



# KeyNotes

## A PTO Publication

Volume 4, Issue 1

### A Message From our President

by Erika Honoré

Dear Keystone Families,

Welcome to another school year! Whether you are new to Keystone or an old hand, I know this will be an exciting and eventful year. As always, the PTO will be working hard to support the teachers and our children in as many ways as we can.

Our first general PTO meeting will be in the theater on Wednesday, September 30 at 6:00 p.m. Child care will be provided. We are in for a real treat at all the PTO meetings this year. Mr. Gonzales is going to have his music students from various grades give a short performance to open the meetings. This will be a great opportunity to hear some talented and enthusiastic singers! The main program for this first meeting will be a presentation by Teresa Powers and Alison Raymer on Second Step, the Social/Emotional Learning curriculum that is now in place in most grades. Mark your calendars now; this promises to be a great program.

To those of you who have already joined the PTO, we thank you very much and look forward to working with you this year. If you haven't joined yet, you can do so at any time; we'd love to have you. If you think you are just too busy to volunteer for a committee, don't worry, we never force you against your will! Just by being a member of the PTO you are enhancing your child's school life. I look forward to working with you this year.

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# Welcome Back Keystone Students!

## Announcing:

General PTO Meeting

September 30, 2009

Refreshments

6 p.m., Theater Garden

Meeting

6:30 p.m., Theater

Don't miss it!

## Head of School Search Update

Dear Friend of Keystone School:

We are pleased to report that the Keystone Head of School Search Committee met on Tuesday, September 1, 2009 to evaluate 45 excellent applicants wishing to serve as the next Head of Keystone School. On the basis of their talent, training, experience, articulated vision, and references we have identified nine outstanding candidates who will be interviewed by our committee during the weekend of September 12-13 at Keystone School. Wickenden and Associates reports that all those invited have accepted the opportunity to visit with us. We are excited about the prospect of meeting and further evaluating these individuals in person. We are confident that we will identify a highly meritorious final group of candidates for the Keystone community's evaluation in October. The October on-campus interviews will be the time when the entire community, faculty and staff, parents, alumni, and students, can interact with, and provide feedback on, our finalists to the Search Committee. Based on this feedback, the Search Committee will recommend the candidate who is best suited to serve as Head of Keystone School to the Keystone Board of Trustees.

Mark Steinhilper, on behalf of Susan Kaufman, Chair of the Search Committee

# Headlines

## Dear Lower School Families,

Welcome back to another exciting school year. The lower school is bursting with warm, wonderful energy! The children are settling into routines and adjusting well to the transitions. This year, we continue to build ways to keep communication strong and have added a monthly lower school news update to the Keystone website. Each month, this update will feature some aspect of Lower School life.

This past week, we had our first Lower School Coffee and the library was packed! Alison Raymer, our school counselor, kicked things off by speaking about the social and emotional programs that she oversees and implements. Next month, we will focus on language concepts and development and how it relates to learning in other academic areas. The coffees will continue to take place the first Wednesday of every month in the Lower School library.

Another exciting change this year is that lower school students will have additional performance opportunities. One or two grade levels at a time will sing at the PTO meetings. Kindergarten through second grade has an additional singing/music class, and this will be a marvelous chance to show off their stuff.

So far, this is proving to be a fabulous beginning and there is much to look forward to. Thank you for all of your boundless energy and support!

Best wishes,  
Christine M. D'Alessandro

## Middle School Update

We have had an amazing start to the school year. It appears as though all of our transition efforts are paying off as this year's 5<sup>th</sup> grade is more relaxed and ready than ever before! The 8<sup>th</sup> grade has already returned from their outdoor education trip to Yellowstone and despite some rain, it was a success. Student elections have been held in all grades and this year's PAL (Peer Assistance and Leadership) students have been selected and are ready to get started.

Almost every family has signed on to the Yahoo Groups. This is extremely important because it is the primary way for me to get information to Middle School families. If you have not joined, please contact me directly.

Although we are in constant problem-solving mode, Theresa Powers, Alison Raymer, and I are eagerly tending to each Middle School student. We are so excited that things are going so well and cannot wait to experience all the fun this school year has to offer!

Michelle Rothwell  
Head of Middle School

## Dear Upper School Families,

The opening of school has been the smoothest, albeit hottest, in my memory, which extends over 20 years at Keystone! Students seem to have sorted out their classes, conquered their lockers (for now, at least), boarded the bus to Big Bend in the seniors' case, auditioned for *West Side Story*, launched the soccer and volleyball seasons, and turned their eyes to their books as they work toward making this a great year in their lives. Miss Cihal and I have already held some meetings and scheduled many more with seniors, juniors, and even sophomores and freshmen as we get the Presidential Volunteer awards under way, training on Naviance—the counseling online program—started, and individual meetings with seniors to help them firm up their college application decisions going. Half the freshmen are launching their new required course Self and Community while other high school students are enjoying an array of new electives like Computer Design, Dramatic Literature and AP Environmental Science. It has been a very busy and productive beginning upon which to build a wonderful year.

Regards,  
Suzanne Elizondo



**Keystone families and alumni are invited to the Twig Bookstore on Friday, October 2 from 5:00-7:00. Keystone alum and author, Carmen Tafolla, will be reading from some of her work. Mark your calendars now and expect more information soon.**

# Open House: September 17, 2009

## Middle and Upper School Schedule

We are very excited to have all of our parents on campus Thursday evening to rotate through their child's schedule and meet teachers. When parents arrive on campus, National Honor Society volunteers will have tables near Stevens Hall to hand out class schedules. There will be a table for Middle School and a table for High School. Once parents get their schedule, they will report to Period 1 and begin the rotation of their child's day.

An Upper School volleyball game will be taking place in the gym. If a child is scheduled for PE, please use the time to support the Cobras and visit the game.

<b>6:00—6:10</b>	<b>Period 1</b>
<b>6:15—6:25</b>	<b>Period 2</b>
<b>6:30—6:40</b>	<b>Period 3</b>
<b>6:45—6:55</b>	<b>Period 4</b>
<b>7:00—7:10</b>	<b>Periods 5/6</b>
<b>7:15—7:25</b>	<b>Period 7</b>
<b>7:30—7:40</b>	<b>Period 8*</b>

\* Dr. Haness' Algebra I and Mrs. Steinhelper's 6<sup>th</sup> period Science 7 will meet at this time – this will be indicated on parent schedules.

## Middle School Expands Second Step Program

by Theresa Powers

Because Keystone is committed to a well-rounded educational experience in a supportive, inclusive environment that encourages ethical growth and responsible leadership, we are excited to expand our *Second Step: Student Success Through Prevention* program to help us achieve this vision. This program is designed to decrease aggression, violence, bullying, and substance abuse and help increase school success. All middle school students participate in the *Second Step* program through their weekly advisory period. The program is based on research that links lack of communication and social skills with many problem behaviors for young teens, such as substance abuse and interpersonal violence. The major themes of this program are:

- Empathy and communication
- Bullying prevention
- Emotion management
- Problem solving, decision making, and goal setting
- Substance abuse prevention

Throughout the year, teachers, administrators, and other school staff will participate by integrating the program's concepts into everyday interactions. Families will also be encouraged to get involved in the program through teacher communication and homework assignments.

By participating in this program, we are all playing a vital role in helping students develop skills, behaviors, and attitudes that will help them in middle school and throughout their lives.

## Back-to-school Picnic Pics

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Photos by Dwayne Green



Keystone School  
 119 East Craig Place  
 San Antonio, TX 78212  
 (210) 735-4022



**Keystone PTO  
 Parent Council  
 2009-2010**

**Lower School**

- Paige Bosshardt
- Mark Carolin
- Roxanna Gonzalez-Soza
- Shelly Hensley
- Alice King
- Marilou Tan

**Middle School**

- Susan Agrawal
- Jennifer Chan-Lam
- Danna Halff
- Erica Honoré (President)

**Upper School**

- Fiona Arecchi
- Lisa Cooper
- Patty Swartz
- Amy Zesch

**Ex Officio**

- Mary Burch
- Hugh McIntosh



**Did you know ???**

**Box tops earn dollars for the PTO.**

**Please join the effort to raise PTO money by saving your box tops and depositing them in the drop-box located in the common room.**

**PTO Fundraising Fundamentals**

Here are some easy ways to earn money for Keystone without opening your checkbook:

Shop at Office Depot. Office Depot will pay a percentage of each purchase to Keystone if you ask them to during check out. Keystone's affiliate number is 70100727, but the Office Depot check out person should be able to look this number up if you don't have it with you.

Do you have a Target Red Card? If so, you can enroll in Target's *Take Charge of Education* program and designate Keystone as the recipient of your sales percentage. After enrolling, the more you spend at Target, the more they send Keystone. For details visit [www.target.com](http://www.target.com) and click the link at the bottom of the page to "Take Charge of Education."

**KESTONE DIRECTORIES  
 NOW AVAILABLE!**

at the reception desk in Founder's Hall

**\$5 with PTO membership**

**\$7 if purchased separately**

**Don't forget to pick up your copy if you prepaid through the PTO!**



*Parent Council Reps (l to r): Sue Agrawal, Jennifer Chan-Lam, Roxanna Gonzalez-Soza, Amy Zesch, Erika Honoré, Danna Halff, Paige Bosshardt, Mary Burch, Alice King, and Shelly Hensley (not pictured: Fiona Arecchi, Mark Carolin, Lisa Cooper, Hugh McIntosh, Patty Swartz and Marilou Tan.)*

**PTO Members DO Matter!**

Thank you to the **173 families** who have joined the PTO so far! Our **goal is 100% of families**, so we still have a long way to go. We encourage all families to fill out the PTO membership form and drop it off in Janet Molak's office or mail it to the school. The wonderful programs of the PTO are funded almost entirely by annual membership dues. If you join the PTO and can spare \$20, you will be contributing directly to year-round teacher appreciation efforts, new family support programs, new classroom equipment and materials, Keystone's PSIA teams, and so many other initiatives. We promise it will be money well spent! (A PTO membership form is attached in a separate PDF file with this newsletter.)

**PTO Welcomes New Keystone Families!**

In August, the PTO hosted two Open House receptions to welcome the new Keystone Families.



Parent Council members, students, board members, and school administrators were on hand to greet new students and their families.



**Photos by  
 Mark Carolin**