



THE MLC ALTERNATIVE

Portland Public Schools
Metropolitan Learning Center
2033 NW Gilsan
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 ♦ December 2010



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FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

"It's snowing still. AND freezing. However, we haven't had an earthquake lately."

-Eeyore, The House at Pooh Corner

Dear Families

Here it is, again already, my favorite time of year... we have celebrations and parent conferences, holidays... all in the same month. And, I am perfecting my "snow dance," hoping for a ton of the white stuff so our kids can experience the exhilaration of Portland snow again, without it getting in the way of all our planning and celebrating.

I am still feeling elated from our all-school gathering this week. I'm not sure which I appreciated more: the showcasing of some of our elective classes, watching our students show off their learning, or watching our kid audience drink it all in. Our elective program seems to be thriving, thanks to all of our volunteers, the abounding creativity, the ability to work hard, and Laura pulling it all together.

By the time you read this, we'll be into our second trimester. Students are beginning to pull together their best efforts in their portfolios. Many of you helped set goals with your students and our staff during conference week. How did conferences go for you? Let us know what you liked and what you think we can improve on in our communication with you.

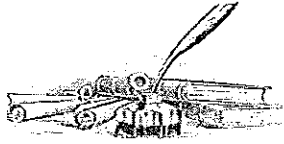
Our Site Council is up and running. In November, we looked at the School Improvement Plan, and our specific school goals (these choices were based on last Spring's student assessments.) We will be adding meat to the plan in the next few months, as teachers work in teams to create deeper and specific ways to address our writing goals. We noted that MLC garnered an "Outstanding" rating from the State of Oregon... it's nice to be recognized in that way.

PTSA is hopping! There is family expertise to support every aspect of their work, from meeting with district folk about a proposed Urban Renewal Area that may affect MLC, to organizing this year's auction, literacy week, and wreath sales. I am in awe as I keep up with all their plans.

Winter Solstice is just around the corner. Bianca and the students are into high gear with their creativity. Pat, Marta, Julie and Steve are supporting Solstice on a planning level, and EVERY teacher and student is involved on a pragmatic level. We always look forward to seeing how our students will mesmerize and enthrall us. We'll spend the afternoon of December 16 in celebration of light and our many blessings. Join us if you can.

My best wishes go with you as we enter the winter holiday season. Enjoy the break with your family and friends!

Fondly,
Pam



From Our Library ...

Desperately Seeking Glass

Help! One of our glass display shelves has crashed to the floor! We are seeking a replacement. If anyone knows of a way to get an inexpensive piece of glass, 38 1/2 inches x 18 inches, please email kliljquist@pps.k12.or.us. And if you happen to have one lying around that you're looking to get rid of, let me know!

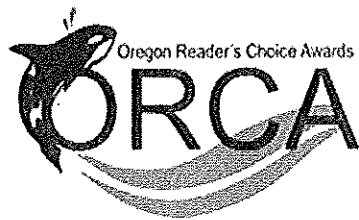
Check Your Student's Library Account from Home

Did you know that you or your student can check her/his library account from home? It's true! Go to MLC's web page and click on the library link, then click MLC Library Catalog. Look at the upper right corner—it says "Login." Go there and type in the required info (student name and six digit student number) and you'll see what is checked out and when it's due. You can also renew from home! You can renew an item up to three times. Check it out!

The ORCAs are Here!!

There is a ton of extra excitement around the library these days. Why, you might ask? Because it's the inaugural year of the Oregon Readers' Choice Awards, or ORCAs! They function much like last year's YRCA, only it's now an award specific to Oregon. This is a readers' choice award for grades 4-12, with 8 books nominated in each of the 3 different divisions: grades 4-6, 7-9, 10-12. We have shelves in our library dedicated to multiple ORCA nominees. Ask your student what s/he has read! Go to our blog (mlclibrary.wordpress.com) and see what others have been saying—it's on the library page of MLC's web site. Students need to read or listen to at least two titles in a division to be able to vote in that division. We'll be voting in the spring. Challenge yourself to read as many titles in a division as you can! They are awesome!

2010-2011 Nominations



Junior Division (4th - 6th grade)

Alvin Ho: Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things by Lenore Look
Found: Book 1 of Missing Series by Margaret Peterson Haddix
Knucklehead by Jon Scieszka
Masterpiece by Elise Broach
Rapunzel's Revenge by Shannon & Dean Hale
Savvy by Ingrid Law
The Stonekeeper: Amulet 1 by Kazu Kibuishi
The Willoughbys by Lois Lowry

Intermediate Division (7th - 9th grade)

After Tupac and D Foster by Jacqueline Woodson
Chains by Laurie Halse Anderson
Elephant Run by Roland Smith
The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman
Heck: Where the Bad Kids Go by Dale Basye
London Eye Mystery by Siobhan Dowd
Nation by Terry Pratchett
Waiting for Normal by Leslie Connor

Senior Division (10th - 12th grade)

The Adoration of Jenna Fox by Mary E. Pearson
Dark Dude by Oscar Hijuelos
The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau-Banks by E. Lockhart
Graceling by Kristin Cashore
Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
Little Brother by Cory Doctorow
Paper Towns by John Green
Sunrise Over Fallujah by Walter Dean Myers

2011 MLC PTSA Auction... coming soon

*Save the Date for the 2011 MLC PTSA AUCTION:
Friday March 4th, 2011
at Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church*

With the support of the PTSA, this year the auction committee will conduct an experiment and ask for a suggested donation of \$10 per ticket. This is not a ticket "price;" no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Why the change? In the past, MLC has made a conscious decision not to charge for auction tickets. The values of community and inclusiveness are part of MLC's core culture and part of our time-honored traditions. At the same time, planning such a large event requires a considerable investment of financial and human resources. Advance tickets will give us a better idea of how many people to expect. We'll be better able to estimate how much food to order, how many tables to set up, and how to most efficiently check people in and out. By asking for a suggested donation, we also hope to cover a portion of the auction costs – sending more money directly to our school and our kids. Indeed, for those of us who have avoided the auction expecting that we can't afford to bid on the majority of the items, this is a modest yet meaningful way to make a contribution – and to enjoy a fun evening out with fellow parents. Finally, this is an experiment. If it doesn't work; if we all hate it – we don't have to do it again. Auction tickets will be available starting at Solstice!

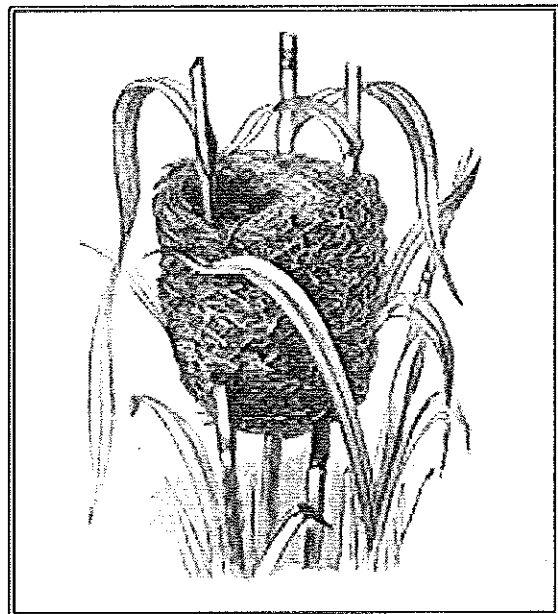
Early-bird drawing for those who get tickets by January 31st! People will also be able to get tickets through a discreet system we will set up in the office. We are excited to follow up on the great success of the 2010 auction!

Auction Proceeds Help:

- ✓ **Purchase school supplies**
- ✓ **Maintain equipment**
- ✓ **Send kids on camping and field trips**

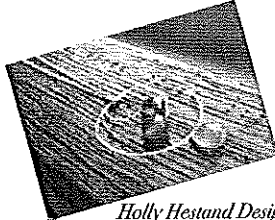
Think About:

- ❖ Can your Business donate items or services? Can you be a sponsoring business?
- ❖ What amazing talents do you have to offer for classes, items, a themed movie night or party?
- ❖ Is volunteering to help the auction committee an option?
- ❖ Can you help with ideas and people power for your class project?*
- ❖ Can you encourage people in your child's class to donate?
- ❖ Can your class create a themed basket that everyone contributes a small piece to - Sports or Art or Rainy Day activities?
- ❖ Do you have food or beverage connections that would help with the refreshments?
- ❖ Can you make something fabulous once a month - cookies, cakes?

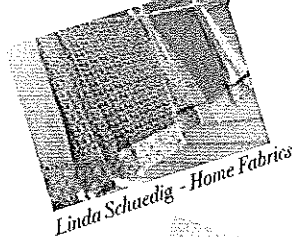
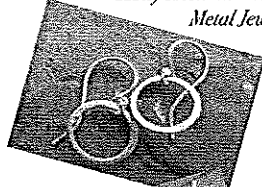


MLC Winter Craft Faire

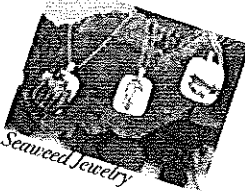
December 16th and 17th



*Holly Hestand Designs
Metal Jewelry*



Linda Schaedig - Home Fabrics



Seaved Jewelry

This MLC PTSA fundraising and community event will be held in the MLC Gym on Thursday, December 16th from 3pm to 7pm and again on Friday, December 17th between 12 and 4pm.

Come on in, shop local, support your school. Last year, the Faire netted several thousand dollars through the sale of tables. The vendors - school programs, families and students alike - keep the full profit from what they sell. Admission is \$1.00.

In addition to pre-event ticket sales to the March 2011 MLC Auction, Scrip and raffle tickets to support Hand in Hand's MLC trip to Israel, there will be beads, artwork, candles, food and much more. Take a look here:

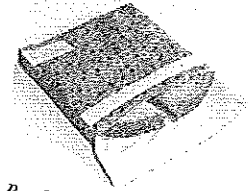
http://www.slideshare.net/BullMedb/catalog-of-wares-wi-crafa-2010?from=share_email. A miniature version of the catalog is also attached at the end of the newsletter



Felix and Stevie's Beeswax Candles



*Gabriel Liston/Lastwater Studios
Prints and hand-drawn objects*



Bug Baby Designs



*Missionary
Chocolates*

MLC Holiday Baskets

MLC has a fun holiday tradition to recognize the wonderful teachers and staff that work so tirelessly with our children. Each year MLC families donate items to make up festive baskets for all teachers and staff to show them how much we appreciate all they do.

You can help by donating:

- ⊗ Food treats: candy, chocolate, fruit and jam
- ⊗ Individually wrapped home-baked items
- ⊗ Candles/lotions
- ⊗ Coffee/tea
- ⊗ Handmade crafts/jewelry
- ⊗ Cards
- ⊗ Small gifts or low-cost gift cards

Drop off items in the MLC library starting Friday, December 10th but no later than Wednesday December 15th at 8:30 am.

To ensure that everyone is recognized equally, "To Anyone" items are best. Baskets are delivered to teachers by 11:45 on December 15th.

For questions or to help with making/distributing baskets on the 15th contact Kristin Cole 503/869-8676 or bkcole@hevanet.com.

MLC PTSA MEETING MINUTES

Welcome & Introductions

Mary started the meeting at 7:15, in attendance were: Tanya March, Leigh Anne Scherer, Jacquelyn Martin, Lauren Nathe, Mary Franklin, Pam Shelly, Diana Moosman, Carine Arendes, Stephanie Brown

Review of October Minutes

Diana moved to approve the minutes from the October meeting with a spelling correction, Lauren seconded. The motion was approved.

Treasurer's Report

Jacquelyn presented the budget P&L and balance sheet. There are a few more expenses this month, income coming in for Winter Craft Faire and Wreath Sales. There is a very small balance in the old US Bank Account, Jacquelyn will check on getting this cleaned up.

Old Business

Meeting about the URA

(Urban Renewal Area) Diana reported on the meeting with David Williams from PPS (see minutes on page 6 of this newsletter), regarding the inclusion of MLC in the URA. PPS always requests that schools be included in the URA when they are being formed so that the schools can get something out of it. PPS will not request that MLC be removed from the URA. The URA is on hold right now. Mr. Williams suggested that a group meet with David Wynde as a next step to ensure the MLC community gets the same information that residents get from PDC.

Library Services Update

7X8 has access to the library at break or before school, they also go into the library monthly

Wreath Sales

Vanessa is looking for help on December 1st & 2nd with distribution.

Auction update

We are working on the contract with the church and auctioneer. The mailing to previous donors requesting a new donation this year went out. There will be a bin and donation forms in the office. We have had a few donations already. The website is up: www.mlcauction.com

Childcare: There is a concern about insurance. KCLC's insurance doesn't cover operating off-site. PTSA insurance only covers volunteers for childcare. They will be looking into a rider for the night of the auction to ensure coverage.

Paddle Item: We are still formulating ideas for the Paddle Item. We'll be asking teachers for suggestions. Pam will also ask for input.

Tickets: Tickets for auction will be available at Solstice, there will be a raffle for early bird ticket holders.

Feedback: The auction committee is looking for feedback on the idea of auctioning off a reserved parking spot in the west parking lot, currently a visitor's spot. Please email your thoughts to: info@mlcauction.com

New Business

PTA Clothing Closet

December 2nd we have MLC shifts at the Clothing Closet. Contact Jenny Fleenor to volunteer: 503/283-2997 jtfleenor@gmail.com

Staff Baskets

On Wednesday the 15th - volunteers are needed. Please bring in your donations such as: gift cards, coffee, candles, candies, cookies, other treats, etc.



Winter Craft Faire

Tables are being sold for \$50.



Saturday Clean-up Opportunity

Umpqua Bank sponsors a neighborhood clean-up through SOLV the second Saturday of the month. Look for more details coming through email. Please RSVP to SOLV directly.

Facilities Committee

There has been talk of developing an MLC Facilities Committee to look at how we might advocate for changes with the Bond, URA, etc. As there is not another parent organization, PTSA is interested in forming an ad hoc committee for this purpose. We would potentially keep this as a standing committee if there is interest and need. Diana Moosman will serve as chair. Please contact her if you are interested in participating: dianamo@spiretech.com.

Flashalert.com

Mary encourages you to go to Flashalert.com to sign up to get alerts sent to email or text messages.

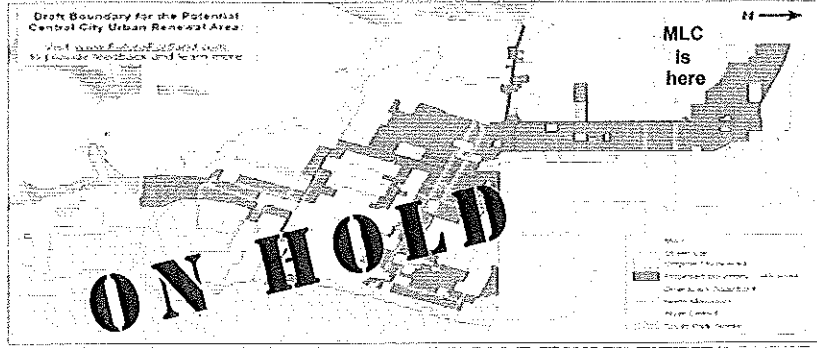
Literacy Week

Jan 30 - Feb 4th. Unfortunately we missed the grant from Nat'l PTA because our Literacy Week was at a different time from the Nat'l PTA week. We will run the week and decide if we want to apply next year. Community Read-A-Thon - to the library or classroom projects.

Another element of literacy week is a Barnes & Noble Book Fair. We need someone to coordinate the Book Fair this year. Talk to Kiva if you are interested in helping out this good cause to raise money for the library. If you are interested in helping or if you have ideas contact Mary Franklin, mary@actaxservice.com.

MLC & PDCs Central City Urban Renewal Area - Update

On October 28th, PPS Director of Government Relations, David Williams met with school representatives to discuss the inclusion of MLC's west parking lot in the plans for the new URA. Diana Moosman, one of the parents attending the meeting, has provided this transcript:



Attendees: David Williams, Portland Public Schools Director of Government Relations; Pam Shelly, principal MLC; Diana Moosman, parent; Jeff Spalding, MLC vice principal; Desiree Wolcott Cushman, parent; Mary Franklin, MLC PTSA president; Autumn Raven Crow, parent; Tanya March, MLC PTSA vice president; Scott McClain, parent.

Meeting Notes:

1) David discussed the history of MLC's inclusion in PDC's new Central City Urban Renewal District, which was initiated about a year ago. Mayor Adams had begun a discussion of creating a new Urban Renewal Area (URA) that might include potential locations in NW neighborhoods to alleviate parking problems. The staff parking lot to the west of the school was one of six lots designated as private property in the 2003 Northwest District Plan. PDOT felt that under the zoning the potential location could be adapted to accommodate a new 110 space parking garage. We currently have 40 surface parking spaces that serve the school exclusively.

2) Being in the URA allows PDC funds to be used for projects on PPS property that "invest in capital infrastructure to incentivize growth within the district." This means URA money can be used for joint community spaces and for access to the building only - probably not in the school building as it is not community space. This fiduciary source could be flexibly combined with other modernization funds into a more comprehensive restoration of the building at any point in the next twenty years. *

See sidebar, right, about the PPS School Modernization proposal.

3) The move to create this new URA was put on hold in early October. Multnomah County asked PDC and the Mayor to slow down with this decision until they can make their case that the investment is needed right now. Approval for the URA had been on track to go to Planning Commission & Portland City Council in October/November though a revised process has not been established. Creation of a new URA would cost PPS 8% of whatever the 'schools' impact is, given the offsets in the state school fund. Since this new URA could have a big financial impact on PPS, they have also asked PDC to slow down with this decision.

4) PPS has a current practice of advocating for inclusion in any URA within the city as a means of leveraging capital improvement funds. PPS wants to be a part of Central City URA if it happens. Both Lincoln HS and MLC properties would be included. MLC, as a district property, cannot request to be excluded from this new URA if it is created.

5) PPS owns the school building and the adjacent properties. They have no plans to give up control of any of their properties. They have no plans to make MLC a neighborhood school and fully support the success of our alternative program.

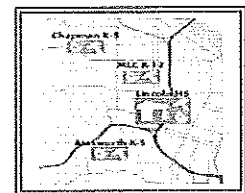
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PPS School Modernization Plan

On November 7th, PPS School Superintendent Carole Smith rolled out a proposal to issue a six-year \$548 million bond measure to modernize PPS School buildings. If approved by the school board and passed during the May 2011 elections, the measure would pay for:

- Major one-time safety and structural updates to school building systems.
- Rebuilding eight schools (Cleveland, Jefferson and Roosevelt high schools and five elementary and K-8 schools, Faubion, Laurelhurst, Markham, Marysville and Rigler), with full design for a fourth high school, Lincoln.
- Interim updates to classroom learning environments and school facilities, including teaching technology, science labs, outdoor PE and recreation spaces and other classroom improvements.
- Accountability and financial management measures, including paying off capital improvement debt.
- MLC would be on the list for an updated learning environment, 7x8 science equipment and a covered play area as well as and safety and structural improvements. See also:

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/schoolmodernization/index.htm> and <http://www.pps.k12.or.us/files/schoolmodernization/Matrix-New-02.pdf>



MLC & PDCs Central City Urban Renewal Area - Update

continued from previous page

6) However, David confirmed that legally PDC would have eminent domain over all properties within the URA, as is typical for the majority of their URA's (not Interstate URA). PPS would put pressure on PDC to not exercise their right for eminent domain (i.e. taking over the parking lot property if PPS objects), but they don't see this as a likely path for PDC. We asked if PPS could request to have eminent domain waived for the MLC property. As of November 25th, we are awaiting clarification from David about the impact of eminent domain.

7) Tanya asked about the 2008 PDC/PPS joint agreement - Resolution No. 6611. What does it mean? Who signed it? David will research the binding nature of this agreement and get back to us, but stated that it is a working agreement and does not bind us to acquiesce to PDC. This agreement says that PPS is given a seat on the Advisory Committee when creating a URA. David Wynde represents PPS on Central City URD Advisory Committee. David encouraged us to meet with David Wynde.

8) What is the process from here: *a.* PPS will wait to hear if the Mayor and PDC decide to proceed with new URA. *b.* PPS has published the priority list of PPS facilities to be included in the School Modernization Plan. *c.* A public school board hearing will be held on December 1st at 5:30, where the public can voice feedback on the proposed Modernization Plan. *d.* On December 13th the PPS Board will vote on this Plan. *e.* We will set up a meeting with David Wynde to learn more about PPS plans for MLC and the parking lot.

9) How can MLC be involved if the URA is created and plans for a parking structure proceed? *a.* David said that PPS has **no interest in building a parking structure on the MLC property in the next 5-10 years.** *b.* He has talked to PDC about notifying MLC parents, who are not necessarily part of the neighborhood of any future meetings regarding the Central City URA. PPS will commit to notifying the entire school of any notices being sent to the public regarding the URA. *c.* He assured us that if plans for a parking structure did proceed, the MLC community would be involved in decision making to leverage for our interests.

References:

MLC Historic designation:

http://www.pps.k12.or.us/files/schoolmodernization/Metropolitan_Learning_Center_ILS.pdf

PPS School Modernization Plan

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/schoolmodernization/index.htm>



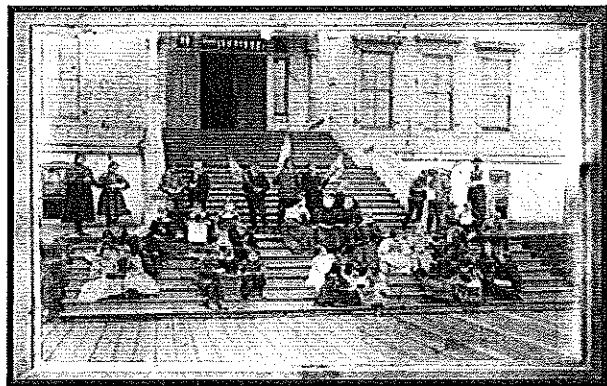
Students outside Blue Moon at NW 21st & Glisan, ca. late 1970s

MLC History: Place Matters

During the 2nd trimester, MLC parent Tanya March will be leading a middle school elective on history at MLC. Tanya, whose background is in historic preservation, has led an elective regarding MLC's history for the past two years.

This year's theme will be "Place Matters." The elective exposes students to the school's history and to the school's archival collections. This year, the elective will explore how the *location* of MLC is a catalyst for learning. There will be walks in the neighborhood and conversations with alumni and consideration of how to best keep hold of stories, information and images that are found. Earlier this year, alumni David Chelsea posted an album of early MLC images on Facebook. As the months have passed, the album has been discovered and the images are beginning to be tagged and identified. Students in the elective will need to consider how we can record this information for the archives. Additionally, our historic school building is part of an urban neighborhood. How is MLC part of the history of the neighborhood?

Kx8 elective sign ups will be held on December 15th - keep an eye out for this and other interesting classes that we as parents wish we could take ourselves.



Students at the old Couch School, 1896

Events and Opportunities

Romco and Juliet at the Northwest Academy

Last Month, the newsletter events page noted that Northwest Academy presents William Shakespeare's *Romco and Juliet*. Two MLC 10th grade students have featured roles in this production: Kenneth Scrgienko and James Swinford.

Performances:

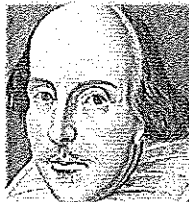
Dec. 3 & 4 at 7:30 pm,

Dec. 5 at 5:00 pm.

Dec. 10 & 11 at 7:30 pm,

Dec. 12 at 5:00 pm.

Tickets: \$10 Adults, \$5 Students.



Second Saturday Clean Ups

Come and help out: Volunteers meet at two locations in northwest to clean litter along the streets. MLC families can join neighbors and local businesses to help keep our community clean. These cleanups are sponsored by SOLV, Umpqua Bank, Food Front and Trader Joe's. Refreshments are provided – the clean ups each last about 1.5 hours.

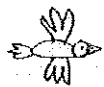
Date: Every Second Saturday

Time: 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.

Locations: Umpqua Bank: 467 NW 23rd Ave.
Food Front: 2375 NW 23rd Ave.

Here is the link to sign up before the event:

http://www.solv.org/volunteers/volunteer_calendar.asp



Hand in Hand

יד ביד: המרכז לחינוך יהודי ערבי בישראל (ע"ר)
بنا بيد: مركز التربية العبري اليهودي في اسرائيل

learning together living together

MLC to Israel Upcoming Fundraisers

The MLC to Israel group will be doing many fundraisers in December including:

- ❖ Participating in the Winter Craft Faire.
- ❖ Selling snacks at various times in the building.
- ❖ Wrapping gifts at the Jantzen Beach Barnes and Noble (for free!) for anyone who needs a little assistance.

On January 8th, we'll have a book fair at the Lloyd Center Barnes and Noble where anything purchased can help raise money to send this group to Israel. You can also get more information and donate directly on the website: www.mlctoIsrael.com. Please visit the website for more information!

PPS/PTA Clothing Center:

Volunteer Dec. 2nd

Twice a year, MLC parents, along with PPS staff, volunteer at the PPS Clothing Center at Marshall High School (3905 SE 91st, rm. C-58). Since 1964, the Clothing Center, has furnished age-appropriate clothing to children needing a hand. By caring for the basic needs of our kids, by helping them to dress as their peers, the center encourages self-esteem, academic success and regular class attendance.

Volunteers sort clothing and assist kids and their families as they look for clothing. No experience needed; it's fun! Shifts are 9:30am - 11:30am. or 11:30am - 1:30pm. We need 3-5 volunteers for each shift. To volunteer contact Jemy Flcncor: 503/283-2997, or jflcncor@gmail.com

If you're in need of clothing assistance, talk to Kathleen Frutiger: kfrutiger@pps.k12.or.us or 503/916-5737. Donations are welcome. Leave bags of cloths in the office marked "PTSACLOTHING CENTER." For more information about donating or requesting clothes, take a look at this link:

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/schools/sabin/228.htm>

The Children's Program: Dental Services

This referral-based program managed in partnership between OEBC, ODS, Kaiser, Willamette Dental and Oregon dentists was established to provide immediate dental treatment for uninsured children between the ages of five and 15 who live in Oregon. The program provides access to basic dental services at no charge up to an annual maximum of \$500. If you are interested, email childrensprogram@odscompanies.com or call 888-393-2772.

Affordable Housing for Families with Children in the Pearl

An income-based, 138-unit apartment complex, the Ramona Apartments, will be opening Spring 2011. The location at 13th/14th between NW Quimby and Raleigh is very close to MLC. As of the most recent information, rents are anticipated to be under \$1000 for 3BR/2BA units. Their email address is Portlandfamilyhousing@gmail.com.



December/January At MLC



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1 Site Council Meeting 3:15 Library Wreath Sale Pick Up	2 End of 1 st Trimester Wreath Sale Pick Up	3 No School Teacher Planning Day	4
5 ●	6	7 7x8 Play "Annie"	8	9 PTSA Meeting	10	11
12	13	14	15 Elective Sign Ups Staff Appreciation Baskets	16 Solstice Gathering Winter Craft Faire 3-7	17 Winter Craft Faire 12-4	18
19	20 No School Winter Break	21 Winter Break ○	22 Winter Break	23 Winter Break	24 Winter Break	25
26	27 Winter Break	28 Winter Break	29 Winter Break	30 Winter Break	31 Winter Break	20 11/1
2	3 Classes Resume	4 ●	5 Site Council Meeting 3:15 Library	6	7	8
9	10	11 2 nd Trimester Electives Begin	12	13	14	15
16	17 No School	18	19 Visitor's Program 10am	20 PTSA Meeting	21	22

