



The Gator Gazette

Decatur PTA Newsletter

September 8, 2026

PTA President's Message

Welcome back, Gators!

My name is Carrie Drake, and I am honored to serve as your PTA president this year alongside a board of wonderful parent volunteers. My son, Matthew, came to Decatur from Bryant in second grade and is now a fourth grader in Ms. Ross's class. Since then, I have been at Decatur often as a volunteer and substitute teacher. I have had the pleasure of meeting many of your kids and getting to know our wonderful staff.

I know we are all being inundated with beginning-of-year communications and tasks, so I will try to keep my own message brief. The PTA is central to all the enrichment and extra-curricular experiences our kids have at school. They benefit from assemblies, field trips, extra-curricular opportunities, additional staff, and all the little extra things our teachers put together to enrich curriculum. In a school district regularly faced with uncertainty and change, our generous community has consistently supported these things each year.

Generosity of time, however, is more challenging for a small school. There are fewer hands to carry the same load of event planning and classroom support and field trip chaperones (and more!). Volunteering is difficult for most of us, with jobs and kids' schedules and the demands of life. Whether or not you've volunteered before, and whether you're new to Decatur or a regular around here, we hope you will consider giving some of your time this year if you are able.

Whether you donate or volunteer or just think supportive thoughts, **thank you**. The PTA's work should be a reflection of a school's values, and Decatur's values are worth the effort.

Looking forward to a fantastic year!

Upcoming Events

Stay tuned for details about our upcoming **Curriculum Night**, when you can meet your child's teachers and hear about what they will be learning this year, and **BINGO Night**, a fun community tradition sponsored by the PTA. Dates are not yet finalized, but both events should happen within the next month.

View the full PTA events calendar [here](#).

Announcements

Join the PTA!



Please consider becoming a PTA member this year. Even if you purchased a membership in the past, you must re-enroll each year to keep your membership active. Dues are \$15 for one person, and \$25 for a couple. Buying a PTA membership allows us to keep our PTA in good standing and qualify for grants and opportunities offered by the state and national PTA. Sign up [at this link](#).

Opt In to Room Parent Emails, School Directory and More:

Please take a moment to fill out the [Back-to-School Information form](#), if you haven't already (it's quick!). This will set you up to receive Room Parent messages, school-wide event details, opportunities to buy Gator Gear and the yearbook, and more.

Are You Approved to Volunteer?

In order to volunteer in the classroom or to chaperone field trips, you must go through Seattle Public Schools' volunteer approval process, which includes a background check. Approvals must be renewed every two years. Check your status or apply for a new volunteer approval through the [SPS Volunteer Portal](#). It can take two to three weeks to be approved, so it's good to start the process early!

Track Your Child's Bus

Families receiving bus service may track their child's bus each day using the [Zum app](#).

From the Community

These brief announcements from outside Decatur are provided as a service to the community, and are not endorsed by the PTA. Click links below for further information.

[SQUIRRELLY WORKSHOP: After-school Art Classes](#)

Add some sunshine to your child's week this fall, and send your kiddos over to Squirrely for bountiful creative fun and adventure. Classes start 9/14.

[UW Recruiting Participants for Study on Obesity](#)

The BRIGHT Study focuses on the health and development of young girls in the Seattle area, and is an opportunity for underserved families in the Seattle area to receive treatment for childhood obesity.

[Climbing Clubs at U District Bouldering Project-4502 University Way NE](#)

After-school climbing clubs (for [ages 10-12](#) and [ages 7-9](#)) start this week, with prorated deals for Decatur families who join late: use code **NSEA15** during sign-up for 15% off.

Submit an Announcement to the Gator Gazette

We are happy to share school news, or news from the broader world that is of interest to our school community. Please send items to communications@decaturpta.org by 9pm each Monday for inclusion in that week's Gazette.