective students)	20 Also the 19 <sup>th</sup> PTSA Meeting 5:30pm (child care available)	21	22
23	24	25	26 Visitors' Program 7-8:30pm (Prospective students)	27	28	29
30	31 Literacy Week	1 Literacy Week	2 Literacy Week Site Council Meeting 3:15 Library Family Writers Marathon 7pm	3 Literacy Week	4 Literacy Week Read-a-Thon Ends	5

