

A PUBLICATION OF
THE RENNER PTA

Mission

The mission of Renner Middle School, a shared responsibility of home, school and community, is to provide education which nurtures, inspires and challenges students in their uniqueness, preparing them to be contributing members of society.

Renner
Round-Up
is published seven
times a year by the
Renner PTA.

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Plano, TX 75093

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RENNER ROUND-UP



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FEBRUARY, 2012

In March and April our students will take the new state assessment. The State Assessment of Academic Readiness, or the STAAR test, replaces the TAKS test. While much about the test is still unknown, one of our jobs as educators and parents is to do our best to prepare them for the new test. I have included some information below about the test. If you would like additional resources I would encourage you to go on-line to the TEA website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/>. On this site you can find general information about the test as well as sample STAAR formatted questions for each tested area.

STAAR Middle School Testing Dates

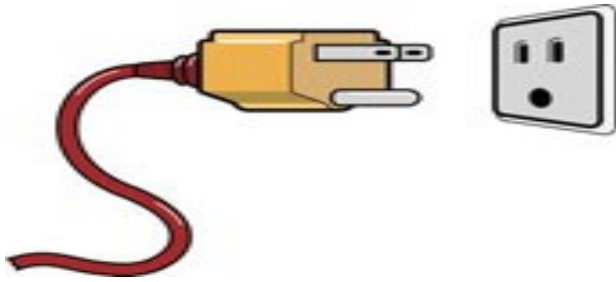
March 27 th	7 th Grade STAAR Writing / 8 th Grade STAAR Math
March 28 th	7 th Grade Writing (Day 2) / 8 th Grade STAAR Reading
April 24 th	6 th and 7 th Grade STAAR Math
April 25 th	6 th and 7 th Grade STAAR Reading
April 26 th	8 th Grade STAAR Science
April 27 th	8 th Grade STAAR Social Studies
May 15 th	8 th Grade EOC (for 8 th grade students that have met the criteria)

What we know about the test:

- **Timed Test:** Unlike TAKS, the STAAR test is a timed test. Students have 4 hours to complete the test. **Manage your time:** TEA has stated that not all students will be able to finish all the test questions during the testing period. Students will need to manage their time wisely on questions so that they are able to correctly complete as many items as possible.
- **More Questions:** There will be more tested items on the STAAR test
- **The questions measure students understanding of the TEKS, which is a foundation of the Plano ISD curriculum**
- **Higher Level Questions:** Questions for the STAAR test will be written in a manner that requires higher level of thinking for the student to be able to answer correctly
- **7th Grade:** this year 7th grade students will be expected to write more than one writing prompt

The most complete and up to date information can be found on the TEA website listed above. As parents I think the most helpful way to prepare your child for this test is to make sure they are mastering their classes at Renner. Doing well in their classes is one of the best predictors of success on state assessments. Making sure your child is studying at home, attending tutorials, preparing for tests and quizzes, and in general being successful in school is something that will benefit your child beyond just the STAAR test. Though doing well on this test is important, student learning and growth in addition to the other experiences at middle school are important life skills. I encourage you to take a look at the TEA website and encourage your child to regularly attend tutorials.

February	
22	Shepton Round Table for incoming 8th Graders
23	Spring Pictures
23	6th Grade registers online for courses
24	7th Grade registers online for courses
	Winter Outreach ends
	Report Cards come home
27	Renner Round Table for incoming 5th Graders, 6:30pm
March	
1-8	Book Fair
5	PTA General Meeting, 10:00am, Renner Library
6	Open House
	PISD School Board Meeting, 7:00pm
11	Daylight Savings Time begins
12-16	Spring Break
28	PACE applications due
April	
3	PISD School Board Meeting, 7:00pm
6	Student/Teacher Holiday
12	Teacher Treats
20	Report Cards
	Spring Socials
May	
7-11	Teacher Appreciation Week
28	Student/Teacher Holiday
June	
1	Last day of school; Early release at 12:40



ARE YOU CONNECTED TO RENNER?

Listed below are several ways to make sure you know what is going on at Renner and in PISD:

Renner PTA E-mail Blast

The Renner PTA will keep you current with a weekly email blast. To sign up, go to the PTA website and enter your email address.

The Mustang Messenger

Are you receiving this email from Renner each Friday? If not go to www.pisd.edu and click on the enews icon and sign up for Renner and any other school your students attend.

Renner PTA Website

www.rennerpta.org will give you updated calendars and events going on at Renner. It will also give you a list of board members to contact if you have questions or would like to become more involved.

The Renner Activity Line

Did you know that you can call the main number at Renner (469) 752-5800 and press 9 to get all of the activities and events going on that week? This is updated every Sunday night.

Parent Portal

This is a new feature on the PISD website (www.pisd.edu). Last year only Parent Viewer was offered as a way for parents to keep up with grades and absences in each class. Now there is a Library Link that accesses any online curriculum that PISD uses. Depending on the teacher, all of the handouts and extra helps are available to parents and students. Some of the other features include a current PISD calendar, announcements in the district, and your student's Learning Growth Charts. Please take the time to see what all is available on this site.

**Stay Connected to
Renner and Your
Child with Enews**





The President's Column

By Julie Myers, 2011-2012 Renner PTA President

Renner staff, teachers and students have all been very busy as the second semester is in full swing. I hope you will have a chance to come to Open House on Tuesday, **March 6th** to see how much the students have already accomplished this year and to have a chance to visit the Renner Book Fair. **Jenny Wood, Kim Brown** and many volunteers will be waiting to assist you in choosing books for your student or for a teacher. The Book Fair will be open each day during school hours, March 1st through March 8th as well as Open House on March 6th. The Book Fair continues to promote the joy of reading, provides books for the school library and helps the PTA fund its many worthwhile activities.

We still have one important event remaining in February. February 27th at 6:30 p.m. we will have the Renner Round Table for 5th grade parents. The Round Table features Mr. McLaughlin, other staff members as well as current Renner 8th grade students who participate in a variety of classes and activities talking candidly about life at Renner. This evening gives future Renner students and their families a chance to see inside the Renner family. There will be a time for questions to be asked of both the staff and students.

Spring Break is around the corner and I hope each of you has a wonderful break and comes back refreshed and ready for a great last couple of months of the school year. There are many events coming up that I hope you will be a part of. If you would like to help with any of the activities that occur for our teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week **May 7th – 11th** please contact **Sheryl Pidgeon or Julie Kabel** at appreciation@rennerpta.org. **Michelle Stapleton** will also be coordinating casseroles for each teacher on Wednesday of this week so please contact her if you can make a casserole at casserole@rennerpta.org.

Another fun event coming soon is the Renner Spring Social on **April 20th**. The social is a great chance for your student to have fun with their friends in a safe environment. To make the social a success we need two things: students to attend and parents to volunteer to chaperone the evening. Contact **Tracy Tomson** at socials@rennerpta.org if you would be willing to provide snacks, sell tickets during lunch or chaperone the night of the social. It will be a very fun night with loud music, lots of snacks and time to socialize with friends.

The nominating committee will present the slate of officers for the Renner PTA 2012 – 2013 Board at the General PTA Meeting on Monday, **March 5th** at 10:00 a.m. After the election, the officers will meet to begin filling the other positions on the board. If you would like to serve on next year's Renner PTA Board go to the Renner Website (www.rennerpta.org) to find a board interest form. If you have questions about any positions please contact **Jill Van Mater** at parliamentarian@rennerpta.org or me at president@rennerpta.org. Please pass this information along to any parents who will have a 6th grader at Renner for the first time. This is a great way to meet people and one more way to be connected at Renner. I look forward to hearing from you.

Lastly, I would like to announce that in December the Renner PTA awarded the Texas PTA Life Membership to four very deserving individuals: Sheryl Pidgeon, Kim Brown, Judith Grace and Leigh Ann Thompson. The Texas PTA Life Member award is given to individuals who have provided outstanding service to the students of Renner and the community. Thank you again to these parents and staff members who have so selflessly given of their time to our students.

As always please do not hesitate to contact me with any ideas, questions or comments.

Julie Myers
president@rennerpta.org.

COMING SOON TO A LIBRARY NEAR YOU

BOOK FAIR 2012 MARCH 1-8

‘Escape to the Tropics’ at this year’s Book Fair! Lots of volunteers are needed to make this book fair the best yet. If you would like to help, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Susie Learmont at volunteers@rennerpta.org or 972-978-4032. We need 2-3 volunteers at the book fair at all times. We can be flexible with your schedule—giving just an hour of your time makes a difference.

Thank you in advance,
Jenny Wood and Kim Brown
Book Fair Chairpersons



Renner's Winter Outreach Project

Renner's Winter Outreach Project is in full swing! The project is a Pet Supplies Drive to benefit Operation Kindness, and will continue through February 24. Operation Kindness is the oldest and largest no-kill animal shelter in North Texas. The shelter cares for an average of 200-250 animals on a day-to-day basis, with another 60-80 animals in foster homes. More than 3,000 dogs and cats are assisted by Operation Kindness each year!

Operation Kindness needs anything from cage cleaning supplies to pet toys. Please place all donations in the silver bins located outside the front office.

Let's finish strong, and show Operation Kindness how much Renner Middle School cares about the homeless animals in our community. Thanks so much for your support!

Please contact the Renner PTA Community Outreach Coordinator, Leslie Hyne, at outreach@rennerpta.org if you have any questions.

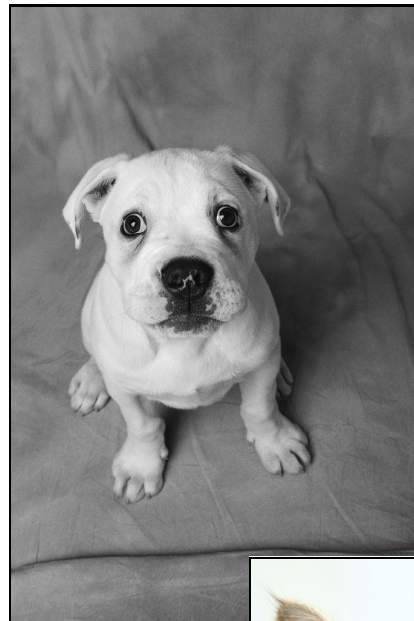
ITEMS NEEDED INCLUDE:

General Supplies:

Paper towels
Manual can openers
Hand sanitizer
Bleach
Clorox wipes
Clorox cleaner with bleach
Dow bathroom cleaner
Toilet paper and facial tissues
Laundry detergent
Endust or Pledge furniture polish
Air fresheners

Pet Supplies:

Plush toys and chew toys (new)
Rawhide chews and pig ears
Cat litter, 99% dust free--Fresh Step, Maxi Cat or Tidy Cat
Puppy pads
Small dog biscuits--preferably without dyes
KONG (TM) toys--all sizes
Peanut butter for KONG (TM) toys
Collars--chain: 18" to 26"; nylon: 8" to 14"
Grrrip (TM) big dog leashes, leashes--6 foot
Greenies pill pockets
Canned chicken
Chicken jerky or liver treats
Natural Balance bagged dog food in regular and small bite varieties
Pedigree or Natural Balance canned dog and puppy food
Natural Balance bagged cat food
Friskies & Fancy Feast canned cat and kitten food



Save the Date



For the Renner Spring Social

Friday, April 20

Don't miss the last big party of the school year and a great chance to hang out with all of your friends! There will be music by DJ Bill Cody, inflatables and games in the gym, drinks and snacks. All this is just \$5 a ticket if you purchase in advance. Tickets are \$7 at the door.

For Parents who are interested in chaperoning and/or providing snacks, please contact:

Tracy Tomson at socials@rennerpta.org

Boy parents are asked to provide something salty and girl parents please provide something sweet.

All items must be store bought and individually packaged.

We look forward to seeing all students there!

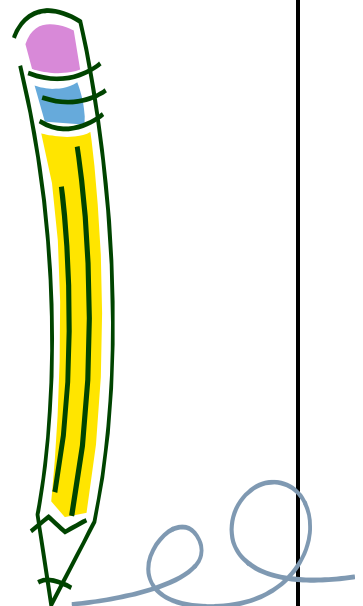
Visit the Renner School Store

Lost your pen or pencil?

Just want something fun and different?

Check out the great school supply items at the School Store. We have scented pencils and highlighters, erasers, pencil sharpeners and other cool novelties. Most items are under \$1!

Remember, the store is open on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during lunch for the 2nd semester of the school year. Proceeds from the store benefit the programs and grants sponsored by the Renner PTA.



Renner Round Table

Renner Round Table
Monday, February 27th
6:30pm – Renner Library

This informal program is for incoming 6th graders for the 2012 – 2013 school year. It is open to all parents and students who will be attending Renner next year. Renner 8th graders and staff will be here to answer questions. If you have a current 5th grader or know one, please let them know about this program.



Renner's Spring Theatre Show

We'll be performing two one act plays:
This is a Test and Small Actors both by Stephen Gregg.
These are both very funny and set in a high school—expect great performances!

Shows will be April 13th and 14th at 7:00 \$5 admission.

Shepton Round Table



Shepton Round Table
Wednesday, February 22nd
6:30pm – Shepton Library

Future Shepton Stallions and their parents will have an opportunity to visit with Principal Burt Smith, Shepton staff, and current Shepton students about life in high school. It will be an informal program and parents and students will have an opportunity to ask questions.



- T-shirts \$12*
- Tie Dye Shirt \$12*
- Athletic Shirts \$15*
- Pullover Hoodie \$25*
- Girls shorts \$15*
- Boys shorts \$15*



Come and support your school by purchasing Renner Spirit Wear today!! Stop by the school store and check out our selection of t-shirts, tie dye t-shirts, athletic shirts, sweatshirts and gym shorts! The school store is open during lunch on Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11-1.

If paying by check, please make check payable to Renner PTA. For more information please contact Jeanne Koepke at 214-458-9812

Help Renner Recycle Cell Phones Laptops, PDAs & HP Cartridges for \$\$\$!



Thank you to everyone who has sent used cell phones, PDAs and HP ink jet cartridges to Renner for recycling! We will continue to recycle these items throughout the school year. So keep Renner in mind when you replace or upgrade your technology.

HP Ink and Laser Jet Cartridges

Send your empty HP ink and laser jet cartridges placed in a plastic bag/baggie. Your student can put them in the designated container in the CTA Office (by the rotunda). For each empty HP inkjet cartridge we recycle, Renner receives \$\$\$ (Laserjet prices vary).

Cell Phones, Laptops and PDAs

We are also asking you to recycle your used cell phone, laptop and PDA through the school. When you upgrade, send your old item in a plastic bag to school. Renner will make money for everything we recycle. Visit <http://cartridgesforkids.com/pricesframe.html> to see what your item is worth in this recycle program!

Questions? Contact Tom Pittman, Renner CTA, at (469) 752-5806.

Teacher Treats say Thank You!

By Maggie Peck & Lori Gropper



Thank you to the many Renner parents who donated this school year for Teacher Treat day!!! The staff loved every bite! **Our next Teacher Treat date is Thursday, April 12**, so mark your calendars! And a BIG thank you in advance!

It is so easy to participate. The treats can be homemade or store bought. Treats can be sweet (cookies, brownies, cupcakes, coffee cakes), or salty (chips and dips, pretzels, crackers, meat and cheese, or healthy (fruit, veggie trays). The teachers love to have a wide variety. Just drop off your treat at the front office by 8:30 labeled "Teacher Treat" and we will take it from there. Disposable containers would be best but if you leave a serving dish you need returned, just put your name on the bottom and we will wash it and leave it at the front desk by the end of the day for you to pick up. You may also send your treat with your student as they come to school in the morning. We will take it from there. We decorate the Teachers Lounge based on the season and create a yummy-looking spread with your donated treats. We will also display the names of the team members who participate each time. You do not have to participate every six weeks, just whenever is convenient for your schedule.

We will send out an email reminding our volunteers a week before the upcoming treat day. Just let us know you are bringing something and what it might be. As you can imagine, it takes a lot of treats to feed over 110 teachers and staff! If you are interested in joining the Teacher Treats team for the upcoming school year, contact Maggie Peck or Lori Gropper at treats@rennerpta.org. We would love to have you join us in saying "Thanks"!

*Our next
Teacher
Treat date
is
Thursday,
April 12th*

RENNER BOOK FAIR

THURSDAY MARCH 1ST – THURSDAY MARCH 8TH

Wanna get away? Escape with a book!



Need a great read for an upcoming spring break road trip? The Renner Scholastic book fair is **March 1 -8** in the school library. Shop the book fair before or after school or during lunch. We'll even be open during the 6th grade choir concert and open house! The book fair is a great way to indulge your love of reading while supporting the Renner PTA and your school. Proceeds from the book fair benefit the school library and the many programs and grants provided through the Renner PTA.

Renner Officer & Chairman Volunteer Interest Form 2012 - 2013 School Year

The seven officer positions to be recommended by the nominating committee and elected at the March 5th General Membership Meeting are: President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, 3rd Vice President, 4th Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The President appoints the remaining Executive Board positions of Historian and Parliamentarian. Once the officers are in place, they will begin the process of appointing the Chairmen for Standing and Special Committees for the 2012 – 2013 school year. The duties of the PTA Officers and Chairmen are briefly described below. For a more complete description, please refer to the Renner PTA by-laws posted at www.rennerpta.org.

If you are interested in serving on the Board, please complete this form and return it to Renner, attention: Jill Van Mater, Parliamentarian, by February 1st to be included for consideration. Please contact Jill Van Mater at parliamentarian@rennerpta.org if you have any questions about the election process or job descriptions.

PTA Member Name _____ Phone _____

Student(s) at Renner: (2012-2013 school year)

Name _____ Grade _____ Name _____ Grade _____

Name _____ Grade _____ Name _____ Grade _____

OFFICERS

____ **President** Coordinate the work of the officers and committee chairmen. Preside at all meetings of the association, and represent the local unit as a delegate to council, State, and National PTA.

____ **First V.P. – Programs** Act as aide to the President. Plan educational, parenting, special, and general PTA meeting programs.

____ **Second V.P. – Volunteers** Organize and coordinate all volunteer programs and activities. Maintain record of all volunteer hours.

____ **Third V.P. – Ways and Means** Organize and coordinate all fundraising activities and develop fundraising strategy.

____ **Fourth V.P.—Membership** Responsible for promoting membership in PTA as well as completing and issuing membership cards. Supports Directory chairman and chairs committee to select PTA life members.

____ **Secretary** Record minutes of all meetings, notify board members of upcoming meetings, keep attendance records and maintain PTA office supplies.

____ **Treasurer** Act as custodian of all PTA funds, maintain all bank records and present financial statements, prepare tax return for year served. Also serve as Chairman of budget committee.

____ **Historian** Act as custodian of records and materials related to the history of the PTA, record school/PTA events and activities, prepare school scrapbook. Work closely with the Yearbook committee.

____ **Parliamentarian** Coordinate yearly by-laws review committee and nominating committee and attend all PTA meetings.

Officer & Chairman Volunteer Interest Form 2012 - 2013 School Year

STANDING COMMITTEES

____ **Arts in Education Chairman** Responsible for the publicity, promotion and participation in the National PTA's Reflections program.

____ **Cultural Fusion Chairman** Promotes cultural inclusiveness among the Renner students, communicates cultural events in the community in the Renner Round UP publication and on website.

____ **Environmental Chairman** Responsible for the promotion and participation in environmental awareness programs including the PTA's EPA poster contest and Environmental Club.

____ **Hospitality/Newcomer Chairman** Coordinate hospitality committee. Responsible for Back to School coffee, Renner family social activities, Newcomers' coffees, PTA Winter and End of Year luncheons. Maintain hospitality supplies.

____ **Legislative Chairman** Attend meetings of the Plano ISD Board of Trustees and report to executive board. Keep aware of the Legislative actions of the Texas and National PTA.

____ **Publicity Chairman** Responsible for the promotion and publicity, in coordination with PISD, of Renner Middle School student and PTA activities and events through the news media and website.

____ **Renner Round-Up Chairman** Procure news information/articles to develop and publish the Renner Round-Up.

____ **Safety/Youth Protection Chairman** Plan and develop programs for securing protection for neighborhood youth. Develop, coordinate, and monitor all safety programs.

____ **SAGE Chairman** Acts as liaison between parents with gifted and special needs children and the PTA. Promotes awareness of community events and programs for the families at Renner.

____ **School Store Chairman** Responsible for the selection and sales of all school store items. Maintain purchase records and weekly deposits with treasurer. Coordinate selling of school supplies at registration.

____ **Science Fair Chairman** Work with Renner staff member responsible for school Science Fair and enlist any volunteers that may be needed.

____ **Teacher Appreciation Chairman** Plan and organize faculty/staff appreciation activities. Staff in service luncheon, six week teacher treats, winter luncheon and Teacher Appreciation Week activities.

____ **Spirit Wear Coordinator** Select, sell and distribute all spirit wear.

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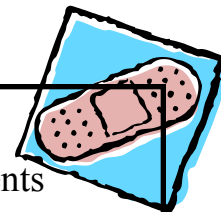
Officer & Chairman Volunteer Interest Form

2012 - 2013 School Year

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

- ____ **Birthday Cake Coordinator** Coordinate volunteers to provide a cake to recognize faculty birthdays.
- ____ **Book Fair Coordinator** Schedule, promote and implement all Book Fairs.
- ____ **Calendar and Activities Line Coordinator** Secure school calendar dates for publication and sale at registration. Record weekly activities on the phone line.
- ____ **Care Coordinator** Send greeting cards (congratulations, sympathy) or memorials to faculty/staff.
- ____ **Casserole Coordinator** Coordinate all activities to provide casseroles for staff during Teacher Appreciation Week.
- ____ **Community Outreach Coordinator** Responsible for planning, maintaining and publicizing collections from Renner students for non-profit organizations. Works with counselors for the Families-In-Need Fund.
- ____ **Directory Coordinator** Responsible for organizing, developing, publication and distribution of a school student directory.
- ____ **Directory Advertising Coordinator** Responsible for soliciting, billing, and final advertising inclusion in the Renner student directory.
- ____ **Library Volunteer Coordinator** Responsible for scheduling volunteers to assist the Librarian as needed.
- ____ **Office and Copy Coordinator** Responsible for scheduling volunteers for the copy room, main office, and the counselors' office.
- ____ **PTA Website Coordinator** Develop and maintain PTA website with pertinent and current school year information.
- ____ **Partnership Coordinator** Develop and maintain PTA contacts with potential partnership organizations and secure donations for designated events.
- ____ **School Store Schedule Coordinator** Responsible for scheduling volunteers to work shifts in the school store.
- ____ **Staff/Team Luncheons Coordinator** Coordinate volunteers to provide a luncheon for each Renner faculty team and the administration. One coordinator per grade: _____ 6th _____ 7th _____ 8th
- ____ **Student Socials Coordinator** Coordinate two school-sponsored student socials, one per semester. Work with school personnel in implementing 8th Grade End-of-Year event.
- ____ **Teacher Treats Coordinator** Coordinates volunteers to provide teacher treats at the end of each six week grading period and sets up in Teachers' Lounge.
- ____ **Yard Sign/Decal Coordinator** Work with school personnel in coordinating the sale and distribution of activity related yard signs and vehicle decals.

Nurse's Notes... Asthma



The Most Common Medical Condition Identified by Parents of Renner Students

Does your child have asthma? Has your child ever had asthma? Does your child use common asthma medications during allergy season? When he/she has an upper respiratory infection? Before active sports or PE? Even if you have never heard the word asthma from the lips of your child's doctor, many students experience symptoms similar to asthma or reactive airway disease under certain conditions.

What is Asthma?

Asthma is a CHRONIC condition. This may mean that your child will always have some risk for asthma symptoms. Many parents believe that their child has grown out of asthma. In fact, normal growth, including growth in the size of the child's lungs, may allow for better breathing. Sometimes, the symptoms seem to be absent but there may still be subtle changes remaining in the lungs. Asthma symptoms may return with the right triggers. Triggers can include: allergies, infections, cold weather, hot weather, exercise, inhaled pollutants (strong odors, cigarette smoke, perfumes), pet dander, laughing, crying and others. Avoiding triggers is essential and in some children, taking prophylactic medications such as allergy medications is also important.

Asthma is an INFLAMMATORY condition. Many folks think of asthma as being just a spasm of the airways. Now we know that asthma also causes inflammation and excess mucous production inside the airways while at the same time the muscles around the airways are squeezing the airways smaller. Reliever (fast acting) medications such as Albuterol and Xopenex work best to relieve the clamping down of the airways while other medications such as leukotriene inhibitors (Singulair) and steroids (oral or inhaled) work best to control the inflammation. Some people with asthma end up using the controller medications on a daily basis.

Asthma is a TERMINAL condition. What? It is true. We have all heard horror stories in the news about people who died from complications of asthma. Sometimes the problem traces back to lack of insurance to pay for medications or medical care. In other cases the person's inhaler was not accessible. Many times it is because the person did not understand the condition. I know a story about a college athlete with exercise and allergy induced asthma. He had not had trouble with his asthma for some time and got lazy about taking his controller medications and bringing his fast acting inhaler to practice. During a particularly intense practice he became breathless and asked the coach if he could go to his car to get his inhaler. The athlete ran to his car but collapsed in the parking lot before getting to his medication. By the time medical care arrived it was too late. So many things went wrong in that scenario. The athlete was not taking his controller/prevention meds. He did not have reasonable access to his fast acting inhaler. The coach sent him alone to get the medication. The athlete did not understand that trying to get to the car quickly by running was putting him in more danger.

Living With Asthma

Of course most people do not have asthma as severe as that athlete. However, all parents and kids who live with asthma symptoms should educate themselves about the condition and their medications. Learn when and how to use your prescribed medications. Use the tools that are available to you such as spacing devices for inhalers, peak flow meters and nebulizers. Know when you are starting to get into asthma trouble. The rule of "2's" is a good one to follow.

- If you have to use your rescue / fast acting inhaler more than twice a week (this does not include using the inhaler before sports or PE)
- If you are awakened by wheezing or coughing twice in the night
- If you need to refill your rescue medication twice in a year

If any of these are true of your child's asthma symptoms, they may not have the best control. Obviously, every child is different and pediatricians, allergists and pulmonologists sometimes have different approaches for different circumstances. Students with controlled asthma should be able to participate in all activities and have uninterrupted sleep. They should not have to miss any days of school due to asthma symptoms or spend time in the emergency room with an asthma episode.

How Does the School Approach Asthma Management?

At school, we are able to assist you in managing your child's asthma. Many children need to have access to an inhaler at school. Like any other medication, we ask that the parents sign a Medication Request Form and provide the inhaler or other medication with an original pharmacy label. We also ask that you have the doctor complete an Asthma Action Plan which can provide important clinical information. **The action plan also includes a place for your doctor to authorize the student to self carry their inhaler if there is a need for this.** (These forms must be updated at the beginning of every school year and are available online at <http://pisd.edu/parents/health/checklist.shtml>).

Please consider where we will store the inhaler at school very carefully. Inhalers stored in the health office are always accessible and their location is known by many adults in the building. While we understand that some students must have easy access to their inhaler and parents prefer that they carry it, in an emergency we will never be able to find an inhaler that has been left in a locker or forgotten at home. We do have a nebulizer at school if your child would benefit from taking their medication that way. A student who uses their own inhaler at school should check in with the nurse to be sure that they are having good relief. The nurse can listen to their lung sounds and check the peak flow and pulse oximetry if indicated in the action plan.

The most important thing that you can do is to communicate your child's needs so that we can know what to expect here at school. If you have any questions about asthma or your child's medications, feel free to contact the school nurse or your physician.

And the winner is....



**The American Library
Association
announces the
2012 literary award
winners:**

John Newbery Medal for most outstanding contribution to children's literature
Dead End in Norvelt - by Jack Gantos

Newbery Honor Books

Inside Out and Back Again - by Thanhha Lai
Breaking Stalin's Nose - by Eugene Yelchin

Randolph Caldecott Medal for most distinguished American picture book for children
A Ball For Daisy – written and illustrated by Chris Raschka

Caldecott Honor Books

Blackout – written and illustrated by John Rocco
Grandpa Green - written and illustrated by Lane Smith

Michael L. Printz Award for excellence in literature written for young adults
Where Things Come Back - by John Corey Whaley

Printz Honor Books

Why We Broke Up - by Daniel Handler
The Returning - by Christine Hinwood
Jasper Jones - by Craig Silvey
The Scorpio Races - by Maggie Stiefvater

William C. Morris Award honors a book written by a first-time author for young adults
Where Things Come Back - by John Corey Whaley

Robert F. Sibert Medal for most distinguished informational book for children
Balloons Over Broadway - by Melissa Sweet

Edgar Award Nominees for most distinguished mystery book

Shelter - by Harlan Coben
The Name of the Star – by Maureen Johnson
The Silence of Murder - by Dandi Daley Mackall
The Girl is Murder - by Kathryn Miller Haines
Kill You Last - by Todd Strasser

**Find these and many more titles at the Renner
Library!**

PACE

PACE Testing

PACE, Plano Academic and Creative Education, is a program for gifted and talented students. Students seeking a greater academic challenge may choose to take the PACE tests this spring to be considered for entry into the program next fall. Students are eligible to test only once per year. The deadline for application packet submission is March 28, 2012. Application packets can be found online at the Plano ISD website. Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, the annual testing will occur only in the spring.

8th Grade PACE

Eighth graders recently finished reading Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* and creating projects based on the book. Their projects included art, music, drama, and writing. Although some had approached this rigorous unit with trepidation, most feel enriched by their reading of this novel with its themes of justice and injustice in society.

Attending the play *The Diary of Anne Frank* at the Water Tower Theater gave these same eighth graders a personal understanding of the Holocaust. Followed by a presentation in the Renner library by the writer James Deem, who explained his book *Kristallnacht*, most have begun to understand the injustices perpetrated upon vulnerable people during the 1930s and 1940s in Europe. Reading *Anne Frank Remembered* by Miep Gies and *The Sunflower* by Simon Wiesenthal, the next books of study, further will enhance that understanding.

7th Grade PACE

Seventh graders have studied mythology and analogy while reading Agatha Christie's *The Labors of Hercules*. Leaving the mystery genre and beginning an adventure novel, *The Prisoner of Zenda*, these students will continue to enhance their vocabularies and practice their reading and writing skills in advance of the STAAR tests.

Box Tops for Education

Looking for an easy way to help Renner earn some money? Just bring in your Box Tops! Each little Box Top gives our school 10 cents. Just bring them to the pink box in front of the office and put them in there. It's that easy, and we'll collect them until the end of the year. Also, you can ask your family such as your aunts, uncles, and cousins and see if they might help you join the cause.



Another way to help is by creating an account on My Coke Rewards. Any points you earn from entering product codes can be donated to Renner Middle School.

Thanks for your help!

Renner Research

At various times during the school year, students may find themselves busy in the library only to realize that their research may not be finished by closing time! If you find yourself in a similar situation, never fear, PISD online resources are here!



Use the following instructions to access the research tools available through the PISD library website.

1. Go to Renner.myPISD.net to access your desktop.
 2. Find the box entitled “Quick Links”.
 3. Inside the Quick Links box, click on the link entitled “Library Resources”.
- Choose Renner from the list of schools under “Secondary Campus Library Sites”.

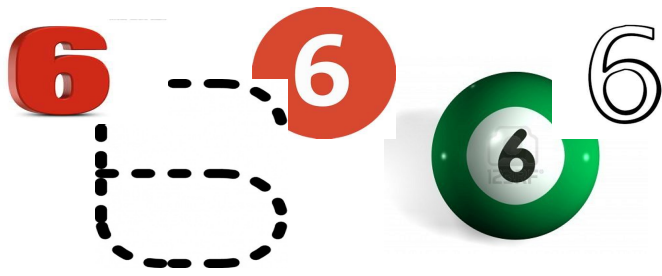
Databases	Fast Facts	Newspaper & Magazine	History & Geography	Texas Resources	Science & Technology
Encyclopedias	World Atlas	Access World News	ABC-CLIO Social Studies Databases	Archive of Texas History	Science Reference Center
Current Events & Hot Topics	CultureGrams	MAS Ultra – School Edition	CultureGrams	Texas Almanac	ScienceSource Collection
Biography Resources	Information Please Almanac	NewsBank	America’s Historical Newspapers	Ebsco – Texas Reference Center	Student Research Center
Literature and Books	World Almanac	KidsPage by NewsBank	History Reference Center	Handbook of Texas Online	netTrekker
Health Resources	U.S. Census Bureau	Ebsco – Student Research Center	Gale-Virtual Reference Library	Texas Beyond History	
Spanish Resources	Merriam-Webster’s Word Central Dictionary	Facts on File – World News Digest	netTrekker AP Images	The Portal to Texas History	

**Some resources will require a login and password. Use the following:
Login: planoisd Password: explore**

Other available resources include multimedia resources, search engines, graphics and images.

This information is also available on the back cover of the student agendas!

Happy Researching!
Shana Nowlin, Librarian



GRADE

history

The history classes have been journeying through Latin America and Africa in the unit, “Cultures in Transition”. The unit culminates with a study of an individual country from Africa or Latin America. Next, the classes will then be learning about 20th Century Europe with a focus on “Conflict and Cooperation”. The unit will take a look at the World Wars, the Russian Revolution, the Cold War, and the recent changes in modern Europe with the emergence of the European Union. Various political systems and economic systems will be introduced and studied in an historical context.

science

Dolphin, Sea Otter, and Penguin Science students have learned about the differences between fish and cetaceans, organization of ecosystems, and classification of living things into Domains and Kingdoms. We completed our ocean animal research project!! Presently, we are learning about the wise use of natural resources. Students will be exposed to variety of energy transformations throughout this unit. They can identify the original and final form of energy transformation in various situations.

math

“Variables & Patterns” is the current unit of study for 6th grade math students. This unit develops students’ ability to identify and recognize variables in situations. Students learn to describe patterns of change shown in words, tables, and graphs of data. We work on constructing tables and graphs to display relations among variables. “Variables and Patterns” also focuses on using algebraic symbols to write rules and equations relating variables and using tables, graphs, and equations to solve problems.

We are beginning STARR tutorials after school to focus on areas in need of improvement as we prepare for the upcoming STARR test in late April. Since the STARR test is new, students will continue to use the blue TAKS Review and Preparation Workbook as weekly practice. We will be completing a set of TAKS Tune-Ups for a double daily grade each week. Sets will be assigned on Fridays and due the following Fridays. These practice problems will be completed in lieu of the Weekly Practice Sheets.



GRADE

Texas history

Second Semester has begun and Texas History is heading into Unit 3: the Republic to Reconstruction. This unit focuses on the Republic of Texas, War with Mexico, Civil War, and Reconstruction. Lessons will concentrate on human response to conflict and change. The students will be working on their writing skills they learned in the first semester. They will be analyzing primary source documents and answering document-based questions in essay format. The unit will end with a Culminating Assessment Plan (CAP) where students will be producing a foldable or poster that shows their understating of the various times and events from this unit.

english

March 27th and 28th, 2012 are the dates of the new STAAR writing test. The 7th grade students have been working hard to train for the big event. Students will be expected to respond to narrative and expository prompts, demonstrate revision skills, and exhibit an ability to edit texts. As their parents, you can support and help them in the following ways:

1. Make sure they are here at school and on time.
2. Encourage them to take the test seriously
3. Fill them up with a good, **healthy breakfast** of champions Tuesday and Wednesday morning. Eggs are brain food!
4. Please see that they get plenty of rest the night before and are ready to focus.
5. Try not to upset them before they leave for school.
6. Have students use their STAR notebook as a means of preparation prior to the assessment.
7. Read information regarding the format and design for the STAAR tests at the following link:
<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/staar/>
8. Finally, let them know you love them and care about their performance.

science

7th grade science students started the year off by creating class compost bins using worms! Have you had any odd requests for used coffee grounds, eggshells, or dryer lint? Students became aware of both positive and negative effects that humans have on the ecosystem by studying changes in watersheds following urban development, preservation efforts by humans, and ecological succession.

Students are now learning how the human body maintains equilibrium by investigating the interaction of the different systems of the body. Ask your child about the nervous system lab called "Getting on My Nerves"!

math

Happy New Year!! We have started a great new year with a new unit called Moving Straight Ahead. This book will explore properties of linearity. Your child will learn to construct tables, graphs, and equations that express linear relationships. They will also be able to understand the connections between linear equations and the patterns in the tables and graphs of those equations: rate of change, slope, and y-intercept.

Please remember 7th grade math tutorials are every day and times are listed below.

Monday	7:55 am – 8:25	Room 511
Tuesday	7:55 am - 8:25	Room 811
	3:30 pm – 4:00	Room 815
Wednesday	7:55 am – 8:25	Room 511
Thursday	3:30 pm – 4:00	Room 811
Friday	7:55 am – 8:25	Room 815



US History started back with a roar after winter break with the “New Republic.” Luckily, we are beginning the process to select presidential candidates. If you wish to assist in drawing the connections, watch the news and discuss with your child about the upcoming presidential election. These conversations help our classes as well as the student’s understanding of history come alive.

So, throughout the New Republic, we have positioned conversations to bring about awareness of the process and help students to understand the challenges facing government today and when it began. Much like this unit, “New Republic,” it is organized to help students understand the challenges faced by the new republic during the presidencies of George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe. The unit begins with the precedents established by the first president, George Washington and is followed by the visionary leadership of the remaining four presidents.

The election of 1800 is presented students to better understand the development of political parties in the United States and the political process of electing a president. The judicial branch is highlighted with the establishment of judicial review by the Supreme Court through the landmark case of *Marbury vs. Madison*.

The students will learn that this period of history is often referred to as the beginning of nationalism as the United States embarked in a second war with England, the War of 1812. It is also the end of the Federalist Party with only the Democratic-Republic Party (the party of Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe) in power. Correlations to current events are being drawn as we see political candidates and their campaigns for president.

In conjunction with the Colonial Williamsburg foundation, Thomas Jefferson will be visiting Renner MS on February 23rd. Bill Barker, who represents Thomas Jefferson, will be conversing about Jefferson’s time in office. To preview some of this visit, check out http://www.history.org/experience/jefferson_elections/ and http://www.history.org/experience/jefferson_elections/questions.cfm . If you wish to attend, we will have presentations at the start of each period starting at 1:00 p.m. in the library.

Communication skills are the focus for this unit through writing and giving speeches for a political campaign. Ending the February 10th, we will be moving onto “An Expanding Nation.”

In this unit of *An Expanding Nation*, the content focus is threefold: analyzing westward expansion and its effect on the political, economic, and social development of the nation, analyzing how political, economic and social factors led to the growth of sectionalism and the Civil War, and identifying the impact of science and technology on the development of the U.S.

This era with its expansion into the West and the economic transformation that changed the ways Americans worked, where they lived, while simultaneously creating new opportunities and new social problems, requires students to grasp the interrelationships among the expansion and industrialization period of our nation’s history.

ONLINE TEXTBOOK: www.mhln.com/texas, click on Class Code, Class Code: 08222011, then just click on the textbook link.

math

Our **CMP Algebra 8** students have just started the Unit called Frogs, Fleas, and Painted Cubes (FFPC). In earlier Units, they studied problems that could be modeled with linear or exponential relationships. In this unit, they start to explore quadratic relationships. By the end of the unit, they will be able to recognize patterns of change for quadratic relationships. They will also be able to write equations for quadratic relationships represented in tables, graphs, and problem situations. They will understand how to use a quadratic equation to identify the maximum or minimum values, the x- and y-intercepts, and other important features of the graph of the equation. They will also be able to use the distributive property to write equivalent expressions in factored and expanded form. They will be using their newly acquired knowledge to solve problems from geometry, science, and business.

Our **CMP Honors Algebra 1** students will just be finishing up the Unit on FFPC and be about to start on Say It with Symbols (SIWS). This unit continues exploring factoring quadratic equations, and in addition, it focuses on modeling situations with symbolic statements, and equivalent expressions. They will be using their knowledge of linear, exponential and quadratic equations to make predictions. The emphasis shifts to using the properties of numbers to look at equivalent expressions and the information each expression represents in a given context, and to interpreting underlying patterns that a symbolic equation or statement represents. The aim of this unit is to help develop what we call “symbol sense”.

science

Students will continue the dynamic Earth unit by exploring the geology of the Earth. The key components include a study of the rock cycle, the minerals found in rocks and the forces that change the topography of the Earth. We will discuss plate tectonics, plate boundaries, and the theories explaining why Earth’s plates move and the effects of this movement such as earthquakes and tsunamis. Students will gain a sense of the time frame of Earth’s ever changing face and how that could alter global climate patterns in the future.

english

Honors English 8 – Students will complete their class novel Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde. By the end of the novel, students will understand that there can be two sides to characters and will be able to identify good and evil character traits. Students will move forward and read Fahrenheit 451 learning about dystopian societies, censorship, and the importance of literature in every day life.

On-Level English 8 – Students will continue working on their class novel, The Transall Saga. By the end of the unit, students will have a greater understanding of conflict in literature. Students will identify different types of conflict and how characters handle conflict. Conflict related activities bridging to the classroom and outside world will supplement the novel. In addition, students will continue to expand their vocabulary by learning new words and implementing them in everyday use.