

Calendar Activity Descriptions



Meet the Teacher

Before school begins in August, students and parents are invited to attend our annual *Meet the Teacher* event. At a specified time, the school doors open and parents and students go to the cafeteria where student's names are posted next to their newly assigned teacher's names. Teachers open up their classrooms to meet their new students and their parents. This event allows students to drop off their supplies, introduce themselves and their parents to the teacher, know where to go on the first day of school, and find out who is in their class. The information about *Meet the Teacher* is provided to students and parents in a letter that is enclosed in the last report card or in registration packets that are given to newly enrolled students.

Parent Orientation

The first PTA meeting typically includes Parent Orientation. This is a late afternoon and early evening event where classroom teachers discuss expectations, schedules, routines, rules, communications, and more. This is a very informative session that parents should definitely try to attend.

Reflections

The National PTA's Reflections Program provides opportunities for students to express themselves and to receive positive recognition for their artistic efforts. The program offers students the opportunity to create works of art for fun and recognition. Students in preschool through grade 5 are encouraged to create and submit works of art in four areas: literature, musical composition, photography, and the visual arts (which include art forms such as drawing, painting, print making, and collage). Students participate in the Reflections Program by submitting entries to their local PTA or PTSA. Any PTA/PTSA in good standing is eligible to sponsor a

Reflections Program. Rules, deadlines, and specific guidelines are sent out in the fall semester.

Fun Run

The Fun Run occurs in the fall and is sponsored by our PTA. This event honors a past teacher, Mrs. Norma Walthrop who died while teaching at Spicewood. The event usually begins around 5:00 p.m. Parents, students, and even some teachers run around the track. Hotdogs are served and there is usually live entertainment as well.

Book Fair

The PTA sponsors a Book Fair each year during the October National School Library Week. The event raises money that is donated to the school library for programs such as Bluebonnet Books, PYP, and visiting-author presentations.

PTA Meetings

We are fortunate to have a very active and outstanding PTA. They sponsor various parent teacher events while also coordinating an active volunteer program. Enrichment Day, Fun Run, Reflections, Book Fair, Math Club, Principals' Pride, Fall Carnival, and Spring Silent Auction are among the many special events that take place at Spicewood. PTA Meetings are typically scheduled on the first Tuesday of the month. School programs are often done in conjunction with these meetings. Our music teachers plan music programs for first, second, fourth and fifth grades, and our Art Teachers organize an Art Gallery Night where all of our students' art work is highlighted.

SBAC

Site Based Advisory Committee Meetings are scheduled once a month. The Committee is made up of teachers, staff members, parents, and community members who review the Campus Improvement Plan (CIP). The purpose of the SBAC is to involve all stakeholders in the school improvement process. Although the Principal is an official member of "Site Based" and must oversee the operation of the committee, a chairperson is appointed and is responsible for sending agendas out before meetings, posting agendas, taking minutes, and posting minutes. The Site Based Committee is another avenue for parents to voice concerns or issues affecting their child or the school.

Early Release Days

In the RRISD Elementary Schools, there are three early release days in the fall and three in the spring. These days allow time for student-led parent conferences.

The teachers use the first early release day in each semester to prepare for the conferences and the next two days to conduct these conferences. Conferences typically last 15 minutes and are used to plan students' goals in the fall and review the results in the spring. On early release days, students are released two hours early, which equates to a 12:45 dismissal time.

Principal's Pride

Principals' Pride Ceremonies occur throughout the year and parents are invited to join the ceremony. Teachers nominate a student each week for this award based on a positive practice associated with the PYP Attitudes. Individual certificates are made for each student and specify why he or she has earned the award.

Grandparents Day

In mid-September, the district's Food Service Department sponsors Grandparents' Day. According to the Food Service Department, these dates are typically scheduled for the Friday following the Sunday designated day. Grandparents and parents can join their students for lunch. Invitations that include the lunch menus and prices are sent home around the beginning of September.

Red Ribbon Week

The Counselor uses this nationally designated week to heighten awareness of the dangers of using drugs and alcohol. Daily events may include special broadcasts, speakers, or activities focusing on drug and alcohol prevention.

School Carnival

Very hard-working behind-the-scenes PTA members plan this fun and exciting event on a Saturday in the fall. It lasts for four or five hours and our students come and go around their other planned events such as soccer and football practice. There are a host of activities for the young and older students to enjoy, as well as wonderful food and entertainment. There are never too many volunteers on this day!

School Pictures

In the fall, students' individual pictures are taken. Parents can pre-pay for these packets and a make-up day is scheduled for re-takes or absences. In the spring, classroom and individual pictures are taken.

Outdoor School

In the fourth grade, students and parents at Spicewood are provided an orientation session regarding the *outdoor school*. If decided, students participate in a fund raising event that is intended to fund the Outdoor School in the fifth grade.

Class Parties in Grades K - 5

Class parties correspond with the Winter Holidays, Valentines Day, and the end of school. These parties are usually planned for the last hour of the day and are coordinated through the P.T.A. homeroom parents. These three days are designated as "holidays" from the FMNV (Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value) rules.

Science Fair

Coordinated with the Austin Energy Regional Science Festival, Spicewood's Science Fair is open to K - 5 students on a voluntary basis and required for students in our upper grades. Specific procedures and dates are posted on our website each year.

School Cookout

Each year Spicewood invites all parents to school for our annual cookout. The RRISD Food Service Department grills hamburgers outdoors and the parents, students, and staff picnic around the school grounds. Because of the historically large numbers of parents, we encourage parents to bring blankets on good weather days and enjoy their lunches in the park. Lunch times typically follow the daily lunch schedule.

Silent Auction

PTA sponsors a silent auction in the second semester of each school year. Historically, this is a highly successful fund raiser that our PTA works all year long to sponsor. It is held off-campus in the evening and is considered a parent-only event. Along with dinner and dancing, there are silent and live auctions that offer a wide range of items to purchase. Teachers and parents consistently report wonderfully positive comments about the Silent Auction. This event is PTA's largest fund raiser, and over the past few years, proceeds have funded many incredible opportunities for the children and teachers at Spicewood!

Enrichment Day

This full day of learning is planned by a group of enthusiastic PTA parents to "enrich" learning in a specific area or content. Past enrichment days have included studies, activities, and events that centered on topics such as Careers, Cultures of the World, America, Whales, Out of the Box Thinking, and more! This is a great day for parents to volunteer!

Wellness Day

Our PE Teachers select a Friday in late April or early May where they do culminating activities that focus on physical fitness and healthy life choices. Many parent volunteers are needed for this fun event.

School Supply Sale

Close to the end of school, a PTA Volunteer will send a letter out to parents offering school supplies for the following year. The supply lists are developed by the teachers and include everything the students need for the next grade level.

Other Events that are listed on the School Calendar

Scouts

The Boy Scouts and Girl Scout Organizations send information home at the beginning of the school year that describes these programs and events. Many of the meetings are scheduled for after-school in one of the teachers' classrooms.

Running Club

In conjunction with Run Tex, our PE Teachers, recognize students who accomplish an established number of miles to run. Dates and lessons are planned to accommodate the dates that are designated by Run Tex.

Chess Club

The Chess Club is a very popular "club" that is supported by the PTA. Children in grades K - 5 can participate. Information on the chess club can be found on the website.

Math Club

The Math Club is sponsored by the PTA as a way to encourage math problem solving. We often hear that many of the problems create thought-provoking questions and conversations at home. This is not a required program, but a voluntary program that students choose to do. Information about this program is sent home at the beginning of the school year.

Westwood Community School

After school and summer classes are provided to students and community members in the fall, spring, and summer through the Westwood Community School. Information is provided in catalogs that are mailed directly to households in the learning community.

After School Clubs

Spicewood offers several after-school clubs that are sponsored by the wonderful teachers at Spicewood. They are offered each semester and are typically targeted to specific grades. We have Spanish, Art, Music, Science, Atrium, Math Pentathlon, and Social Clubs each week after school.