

**Subject:** Fwd: Enrichment discussions & the PTA

**From:** zielinskil@mokena159.org

**Date:** 9/6/2023, 11:03 PM

**To:** Eric Bush <bushe@mokena159.org>

Just so you are aware Mr. Bush. I sent this to Dr. Cohen as well so he actually had all the comments made on that subcommittee post. Have a good evening .

Lisa

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** zielinskil@mokena159.org

**Date:** September 6, 2023 at 10:59:47 PM CDT

**To:** Mark Cohen <cohenm@mokena159.org>

**Subject:** Re: Enrichment discussions & the PTA

Just so you aware here is the rest of the posts on the subcommittee. You only had the ones Michele was in and not the other the PTA commented on.



## District 159 Parent Council



Linda Ann · Aug 25 ·



**Maire Faddah**

**Michele Coleman** thank you again for you feedback. I recommend exploring ALL that the PTA CAN do for schools.

1w Like Reply



**Maire Faddah**

I have provided two links one to the Nation PTA and one to the Illinois PTA sites for your reference:  
<https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta>



**Run Your PTA | National PTA**  
[pta.org](https://pta.org)

1w Like Reply



**Maire Faddah**

Illinois PTA Site: <https://illinoispta.org>

**Home**

illinoispta.org

1w Like Reply



**Erin Ford**

Admin

**Michele Coleman**

**PTAs Benefit Everyone**



**District 159 Parent Council**



Linda Ann · Aug 25 ·



**Erin Ford**

Admin

**Michele Coleman**

**PTAs Benefit Everyone**

PTA addresses issues that are important to parents and public school administrators. We fight for full funding, quality teachers, and capabilities for schools to thrive. If your school or district does not have a PTA, now is the time. Membership is open to everyone. Your PTA is autonomous but supported by a national structure. It sets its own dues.

**Why Your School Needs a PTA**

...



1w Like Reply

2  



pta.org

## Fundraising and Resource Allocation

PTAs often organize fundraisers and other initiatives to raise funds for the school. These extra resources can be used to support various educational programs, extracurricular activities and infrastructure improvements.

PTAs play a crucial role in mobilizing financial support from parents and the community, supplementing the school's budget and enriching the educational experience.

## Volunteer Support

PTAs rely on volunteers to organize and execute their activities. This volunteer support can extend to various school events, classroom assistance, mentoring programs and more. The PTA's network of engaged parents provides a valuable resource for schools to tap into, enhancing the overall functioning and capacity of the school.

Erin Ford

pta.org

## Educational Enrichment

PTAs often organize educational programs, workshops, guest speakers, field trips and other

initiatives aimed at enriching students' learning experiences. These activities provide extra educational opportunities beyond the standard curriculum, broadening students' horizons and fostering a love for learning.

## **Advocacy and Influence**

PTAs can advocate for the needs and interests of students and their families at the school, district, and even state level. They can address



- **Enjoy Informed Parents**

Involved parents understand the challenges schools face and become part of the solution. By

become part of the solution. By developing a closer relationship with parents, student achievement improves, and the school develops a positive reputation in the community.

- **Fulfill ESSA Obligations**  
Finally, PTAs can help schools fulfill the parent involvement requirement of the **Every Student Succeeds Act** (ESSA). PTA understands the needs



## District 159 Parent Council

Linda Ann · Aug 25 ·



**Erin Ford**

**Admin**

- **Enjoy Informed Parents**  
Involved parents understand the challenges schools face and become part of the solution. By developing a closer relationship with parents, student achievement improves, and the



1w Like Reply

1 ❤️



**Kelli MacMillan**

**Admin**

On Sep 6, 2023, at 10:34 PM, Mark Cohen <cohenm@mokena159.org> wrote:

**I'm excited to hear more about all the new things Mokena PTA is working on as well! Looking forward to the meeting on 9/12! So far, so great! 🤗💚**

Dear Board Members,

On August 25th, Lori Meehan, a second grade teacher received the following email from a parent:

----- Forwarded message -----

From:

Date: Fri, Aug 25, 2023 at 1:54 PM

Subject: MPTA

To: Lori Meehan <meehanl@mokena159.org>

1w Like Reply

2 👍❤️

Hi Mrs. Meehan,



**Maire Faddah**

**Kelli MacMillan thank you for you continued support to the PTA and we look forward to you joining us on 9/12!**

Hope you are doing well! I wanted to reach out to you since you were very instrumental in helping us see that full grade acceleration was a good fit for XXXX. He really thrived in 3rd grade last year. Mrs. Meehan and the kids accepted him with open arms. I'm not sure if you signed up for the MPTA this year but they have a new board and many new members. I'm thinking of joining the enrichment programs subcommittee the MPTA is putting together. I remember you mentioned teaching the high achieving kids at Mokena when they previously had a program. Would you or any other teachers you know be interested in joining? It would be great to work with teachers like you to help get enrichment programs going in the district and in the hands of teachers to help these kiddos thrive.

The first meeting is September 12th at 7pm at MES

Thanks!

1w Like Reply

This email was brought to my attention just today. It mentions the PTA forming an enrichment subcommittee. On the same date the email was sent a member of the D159 parent council posted a similar message to Facebook about an enrichment subcommittee of the PTA. (The posting and one of the responses is attached.) Lori Meehan expressed concern about the invitation to discuss curriculum in this format. The PTA has worked really hard to get teachers to join and attend meetings, but I am afraid that these types of discussions will keep them from attending. I reached out to Maire from the PTA and she stated that this was not a subcommittee that had been discussed. Here

is her response:

*Thanks for sharing, I am glad this person is encouraging teachers to join the PTA, but there is definitely some miscommunication. I will address the committees at the first member meeting and will clear it up.*

*Thanks for the heads-up.*

*Maire*

Given that the email and posts about the PTA are almost 2 weeks old it may no longer be an issue, but I wanted to make sure you were informed.

Social media posts such as the third one attached to this email reflect that there are parents who may approach the District inquiring about an enrichment program in the future. I am sending this email to you so that you are not surprised.

I stand by my past statements that our singular focus in K-5 should be the implementation of the new ELA curriculum with fidelity. Any discussion about changing the curriculum for groups of students is premature until we have assessment data that indicates that needs are not being met. Once assessment data is in we can begin to have a discussion about how we address any needs we see.

The 6-8 ELA teachers will be reviewing their curriculum this year and we will bring their recommendations to the board in the near future. Given the unbelievable growth that was seen this year using CER for writing across the curriculum I do not expect a recommendation for any changes, but they will study what is out there and let us know what their needs are. I will illustrate for you what I mean by this growth.

In 21-22 only 6% of 7th grade students achieved a level 5 (exceeds expectations) on the ELA portion of the IAR assessment. This same group in 8th grade last year had 19% of students achieve a level 5 in ELA. This data shows demonstrable growth among our top students; the amount of students achieving a level 5 tripled. These students did not have an enriched or separate experience for their ELA curriculum. The CER efforts made for all students pushed them over the top.

At the opposite end of the achievement spectrum, in 21-22 the 7th grade group had 28% of students that were at level 1 or 2 on the IAR. With the rigorous writing that was expected of them last year, the percentage of students at these lowest levels of achievement dropped to just 10%. Our students with IEP's, our low income students, and our ELL students all saw tremendous gains. What worked for raising the scores of our highest achieving students also worked for those who had been low achieving. The bottom line is this- High quality, rigorous instruction is good for all students. It was not necessary to create different groups of students in order to make this change happen.

I look forward to the time when we can discuss this further and pull more data for the Board to look at. I hope that we can follow this year's freshman class at Lincoln-Way, the same group of students I just referenced, to get data on high school readiness for us to use as a barometer of our success.

Thank you and have a good night!

Mark

--

Dr. Mark A. Cohen  
Superintendent  
Mokena School District 159  
(708) 342-4900



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<pcspr23\_IL-560991590020000\_District\_Performance\_Level\_Summary\_Spring\_Grade\_8\_ELA (3).pdf>

<pcspr22\_IL-560991590020000\_District\_Performance\_Level\_Summary\_Spring\_Grade\_7\_ELA (1).pdf>