

2019 PINE CREST GEOGRAPHY BOWL

Dear Pine Crest Parents and Guardians,

This spring the MKPC PTA is excited to sponsor a Geography Bowl (Geo Bowl). This letter will provide a brief overview of the program and outline volunteer opportunities. The goals of this program are to complement our social studies curriculum, create enthusiasm in our children for geography, and bolster school spirit through team competition. The program that we will be using was developed at other Montgomery County schools and has been used at Piney Branch, Highland View, Woodlin and other schools. The focus of this year's Geo Bowl is on North America. Next year, the Geo Bowl will focus on Africa and South America.

Here is a brief timeline of the Geo Bowl program:

- **January 2-3.** Geo Bowl Launch and packet distribution.
- **January 9, 16, 23, 30.** Lunch bunch sessions to help with packet completion.
- **February 1.** Deadline to turn in Geo Bowl packets to teachers. Students are encouraged to turn in packets earlier—they will get them back earlier if they turn them in earlier.
- **February 8.** All packets will have been returned to students along with an answer key to use as study guides. All students who finish the packet will receive a small geography-related prize.
- **Week of February 25 – March 1.** Optional Geo Bowl quiz for students interested in being on teams for the Geo Bowl. If your child cannot take the quiz this week, you must let us know by February 28th and we will try to make an alternate arrangement. No one is required to be on a team, but once a student has indicated on the quiz a desire to be placed on a team, that is a commitment to participate if selected. Teams will have students from several classes.
- **March 13, March 20, March 27, April 10 and April 24.** Weekly lunch bunch sessions for teams led by parent volunteers. April 24th will be a practice competition
- **April 26.** In-school assemblies for Geo Bowl competition.

Volunteer needs:

In order to run the program, the PTA will need volunteers to help with a number of activities. All volunteers will receive detailed instructions. No geography knowledge is needed. Specifically we will need:

- Volunteers for lunch bunch sessions for packet completion on January 9, 16, 23, and 30.

- Volunteers for lunch bunch sessions to help teams study on March 13, 20, 27, April 10, and April 24. The final lunch bunch on April 24th will be a practice competition.
- 8-10 volunteers needed on April 26th to help with the Geo Bowl competition.

If you are able to volunteer for any of these activities please contact Michaela Spehn (mspehn@mac.com; 301-593-1050) or Michelle Bonner (chellyda27@hotmail.com; 703-581-2778). Or sign up via the link available at <http://www.mkpcpta.org/> or directly at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0A44AAAB2AA46-pine>

Geography Bowl Packet: Frequently Asked Questions

Why doesn't my child's teacher give my child time to work on the packets?

Because the Geo Bowl is not a part of the official curriculum, we cannot require teachers to include time for the program during the school day. There are already many required tasks competing for time in school.

If it's not part of the official curriculum, why are we doing it?

The Geo Bowl is a way to enrich the Social Studies content outside of the official curriculum. Several MCPS schools are now using this program, and we hope to send a message to MCPS about the importance of geographic literacy.

Why does the Geo Bowl itself take place during the school day? If it were held at night, I could see my child compete.

The goal of the program is to reach every student in the school and keep all of them as involved as possible in the program. By holding the Geo Bowls during the day, we are sure that all the students, and all the teachers, get to experience the excitement of the Bowls. Parents will be notified of Geo Bowl dates and times for each grade and are welcome to come and observe, if possible.

Why aren't there more complex questions in the packet—the type of questions that would lead my child to open an atlas, come to me with questions, or go on the Internet for answers?

Because the goal is to reach as many students as possible, the packet must be self-contained. We cannot assume that a student has an atlas, a computer, or a parent at home to help with the packet. Of course, we do hope that the packet will inspire this sort of further exploration. You will be amazed at what the students will learn filling out and studying this packet.

We welcome all suggestions and corrections for the next edition.