

FEB  
2022

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# east lake eagle

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## PTA Presidents Message Erika Conti & Danielle Ocuto

Dear East Lake parents, teachers, staff and students,

Happy New Year! It's our hope that 2022 is off to a great start for you and your families. We are so excited to have made it through the first half of the school year and to have brought back so many of the PTA activities we all love. Most of us now realize how much we appreciate these in-person events that we may have previously taken for granted. With the help and support of the truly extraordinary East Lake administration and staff, our PTA has been able to host the Back to School Bash, Walk to School Day, Halloween Family Fun Bingo Night, Blood Drive, Reflections Contest, Picture Day, Cultivate Kindness Assembly, Holiday Fair and Elf the Musical Family Fun events. It's been such a GREAT first half of the year!

In addition, our Staff Appreciation Committee has been hard at work to remind teachers and staff how much we value them. This committee hosted a welcome breakfast for all East Lake staff the first week of school, gifted dinner for the evening custodial staff in October and surprised teachers and staff with a hot cocoa bar for the holidays.

Lastly, East Lake PTA's Book Vending Machine Committee has been on site at least once a month to ensure the PTA's newest addition, our book vending machine, is fully stocked and that students are able to use their tokens to make the perfect choice.

We are so lucky to have such amazing parents to chair and volunteer on these committees, as well as the overwhelming amount of support we receive from our Executive Board. As everyone who's involved is aware, our PTA is only as good as those involved. We thank the parents and staff that dedicate their time to our organization, including those that repeatedly give back to our community, as well as the newer parents that have gotten involved this year.

Additionally, we appreciate (beyond measure) the East Lake administration and staff that continue to do what's best for our kids, including their assistance with our PTA activities.

We have lots planned for the second half of this school year including an out of this world PARP program (hint to this year's theme!) and Book Fair, a Reflections Contest Ceremony, the boys and girls socials, Mother's Day Plant Sale, Father's Day Boutique and everyone's favorite, Field Day! We are hopeful that the second half of the year will be just as great as the first. We hope you enjoy reading our Newsletter and have a great second half of the school year!

Regards,  
Erika Conti and Danielle Ocuto

**National  
PTA®**

*everychild.one voice.*

Please join and be a  
part of what makes  
East Lake special!



## A Message from Principal McKillop



Dear Parents:

Happy New Year East Lake families! I wish all of you a healthy 2022 and let's hope we can finally put this pandemic behind us in the near future. As I sit down to write this letter, we are finally starting to see a decline in the number of cases, and it appears (fingers crossed) that we are trending in the right direction. Like all of you at home, my staff and I are ready for a return to normalcy that has eluded us the past two years. I am so grateful for the efforts of my entire staff and the PTA for making sure that we are doing everything within our power to provide the students of East Lake with all of the instruction, field trips, activities, and special events that students pre-COVID experienced. Sure, we have had to make some minor modifications and, in some circumstances, needed to delay events, BUT unlike the early stages of the pandemic things are being planned and moving forward. I'd like to thank the community for their patience and understanding during these trying times.

It is hard to believe, but we are almost at the half-way point of the school year. February marks the annual arrival of the PTA Pick A Reading Partner program. This year the PARP program will kick off with our Author in Residence Program. On Friday, February 4th we will finally have a chance to welcome Ms. Anna Raff to East Lake School. We look forward to the activities that are planned and the collaboration with our library and reading departments when Ms. Raff comes to visit after being postponed for almost two years.

After the author visit the PARP program officially "blasts off" on Monday, February 7th. This year's theme, Reading is a BLAST will have students exploring the reading universe, as they have an opportunity to take part in all the traditional PARP program activities. As one of the premier PTA events annually, we are excited for the program to take flight.

Our PTA continues to be an integral part of our community. Parent volunteers support our efforts by providing numerous opportunities for students beyond the classroom. If you are not already a PTA member, I urge you to join and maybe consider getting involved with one of their numerous committees. The East Lake School community is fortunate to have such a positive and supportive PTA and your involvement is truly beneficial not only for your child, but for all students. Finally, if you ever have any questions or concerns about any aspect of your child's education, feel free to contact me or Mrs. Velte. We welcome your inquiries. Again, I'd like to wish the entire East Lake community a happy and healthy new year!

Thomas A. McKillop III  
Principal

## 2021-22 East Lake PTA Board

Erika Conti - Co-President

Danielle Ocuto - Co-President

Luz Bove - 1st Vice President

Stacie Tranchina- 2nd Vice President

Christina Vitucci - Treasurer

Meaghan Wrona - Corresponding Secretary

Ashley Ianotta -Recording Secretary





## Back to School Bash

East Lake PTA was happy to welcome students and their families back this year with the return of our Annual Back to School Bash. This year's bash was our very first in person, family attended event at East Lake since the initial shut down of March 2020. Being able to return to the activities we have all come to know and love put a smile on many faces as was seen by sold out tickets, the fantastic turnout and fun had by all. What a great group of parents and committee members we have that helped to make this event one filled with the sounds of music, laughter, and fun.

This year we were able to obtain some wonderful raffle prizes through the generous donations from our local businesses with their unending support for our school community. And there wasn't a better way to end the night but with an ice cream truck to send everyone off with a sweet treat! Welcome Back to all and wishing you all a great year.



East Lake PTA had much to celebrate this year. We were awarded the NYS School of Excellence recognition as well as the Early Bird and On Target awards. Congratulations!

## Awards & Recognition



**SCHOOL OF  
EXCELLENCE**





Grades K-5 participated in the Walk to or From School event - gathering together to get exercise and spend some extra quality time with friends or siblings before school. They were tasked with searching for nature items (tree, flower, acorn) and marking it off on their sheet as they walked. The grade with the most participation got extra recess - 380 students participated and 1st grade came out on top!

## Walk to School Day



## I am kind

The PTA fundraiser this year, Raise Craze, was based on giving back and gratitude. Participants completed acts of kindness to thank family and friends for donating funds to East Lake. Our students certainly rose to the occasion with over 300 acts of kindness completed and almost 1,000 donations collected!

Challenges were held throughout the three weeks of Raise Craze. The Raise Craze final challenge was won by Mrs. Protano's fourth grade class and Mrs. Dixon's Kindergarten class. These two groups raised more money for East Lake, completed more acts of kindness, and reached out to more family and friends for donations than other classes. They are officially "Kindness Kids!"

Both classes have been featured on a special bulletin board for all their peers to see. Individual acts of kindness included students helping more at home and being more inclusive of their peers.

## Raise Craze





## Picture Day

Picture Day was held on Thursday, Nov. 4 and Friday, Nov 5, 2021. Both days went very smoothly and we were very pleased with the cooperation and coordination of the Irvin Simon Photography Company. We want to thank all of our parent volunteers for giving up their own valuable time to help make our picture days so successful.

## Halloween Bingo



No tricks here - 250 East Lake children gathered together in Halloween costumes to play Bingo! There were raffles and prizes for the winners, and snacks generously provided by the 5th grade committee.



## Staff Appreciation

The Staff Appreciation Committee has surely shown our level of gratitude for East Lake teachers and staff. A welcome back breakfast was laid out for the first week of school, our nighttime custodial staff was surprised with dinner and a hot cocoa bar was laid out to welcome in the holidays. We just love the teachers and staff at our school!



THANK  
YOU



## Cultivate Kindness Assemblies

The students in 2nd and 3rd grade had the opportunity to attend Cultivate Kindness assemblies in November. The students were highly engaged and inspired during Mr. Specht's presentation - proving to them that kindness is the world-changing super power that we all share! He promoted compassion and respect, and encouraged everyone to pay it forward and spread kindness in our communities.



It was so exciting that our annual Holiday Fair was able to take place in-person again this year! It was so special watching the kids' excitement as they picked out a gift for their family, friends, teacher, and pets. It really gave each student fulfillment that they were able to buy their own gifts! They put such thought into each item they picked. It was also amazing to watch all the kids sharing what they purchased with their friends. Hope you all love your special surprises!

## Holiday Fair



The Outreach Committee collected food for Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Rose food pantries - filling 20 copy boxes with donations! A special 'thank you' goes out to the Student Council for neatly organizing all of the food into boxes for the committee to pick up and deliver. It was an amazing team effort!

## Holiday Food Drive

## Book Vending Machine

The East Lake Book Vending Machine Committee visits East Lake every month to ensure our machine is fully stocked and operational. This committee also assists students with choosing the right book with their earned tokens. Students seem to love their visits to this machine and we're so grateful for the chairs and volunteers that keep it going.



The East Lake Family Fun Fall/Winter Committee hosted a group outing for "Elf The Musical" in early December. There was a great turnout and it was a great show! What a great way to bring in the holidays!

## Elf the Musical





## Newsletter Committee:

**Co-Chairs:**  
Mallory Kerley &  
Danielle Ocuto

**Committee:**  
Elizabeth Tolson  
Catherine White  
Brian Wygand  
Hope Wygand

## Join the PTA

The East Lake PTA  
has been working hard  
behind the scenes -  
and we need your help!

Scan the below QR  
code and become a  
PTA member today



## Reflections

# NATIONAL PTA® REFLECTIONS®

The Reflections committee had 57 amazing project submissions this year! Students created fine art, photography, dance, literature and film to share their vision for how they can change the world. Entries are currently being judged by McKenna Elementary teachers and we will soon be submitting the top 2 in each category to the county for the next level of competition. Mrs. Krakoff was instrumental in getting more student participation this year. She held multiple extra help sessions to work with the students. Thank you to Mrs. LiCausi for coordinating the judging of McKenna's entries when we exchanged.

## Check out a few of the submissions!

