



Berkeley Lake Elementary PTO Paw Prints



September

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) News
for the BLES Community

2018

Paw Prints delivers a snapshot of what's going on in the BLES community. It's brought to you by your PTO volunteers. Have feedback or ideas for the PTO? Send us a note at info@blespto.org.

In this issue: [Fall membership update](#) | [Top 3](#) | [Why we do what we do](#) | [Support us when you shop](#) | [Why get involved?](#)

Fall membership update

It's our school's 35th anniversary! It was great to see everyone at the anniversary celebration on September 14.

This moment in time gives us opportunities to make changes in how we support our school.

We're now a PTO, or a Parent Teacher Organization.

Last March at our Parent Teacher Association (PTA) general membership meeting, our members voiced their support for moving forward to transition from a PTA to a PTO. The Executive Board worked over the summer preparing for the change.

The main driver? Keeping our money local versus sending portions off to district and national associations. If you couldn't be at the meeting, you can learn more [here](#).

We have a [brand-new website](#). Check it out for things like membership forms, volunteer opportunities, teacher favorites, how you can shop and give to the school, by laws, contact details and more.

We're changing our yearbook format. This year, you'll be able to personalize it. Plus, there is online ordering where you can use a credit card. (You can still pay by check or cash at any of the PTO information tables at school events or sending through your child's backpack.) Learn more [here](#). (Spanish version [here](#).)

Our [family portraits fundraiser](#) got a makeover. It will still take place here at the school. What's new is the new children's-only format. You can choose special clothing and accessories so your little one can be "shabby chic"!

This year's Turkey Trot combines the popular K-Club pancake breakfast in the cost of your registration. Run, then carb-up in our cafeteria!

These are just a few of the things we're doing to build on our goals of supporting our teachers and students. Stay tuned for ways to get involved.



September 14 35th
Anniversary Bash



Our new PTO logo



Our volunteer tables are at most school events. Stop by to say hello, buy some of our brand-new (and vintage) spirit wear, become a member and

learn more about your organization.



2017 Charleston Wrap pig races

For instance, those of you participating in [Spirit Nights](#) last year helped us raise over \$1,400. Our Charleston Wrap fall fundraiser raised over \$6,000 – and brought pig races to our school for the first time. Yes, really, pig races!

Because of your volunteer hours to conduct the events and support of our fundraising activities, we were able to provide our teachers nearly \$10,000 to purchase reading materials, supplies and host holiday parties.

We hope to do even more this year – and we want you to be part of it. Thanks to several generous donations from BLES families and community members, we're well on our way.

Please consider lending your time and talents during our landmark 35th school year. Visit our [PTO Get Involved site](#) to view our full list of activities.

We are thankful for each of you and hope to see you at these [upcoming events](#)!

Today's top 3



New Yearbook Layout

1. **2018-2019 Yearbooks are on sale now** – They are \$28. But, order by September 30 to get a 15% discount. To purchase a yearbook or to create your custom message, go to www.TreeRing.com/validate and enter our school's passcode: 1015217531682993. Go [here](#) for more information.
2. **Turkey Trot is just weeks away** – [Registration forms](#) will be coming home soon. If you know a company/family that would like to be a sponsor, send a note to info@blespto.org. We'll see you on Nov. 3 for a fun time running and eating delicious K-Kids pancakes!
3. **Family Portraits** – It's all new this year! Learn more [here](#). All appointments need to be scheduled by Oct. 19. Flyers coming home soon.

[- back to top -](#)

Why we do what we do

"I feel like I'm a part of something that benefits so many children and families, not just my own," says Emily Shih.



Emily Shih, Vice President PTO, Chair of Charleston Wrap.

She says she got started volunteering because she wanted a way to be involved with her children's education. "Joining the PTA/PTO was the perfect solution for me. Being an active volunteer has helped me get to know the faculty and staff. I have truly enjoyed being a part of the BLES PTA/PTO family."

Since her first child entered BLES over 8 years ago, she's been a Committee Chair and/or Board member. Her resume includes serving two years as the PTA Co-President and chairing committees such as Box Tops, Room Representatives, Teacher Appreciation, Handbook/Calendar, Kindergarten Lunch and the Fall Fundraiser.

Since Emily took over the Fall Fundraiser several years ago, she's done a lot of research and behind-the-scenes work and promotion that has yielded over \$13,000 for the school.

Emily is currently serving her last term as a Vice President on the PTO Executive Board but is planning to continue committee work.

“She’s a great example of how one idea from one person can impact so many,” says Executive Board Co-President, Tara Givins. “She’s been a long-time volunteer, a wealth of information and always willing to help. We are truly grateful for the many things Emily has done – and continues to do – for our PTA/PTO Board and the school.”

[- back to top -](#)

Upcoming PTO-sponsored events



1. **October 15:** [Spirit Night](#) at "Cue", the BBQ Restaurant at 5260 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard
2. **October 18:** International Literacy Night (PTO table at this event)
3. **October 19:** Final day to purchase your [Family Portrait](#) session
4. **October 26:** Spirit wear and yearbook sales – the last Friday of each month, 7:45 – 8:10 a.m.
5. **November 3:** [Turkey Trot](#), Pancake Breakfast and Family Portraits*
(* Family Portraits Nov. 2 and 3 with Nov. 1 as a rollover date)

Support BLES when you shop

Did you know that when you shop **Amazon, Ingles, Publix, OfficeMax** a percentage of those sales go to BLES? Sign up with your online accounts. Visit [this site](#) to learn how.



You can also send in your **Box Tops for education**. To help with counting, you can download this [Box Tops Collection Sheet](#). Teachers also have copies.

Use those collections sheets!

Make sure to put your name on your Box Tops collection sheets. Put them in the wooden box in the main hallway near the water fountain. We’ll hold a random drawing each month. All students who submit Box Tops will be entered. The prize? A coupon for a free ice cream or an item from the student store.

[- back to top -](#)

Why get involved?

We’re an organization of parents and teachers that each year hosts over 20 activities for the school and raises money to fund purchases to help enrich our students’ education experience.

Volunteers do the committee work to plan and make the activities happen. You are always needed – no matter how much time you can give. Find out how to get involved [here](#).

Do I have to join a committee?



Ellissa Friedman, 2018-2019 PTO Co-President, gets the whole family involved preparing for last year's Turkey Trot!

No. You can simply [join for \\$7 and/or make a monetary contribution](#). Membership numbers are important to show we are an active school that supports our students.

Will I have to come to meetings?

No, not unless you want to. We try to send email blasts with updates or weave our general meetings into activities parents will already be attending – and we keep them short.

- [back to top](#) -

Questions? Feedback? Contact us at: info@blespto.org.
Find out more about BLES PTO, officers, committees, etc. at: www.blespto.org.