

# THE ROAR

Monthly Newsletter of the Echo Canyon PTO

## HAPPENINGS

### Echo Canyon PTO Meeting 4th Tuesday of the Month

Held virtually via zoom,  
this month we meet  
Dec. 15th (due to  
winter break) at noon.



## Thank a Teacher!

Now until Winter Break, a mailbox will be placed at the Drop-Off and Pick-Up line to collect notes of appreciation, accolades, and gift cards, should you like to give a little something. The PTO elves will deliver your messages for you!

*Please be sure the teacher's name is written clearly.*



**MASK UP**  
**ECHO CANYON STYLE**  
**\$10 child**  
**\$15 adult**  
[Click here to order!](#)

## WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?

BY BRETT ROGERS, TREASURER

In a typical year, the PTO's fundraising efforts support a wide range of programs and initiatives at Echo Canyon School. We support the community gardens, Jaggy t-shirts for the students & staff, Exploration Fridays, and more. While we are temporarily restricted on how we can raise and distribute funds, we are still working hard to support our ECS Community!

Given the limited budget this year, we have made some decisions on which initiatives we are going to support through the spring semester. Two of the initiatives from last year that we'll be reviving are the Jaggy t-shirts to support on-campus spirit days as well as Teacher Appreciation Week in May and we are also exploring school branding/signage on the exterior wall facing Camelback Road in order to support future enrollment efforts which are critical to secure the stability of our school for years to come.

Additionally, we are creating a Classroom Supply Fund for our dedicated ECS teachers. There are countless supplies and materials that our teachers need to create more dynamic learning opportunities for our children – and they are not provided by the school district. As a result, the average public school teacher spends nearly \$500 out of their own pockets each year for unreimbursed classroom supplies. The ECS PTO would like to take some of that burden off our teachers and cover some of those costs. We don't expect to cover ALL the costs for classroom supplies this year, but there's no reason not to get the ball rolling since every little bit will help our fantastic teachers!

### **Stay tuned for a Teacher Support Drive next semester!**

Because we are prohibited from running traditional fundraisers like school dances or the pinewood derby this year, our other fundraising efforts have become that much more important. **We are incredibly grateful for everyone's support of our Dining For Dollars events, our online Holiday Shop, Amazon Smile donations, etc.** We know every family has their own unique priorities but if we all work together to recruit other parents to join the PTO and chip in any small amount they can, the sky's the limit of what this organization can do to make Echo Canyon an even better experience for our kids!

# HAPPY

# New Year!

Who is ready to say hello to a new year? The beginning of this school year was not what any of us, parents, teachers, and students alike, expected or hoped for. We have endured reassignments, setting up school at home, cancelled play-dates and extracurriculars, and learning this thing we call mask etiquette.

The one constant we have all been able to rely on is the dedication and passion our educators have demonstrated to make it work, no matter if that is in EDL, on-campus, or a combination of both. We would like to take this opportunity to give a special thank you to Kat Hughes, our school principal who has pushed forward to ensure that our hidden gem was safe and thriving in this unfamiliar chapter. Thank you to our school nurse, Denise Nelson, for staying on top of all of the new protocols, and to our teachers and staff that work tirelessly every day helping our children.



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are compiling a volunteer list we can utilize for in-person and virtual support. This can range from being at pick-up / drop-off to help advertise the PTO, Newsletter, and fundraising events or attending Dining For Dollars to help spread the word. When we are given the green light to hold community events, we will be looking for support from families as well. Behind the scenes, there are a variety of support opportunities.

If you are interested in joining the Go To Crew, email us at [communications@echocanyonpto.com](mailto:communications@echocanyonpto.com).

## GET TO KNOW YOUR PTO

**PRESIDENT**  
STEPHANIE PEYTON

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
JENNA HARDEN

**TREASURER**  
BRETT ROGERS

**SCOTTSDALE PARENT COUNCIL REPS**  
VALERIE RAMOS  
PAIGE ROGERS

**ACTING MEMBERS**  
JACQUE DAVIS  
KRISTEN GUERIN  
JESSICA IRWIN  
MORGAN KANE  
RUTH RAY  
JARETT RAY  
CHARITY RECLA  
JESSICA SCORDO

# SCOTTSDALE PARENT COUNCIL NEWS

BY PAIGE ROGERS

## Update from the Scottsdale Parent Council

SUSD Superintendent, Dr. Menzel, spent a substantial amount of time during the November Scottsdale Parent Council meeting discussing the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact it has had on schools, and what goes into decision-making about keeping schools open for on-campus learning. He reiterated what has been shared in his district-wide letters regarding following the Arizona Department of Health and Arizona Department of Education established metrics to guide all decision making related to on-campus, in-person learning. He also talked about working closely with the Maricopa County Department of Public Health to make case-by-case decisions based on a variety of factors – including contact tracing, in-school transmission, ability to segment off and isolate a specific classroom or building, etc. Together, they are focused on making decisions about possible return to online learning based on a single classroom, building, or school, rather than making any sweeping, district-wide decisions at this time. Dr. Menzel also spent time sharing research findings related to the risks of not being at school and the overall negative impacts of education disruption, especially for elementary school children. He shared a scholarly article published by the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) in November that analyzes the impact that school closures has on educational attainment, and in-turn, the impact that educational attainment has on quality of life and life expectancy. In summary, Dr. Menzel is committed to making decisions related to necessary school closures through partnership with local public health experts and with careful consideration to the impact that such decisions have on whole person wellness and the myriad social determinants of health. These are not easy decisions, nor are these easy times we are living in...but I am encouraged by the fact that our SUSD leaders are considering the whole health of our students and families and the health of the communities within which we live, learn, work, and play.