

FALL/WINTER 2024
GATOR TALES
CHATHAM GROVE PTA NEWS



Good News Gators
A Message from our PTA President

As we reach the end of 2024 and look forward to the second half of the school year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful progress we've made together as a school community. Thanks to your dedication, support, and involvement, we've already accomplished so much. Whether through volunteering, attending events, helping in the classroom or contributing in other ways, every bit of effort has made a difference for our students and teachers.

Our biggest fundraiser of the year, Boosterthon, brought in over \$40,000 exceeding our goal! Way To Go Gators! Dining for Dollars at McDonald's and Al's Burger, Thanksgiving Pie Fundraiser, Fall Photoshoot, and our Thrift Store volunteering hours have all been huge successes, helping us raise much-needed funds for our school.

The CGE Outdoor Learning Center & Garden has made huge strides in getting set up, planted and taken care of by parent volunteers and students alike!

We are excited to see this project grow throughout the years. Your participation and generosity in all these endeavours have truly exceeded our expectations, and we are so grateful to everyone who contributed in any way.

We are incredibly lucky for the strong partnership we've built so far and are excited for all that is still to come. There is so much more ahead, and we hope to continue working alongside you to make this year even more successful.

Together, we can continue to create an environment where our students thrive, our teachers feel supported, and our community grows stronger.

From the entire PTA board, we are wishing you an incredible, happy and healthy Holiday Season! Thank you for all you do. Let's keep up the great work, and here's to an even brighter second half of the year!

Warm regards,
Shana Perry

**In this newsletter
you will read about:**

**Funding &
Fundraising**

Advocacy

Volunteering

Student Enrichment

**Community
Engagement**

**Teacher and
Educational Support**

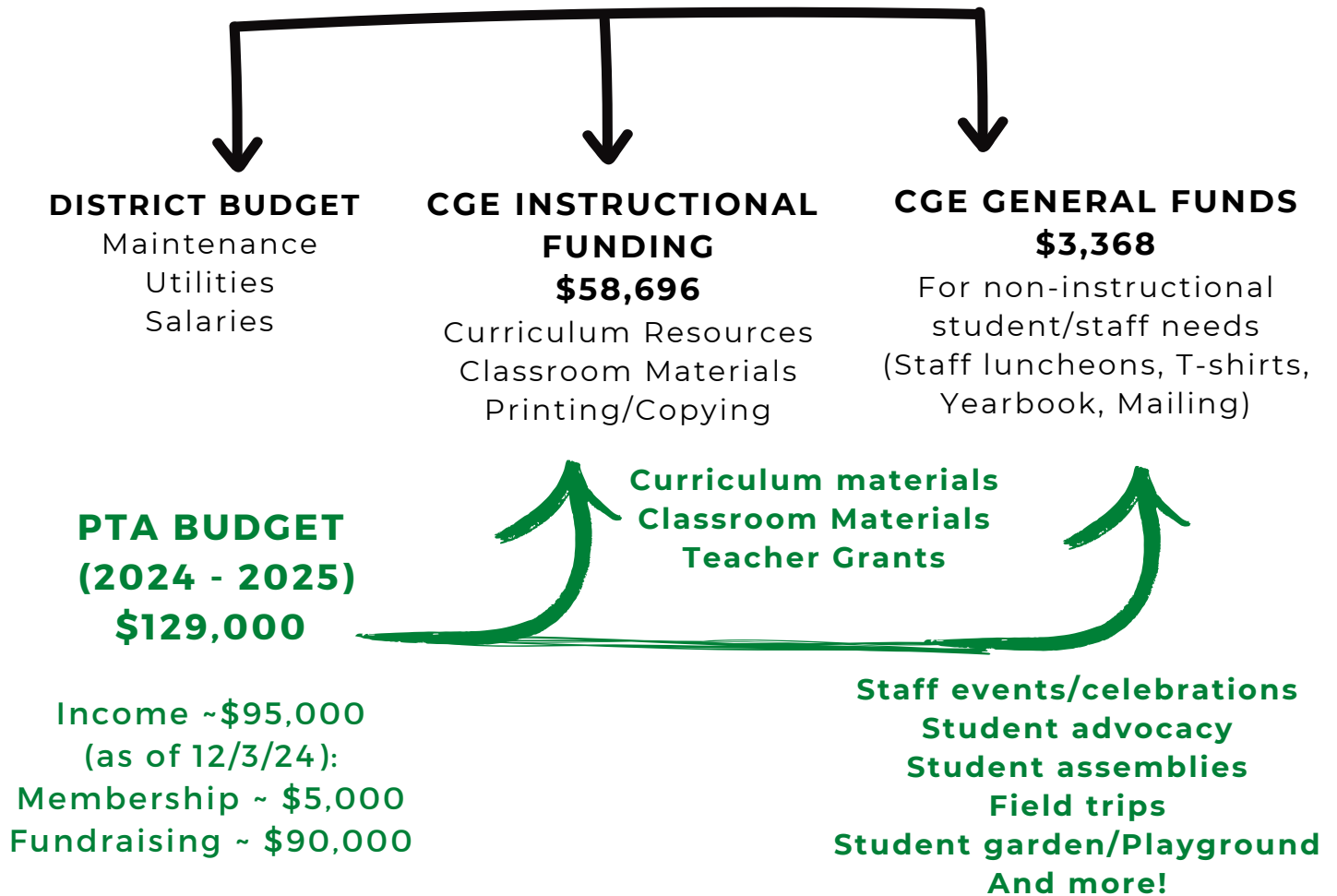
**Planning Ahead &
Staying Connected**

PTA Newsletter Chair, Mary Chandran
newsletter@chathamgrovepta.com

Funding at CGE

A Snapshot of how funding and fundraising supports the CGE experience

DISTRICIT/STATE FUNDING (2024 - 2025)



This year, the PTA had the opportunity to take a closer look at state and district funding for CGE, and we were surprised by the limited resources available. It's clear how challenging it is to allocate these funds to cover all curriculum, student, and staff needs for an entire school year. We want to share this insight with the CGE community to help everyone understand the importance of supplemental support.

Thankfully, CGE has a strong and active PTA and an incredible community of supporters. Your generosity through fundraising efforts makes it possible for us to enhance the CGE experience for students and staff by providing additional curriculum materials, enriching student experiences, supporting teacher needs, and so much more.

This newsletter highlights many of these impactful contributions—none of which would be possible without you. Your support ensures we can continue to make CGE a special place for learning, growth, and connection. Together, we're building the CGE experience we all wish for our students and staff—thank you!

PTA Synonymous with Advocacy at CGE

A Message from our PTA Vice President

At CGE, our PTA board is focused advocating for the success of every student and family. As a young school that opened during COVID, we're tackling unique challenges like building new traditions, streamlining communications, supplementing financial deficits to fill learning and social needs, enhancing playgrounds and shared spaces, and most importantly fostering a sense of belonging for EVERY child at CGE.

We believe in the power of collaboration and want everyone to feel welcome. In an effort to increase parent awareness around school happenings and gather input, we're starting monthly general PTA membership paired with Advocacy meetings in January. These informal gatherings will be a way to share updates, brainstorm ideas, and focus on important topics like equity and belonging at CGE. Our hope is to have these meetings at places like Town Hall Burger, or Breakaway so we can mix some social and work!

Building a strong, supportive, and inclusive school community doesn't happen overnight, but with your involvement, we'll make CGE shine even brighter!

With much gratitude,

Mairread Resch
Mairread Resch

Join the Advocacy Team

The CGE Advocacy Committee held its first parent meetup in September, bringing parents and professionals together to discuss ways to support all students at CGE.

Our mission is to create a welcoming and inclusive environment where every student and family feels seen, accepted, and supported. We aim to:

- **Connect families with shared experiences.**
- **Share and implement helpful resources.**
- **Advocate for supports that improve learning and social outcomes.**
- **Raise awareness of diverse student needs.**
- **Foster compassion and understanding among peers.**

Together, we can make a difference! Join us for monthly discussions or share your ideas at advocacy@chathamgrovepta.com

Playground Improvements

The district has proposed using pea gravel in all three playground areas as a drainage solution, but the PTA strongly opposes this due to safety concerns, ongoing maintenance needs, and the lack of ADA compliance.

We are advocating for more sustainable solutions, such as turf or padded rubber surfacing. These options require significant sponsorships or additional fundraising. If you're a business owner or community member who can help, we'd love to hear from you!

Kits for Inclusive Learning

Our PTA advocacy group recently assembled teacher kits to support students with diverse learning styles and needs. These kits include a variety of tools, such as reading strips and pointers for readers with dyslexia, sensory toys, timers, feelings flashcards, and fidget tools. By providing these resources, we aim to help teachers create more inclusive and engaging learning environments. Thank you for supporting this initiative!

FUNDRAISING UPDATES

BOOSTERTHON FUN RUN

This year's Boosterthon, our biggest fundraiser, **raised over \$40,000**, surpassing our goal! Combining fitness, fun, and character-building, students participated in an exciting program capped off with a Fun Run.

Thanks to our amazing CGE families and sponsors, these funds will support playground upgrades, shared spaces, and student enrichment. Boosterthon is more than fundraising—it's about teamwork, healthy habits, and community.



DINING FOR DOLLARS

Our Dining for Dollars nights are a delicious way to support CGE! Local restaurants like McDonald's and Al's Burger Shack have generously partnered with us to donate a portion of their sales on designated nights to benefit our school. So far those 2 restaurant nights have earned CGE about \$1000.

It's an easy way to give back—simply enjoy a meal with family or friends and help fund projects that make a difference for our students.

It is our goal to have TWO restaurant nights per month, and we need your help to identify additional restaurants willing to participate.

Contact Shannon Walker if you can help: shannonwalker21@gmail.com



FALL PIE FUNDRAISER

This fall, we partnered with Carolina Cravings to offer their delicious pies just in time for Thanksgiving! We hope these treats were a big hit on your holiday table.

We sold around 165 pies of the 300 we were allotted for. Carolina Cravings donated \$6 per pie to CGE. We are grateful! With your help, we can sell even more pies next year to fund additional initiatives at CGE.



FALL MINI SESSIONS

Thanks to your incredible participation, the Fall Photo Mini Sessions raised **\$1,500 for Chatham Grove Elementary's Creative Arts Projects!** These cherished memories were beautifully captured by our very own Shana Perry of Love & Perry Photography. Families, couples, and individuals all joined in to make this fundraiser a success.

TEACHER GRANTS: SUPPORTING CLASSROOM INNOVATION

One of the PTA's most impactful initiatives is the Teacher Grants Program, which provides funding for innovative classroom projects, essential supplies, and creative enrichment opportunities. Below are some highlights of recently approved teacher grant requests:

MR. MARSH (PRE-K)

- Cap and Gown for Pre-K Graduation
- Amount: \$192.58
- Fulfilled October 2024



MS. HACKMAN (AIG K - 5)

- Reading materials to enhance critical thinking activities
- Amount: \$203.49
- Fulfilled October 2024

MS. ADAMS (1ST GRADE)

- Enrichment items for recess and class
- Amount: 194.40
- Fulfilled October 2024

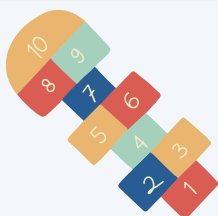


MR. CLARK (3RD GRADE)

- Pencil cases and stickers
- Amount : \$37.75
- Fulfilled October 2024

MS. RAY (OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST)

- Materials for coordination, memory and copying skills
- Amount : \$112.27
- Fulfilled November 2024



MS. KAUFMAN (EC)

- Indoor sensory and motor activities
- Amount: \$177.59
- Fulfilled October 2024

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

The PTA is proud to play an active role in enhancing learning experiences at CGE by providing critical curriculum materials and resources. Recent contributions include funding art supplies, workbooks for 2nd-grade classrooms, and hands-on tools for early childhood and special education programs.

PE CURRICULUM

Amount: \$535.54



ART CURRICULUM

Amount: \$2036.71



GENERATION GENIUS SUBSCRIPTION

School-Wide Subscription
Amount: \$1795/year



2ND GRADE MATH WORKBOOKS

Amount: \$1765



LANGUAGE ARTS WORKBOOKS

Amount: \$2000



STUDENT ENRICHMENT

Exciting News: Book Vending Machine Coming to CGE!

This December, CGE will welcome a special vending machine filled with books! Students can earn tokens as rewards or for celebrations like birthdays, which they can use to select a book from the machine.

We're collecting new and gently used books to keep the machine stocked. Look for the ongoing collection bin in the school's front lobby. Thank you for helping us inspire a love of reading!

Annual Events

We hope you were able to join us and enjoy many of these CGE traditions sponsored and/or supported by the PTA!

Kindergarten Assessment

Chalk the Walk

Gator Gathering

Boohoo & Yahoo!

Curriculum Night

Boosterthon Fun Run

Movie Night

Holiday Lights

And there's so much more fun to come!

Outdoor Classroom Coming to CGE!

Exciting news: We've received approval to create an outdoor classroom where teachers can lead lessons in nature, along with a large sandbox for play and a pollinator garden,

Now, we need your help! To make this a reality, we need businesses and donors to sponsor or fund these projects, with a **total goal of \$10,000**. Do you know of any funding sources or sponsors? Every connection helps!

Paperhand Puppet Project Event

On **January 17th**, students will enjoy a 1-hour in-school performance of "A World of Wonder", featuring fun and engaging vignettes with a variety of creatures and characters. The show highlights our connection to the Earth, its creatures, each other, and our creative impulses.

Organized by Ms. Silver, the art teacher, and sponsored by the PTA, which is investing \$2,200 to bring this experience to all students.

STUDENT ENRICHMENT

Outdoor Learning Center Update!

The Outdoor Learning Center edible plant garden is growing thanks to the generous support from students, teachers, administration and parent volunteers! Cool weather crops have been planted including herbs, lettuce, kale, garlic, carrots, and many more!

The garden requires continued maintenance and regular water. Please volunteer to water the garden: read more about it and [sign up here](#). Garden maintenance is a great volunteer job for folks that are available outside of regular school hours.

The Outdoor Learning Center Committee is excited for growth in the new year, including the addition of a pollinator garden!



5th Grade Legacy Art Project

Ms. Silver, our art teacher, has started a wonderful new tradition at CGE! Since last year, each 5th-grade class has created an art project near the cafeteria as a way to leave their lasting mark on our school. This special project allows students to celebrate their time at CGE and contribute to a legacy of creativity and pride for future generations to enjoy.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Highlighting the Arts

We're collaborating with Ms. Silver (art) and Ms. Galloway (music) to showcase student creativity, involve families in hands-on arts experiences, and raise funds for these important programs. Here's what's in the works:

- **Holiday Lights:** Chorus performs for the first time, and families can paint ceramic ornaments in the art room.
- **"Around the World" Showcase:** A multicultural event featuring singing from every grade level.
- **A Night for the Arts:** Family workshops led by teachers and community members (think watercolor, graphic design, or even underwater basket weaving!), a gallery of student artwork, and a chorus performance.

Stay tuned for more information on details and how to get involved!

Family Game Night

First Family Game Night: **BINGO!**

We're excited to kick off our first Family Game Night on **January 23rd from 6-8 PM** in the CGE Cafeteria with a fun-filled Bingo event!

Join fellow CGE families for a night of games, prizes, and community spirit. More details to come in early January—see you there!

Enhancing Outdoor Spaces at CGE!

We're working to create more beautiful and functional outdoor areas at CGE, and we need YOUR support!

The playground is a key focus, and we're actively pushing the school district to complete the necessary drainage work so we can move forward with more engaging play areas. Carla Murray from the district office is assisting with communications between CGE and the grounds and facilities teams.

This winter break, we'll be adding mulch to the tree and flower beds around the school.

We'd love your help and ideas for additional projects like murals, flowers, and other enhancements. Contact us at VP@ChathamgrovePTA.com to get involved!

Grant Writers Needed

Help Us Secure Grants for CGE!

Did you know there are many grants available to improve school grounds and enhance student experiences? We need your help identifying opportunities, applying for grants, and implementing funded projects.

These grants could support initiatives like the outdoor garden and classroom, expanding arts and health programming, and more!

Interested in making a difference? Reach out at VP@ChathamgrovePTA.com!

Meet our school nurse MS. PUGH



ABOUT ME

My name is Rebecca, and I am the school nurse here at Chatham Grove. You can find me here on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of each week.

I am a product of Chatham County Schools, and I still live in Chatham County with my husband and two daughters. I received my BSN at the University of Mount Olive. This is my 15th year in nursing and my 4th year at Chatham Grove.

My goal is for all of our students here at CGE to be healthy, safe, and in school so that they can focus on learning. I enjoy the close-knit community here at CGE but what I love most of all is seeing the smiles on the students' faces each day and watching them grow each year!

Fun fact about me: In my spare time I enjoy spending time gardening and taking care of our animals (dogs, goats, potbelly pig, chickens, and soon-to-be miniature donkey)!



DONATIONS NEEDED

Ms. Pugh is need of some donations to have on hand throughout the year. Please consider sending in a donation to support our students.

- Individual Packs of Goldfish
- Individual Packs of Saltine Crackers
- Mini Waters
- Mini Ginger Ales

All donations can be dropped off in the front office. Thank you!

VOLUNTEER NEEDS

Find what excites you, get involved, and sign up today to make a difference at CGE!

Field Day

Field Day is an action-packed day of fun, games, and teamwork for all CGE students! Field Day happens for kids during school hours and is a highlight of the school year, creating lasting memories and building a strong sense of community.

Chair: Morgan Callahan

Committee Members: **NEEDED!**

Time of year: End of year

One time or recurring: One time

Previous Event: Yes



Gator Chase

The Gator Chase is a fun, family-friendly run for the whole family outside of school hours that brings the CGE community together for fitness, excitement, and school spirit!

Chair: **NEEDED!**

Committee Members: **NEEDED!**

Time of year: Spring

One time or recurring: One time

Previous Event: Yes

Spring Play

Foster creativity, teamwork, and confidence in our young performers, making their theatrical experiences both memorable and enjoyable.

Chair: Beatrix Love-Perry

Committee Members: **NEEDED!**

Time of year: Spring

One time or recurring: One time

Previous Event: No



Teacher Appreciation Week

Movie Night is a magical evening for the whole family to enjoy a fun, family-friendly movie on the big screen, all while relaxing outdoors with the CGE community.

Chair: **NEEDED!**

Committee Members: **NEEDED!**

Time of year: Fall

One time or recurring: One time

Previous Event: Yes



VOLUNTEER NEEDS_{cont.}

Find what excites you, get involved, and sign up today to make a difference at CGE!

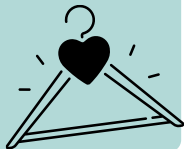
Thrift Store Supervisors

The PTA Thrift Shop is a great funding source for our school, and we need your help! We need volunteers to train as supervisors. It takes just 2 hours with the store manager, plus shadowing Liz for one night. Help us maximize this resource!

Chair: Liz Pedraza

Work Night Supervisors: **NEEDED!**

Time of year: Ongoing



Student Council Parent Liaison

We're looking for a parent liaison for Student Council! This role involves attending one Student Council meeting a month (either in the morning at 7:30 AM or after school) and reporting back to the PTA board on ways we can support Student Council initiatives.

Parent Liaison: **NEEDED!**

Time of year: Ongoing, Monthly

School Improvement Parent Liaison

We're seeking a parent liaison for the School Improvement Team! This role involves attending a monthly meeting at school (3:30–5 PM) to collaborate with staff committee members on ways to improve the school. The parent liaison will then bring those ideas and plans to the PTA board.

Parent Liaison: **NEEDED!**

Time of year: Ongoing, Monthly



Corporate Sponsorships/Funding

Movie Night is a magical evening for the whole family to enjoy a fun, family-friendly movie on the big screen, all while relaxing outdoors with the CGE community.

Sponsors: **NEEDED!**

MEET *the* TEAM

PTA PRESIDENT

Shana Perry
President@chathamgrovepta.com

PTA VICE PRESIDENT

Mairead Resch
VP@chathamgrovepta.com

PTA TREASURER

Sarah Paxton
Treasurer@chathamgrovepta.com

PTA SECRETARY

Jennifer Sparks
Secretary@chathamgrovepta.com

COMMUNICATIONS

Katie Smith
Communications@chathamgrovepta.com

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Mary Chandran
Tara Murphy
Memberatlarge@chathamgrovepta.com

AUDIT CHAIRS

Lauren Shepherd
Stephanie Barnes
Emily Zahuta
Audit@chathamgrovepta.com

STAFF AFFAIRS

Sara Sullivan
staffaffairs@chathamgrovepta.com

ADVOCACY CHAIR

Ashton Blue
advocacy@chathamgrovepta.com

CURRICULUM SUPPORT

Sara Sullivan
Kelsey Bakis
staffaffairs@chathamgrovepta.com

FIELD TRIP CHAIR

Jessi Del Sarto
hospitality@chathamgrovepta.com

SPIRIT WEAR CHAIR

Kyle Warren
spiritwear@chathamgrovepta.com

CLASS REPS CHAIR

Sarah Yates
classreps@chathamgrovepta.com

NEWSLETTER

Mary Chandran
newsletter@chathamgrovepta.com

THRIFT STORE CHAIR

Liz Pedraza
thrift@chathamgrovepta.com

RESTAURANT NIGHT CHAIR

Shannon Walker
shannonwalker21@gmail.com

BOOSTERTHON CHAIRS

Shana Perry
Mairead Resch

FIELD DAY CHAIR

Morgan Callahan

GATOR CHASE CHAIR

TBD

GAME NIGHT CHAIR

CJ Dearing

HOLIDAY LIGHTS CHAIRS

Shana Perry
Mairead Resch

MOVIE NIGHT CHAIRS

Mackenzie Schutlz
Kyle Warren

SCHOOL GARDEN CHAIRS

Jessica Davis
Sarah Frost

SPECIAL STUDENT EVENTS

Krista Jett

SPRING PLAY CHAIR

Beatrix Love-Perry