

Kennard Classical Junior Academy PTO Meeting

February 19, 2015, 6:00 pm, Cafeteria
MEETING MINUTES

PTO Board Members present: Jennifer Anania, Myra Belgeri, Jennifer Beffa, Cheryl Levine, Gary Siddens, Lisa Granich-Kovarik, Allison Miller, Nicole Scott, Tiffany Tibbs. Also present: Dr. LeFlore

PTO President, Tiffany Tibbs, called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

Call to Order

Call for New Business Agenda Items

- Stephanie DeChambeau asked if the PTO agenda could be posted ahead of time in case any issues needed review or research. Tiffany said this was a good idea and it could be posted a day or two ahead of time at least.

Acceptance of Minutes from April PTO Meeting

- Motion to accept by Theresa Grabau, seconded by Stephanie DeChambeau. Motion passed.

REPORTS

PTO President's Report, Tiffany Tibbs

- **Thank you's (lots since our last meeting in November)**
 - To *Lara Fuchs, Cindy Heidenry, and Heather Murch and parent volunteers* for chairing the Math and Science night held on November 19. *Special thanks to all of the parents who volunteered at this event as well!* What an enriching, engaging, and well-organized event!
 - To *Lisa Granich-Kovarik, Amy Breuer, Tricia Moyer, and all of the parents who supported the fifth graders spring trip to Camp Wyman through our Kennard CJA trivia night.* We greatly appreciate everyone who contributed to a classroom basket for the auction, and all of the parents that participated in the trivia night. Your contributions helped make the evening a great success!
 - To *our Green team teachers, parents, and students* who have contributed towards our school's Green Schools Quest efforts, both onsite and at the District level. Representatives from Kennard attended a District meeting about Green efforts; teachers and committee did waste audit and looking into ways to reduce waste in cafeteria, through recycling milk cartons
 - To *Alissa Rowan and Mr. Clement* for collecting and organizing the toys and activities for the Indoor Recess bins. We now have a bin for building blocks (Legos, wooden blocks), an art and game bin (sketch pads, colored pencils, games/cards), an activity bin (jump ropes, bean bag toss), and another bin of mega blocks.
 - To *Jennifer Anania and Tiffany Tibbs* for organizing the PTO closet
 - To *all of the parents who have organized, helped, or donated items towards the class parties or gone on field trips* so far this year – it makes a big difference to our students!
 - To *Gary Siddens, Dawn Brandt, and the Fund Drive committee members* for all of their hard work on the Fund Drive! And to *all of the parents and grandparents and friends* who have donated money to our Fund Drive –we appreciate your support!
 - To our teachers, parents, staff, and students for the great Frozen musical!

- To *Genyne Rideout* for helping with our PTO bulletin board, and to *Susie Anderson-Bauer* for updating our PTO website. Your work helps with communication in our school community!
- To *Amy Halpin, Jenifer Garcia, Lina Galinurova* and all of the parent volunteers who helped with movie night - it was lots of fun!
- To *Chris Deaton, Ms. Watson, Sarah Frost Sullivan* for helping to display student art in the hallway by the art classroom. Also special thanks to *Sarah Frost Sullivan* for assisting the 5th grade students with designing and making prints in Ms. Nelson's art class, which were displayed at the 5th grade Trivia Night.
- To *Mr. Clement* for a great 2014 Equations tournament, at school, and a very successful Equations tournament at U City High School this past weekend (Our 5th grade teams took first, third, and fourth place; a 4th grade team took third place; and 3rd grade teams took first, second, and fifth place). The PTO pays for contest fees for our students. Mr. Clement also wanted to thank the parents who helped prepare, score and serve at the December Kennard event.
- To *Grace Kivindy, Lina Galinurova, Jane Mrozewski, and all of the volunteers at the dance* – great event!
- To *Nicole Colbert-Bochway* who wrote a letter of thanks to the District for the full time nurse and for the completion of the elevator.
- To all the teachers and students who have provided thank you notes – on the large display board by gym & girls bathroom, including Ms. Kadlec's class, and 3rd grade classes. Judging from the very positive thank you notes about indoor recess bins, the library books and technology (document cameras and smart boards) - this illustrates the good work that PTO is doing and the importance of our Fund Drive.
- **Upcoming events/dates**
 - As standard practice, I signed the Boy Scouts of America's charter for Kennard – the PTO is the sponsor for that every year.
 - Next SLPS District Parent Action Council meeting is Thursday, March 26, 6 pm – still in formation stages
 - Discuss vision & mission of the PAC; 1 year term, starting in January
 1. The PAC will replace what was formerly known as the Parent Assembly, and ideally involves at least 2 parent representatives from all St. Louis Public Schools. Invited PTO presidents.
 1. The vision of the PAC : "the District's parental involvement organization that provides effective collaboration between families, schools, and communities to support student academic development."
 2. The mission of the PAC: to "serve all St. Louis Public Schools' families as a sounding-board and action network regarding federal, state, city, and district policies, procedures, programs, and personnel matters concerning student achievement."
 3. The goals of the PAC: to "serve as a sounding-board and action network to address concerns of St. Louis Public Schools families" and to "coordinate, facilitate, and support school and district initiatives to increase parental and community involvement".
 4. There are 6 committees to increase parental involvement at the District level, including parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community
 - Tiffany has attended PAC meetings, and is on Communication subcommittee.
 - Johnni Walker-Gillespie has attended for Mason & Kennard; is chair of Learning at Home subcommittee.

- Tiffany would like to have another person who is interested in District affairs attend next year (as Johnni will not have a child at Kennard next year). This is particularly relevant for our next District Affairs officer.
- Next board meeting February 25, 5 pm
- PTO General meeting – March 4, 6 pm – Officer Nominations; also will be discussing concerns about the Kennard name; many of you may have seen the Post Dispatch article, I would anticipate that reporter will attend our March meeting.
- Book Fair – March 10 – 12.
- PTO General meeting – April 1, 6 pm – Officer elections and volunteer appreciation
- PTO picnic – Friday, May 15, 2015, 4:30 to 6:30; all old and new Board members expected to work the picnic. Have recruited a co-chair to help organize- Jerre Parsons; looking for another co-chair or two, along with the help of the old Board and new Board members.
- Just learned that Kennard CJA was named as one of the 50 Best American Public Elementary schools – very exciting! <http://www.thebestschools.org/features/50-best-american-public-elementary-schools/> Very thankful to our staff and administration for providing such a great education to our students.

Principal's Report, Dr. Wanda LeFlore

- Thank you for the cards, support, and words of encouragement during the passing of my brother during the holiday season in December.
- I also want to personally thank all board members and parents in attendance that chaired or volunteered at any event sponsored this school year. If there is anything I can do to improve our events, please don't hesitate to contact me.
- **Attendance:** This is a friendly reminder to use SLPS' School Calendar for planning purposes since school hasn't been called off due to inclement weather:
<http://www.slps.org/cms/lib03/MO01001157/Centricity/Domain/6/Copy%20of%20Final%20Calendar.pdf>
- *Target's Take Charge of Education Program* funds to the school (\$1,212.22) were used to purchase the math resources for the primary grades. **Spring 2015:** *Target's Take Charge of Education Program* funds to the school (\$591.55) will be used to purchase snacks for the 3rd, 4th, and 5th classes during the MAP Grade Level Assessments and purchase ice cream for Dr. Seuss' Birthday. **Schoola:** Received \$2.00 check from Schoola; online retail kid clothing site that you can purchase from or donate to. If schools register 40% of proceeds go back to the schools. www.schoola.com/KidsClothes
- **Conferences:**
 - Kennard's Spring Parent Teacher Conferences will be held on the following dates:
 - Wednesday, March 11 conferences are held from 4:30pm until 7:45pm.
 - Thursday, March 12 conferences are held from 4:30pm until 7:45pm.
 - No school on Friday, March 13.
 - Spring Break March 16 –March 20.
 - Classes resume Monday, March 23.
 - As always, if you need more information, feel free to contact your child's classroom teacher.
- **Coffee with the Principal:** Friday, March 6 @ 8:30am. Hope you can join me!
- **Curriculum:**
- **Math Updates:**
 - Kennard's 5th grade teachers and Gifted Specialists met with Mia Carpenter, SLPS Math Supervisor and Michelle Jones, Gifted Coordinator to discuss math placement testing for incoming 6th graders and content alignment. It was recommended that placement testing take place in May for SLPS 5th gifted graders. Our dedicated Kennard 5th grade teachers will work with Mia Carpenter to follow thru on this recommendation.

- **Update on implementation of Hands on Algebra for Grades K and 1st:**
Several class just started implementing the program this semester; the other class is implementing the program with an advance group of students once a week. In kindergarten, one class is implementing the program in small groups; the other class setting up groups.

Science Update:

- Students at Kennard are already using SEPUP (Science Education for Public Understanding Program) curriculum for one quarter each in 4th grade and 5th grade as a pilot with great success. Staff input indicates that they want to continue with these units and add to them for the purpose of enriching the gifted curriculum. Additionally, the SEPUP curriculum supports problem-based learning relative to current issues in science and supports the *Next Generation Science Standards*.
- Therefore, a proposal has been presented to David Hardy, Chief Academic Officer, to add the following units for the 2015/2016 school year to Kennard and Mallinckrodt. Also, units have been proposed for McKinley's science curriculum so that the gifted rigor continues and students are appropriately challenged and prepared for college and career readiness. Free professional development will be provided from SEPUP/LAB-AIDS for all units. Units include teacher resources, a class set of books, and enough materials to sustain the unit for five to seven years.

• Unit Description	• Suggested Grade	• Number of Teachers
• Studying Soil Scientifically	• 4 th grade Quarter 1	• 4
• Energy	• 4 th grade Quarter 4	• 4
• Earth in Space	• 5 th grade Quarter 1	• 4
• Weather and Atmosphere	• 5 th Grade Quarter 2	• 4

Technology Update:

- A class set of 26 new Dell computers have been installed in the library and four new computers were divided among the 5th grade classrooms to support student learning and on-line testing. This is another opportunity for students to have access to valuable resources provided by the PTO: Brain Pop and World Book online.
- The tech team that installed the computers informed us that the laptops donated to the school were no longer compatible to SLPS' server. How would you like to proceed? Tech department can pick-up and recycle or donors are free to pick up and recycle?

• **Facilities Update:**

- **Elevator:** The 2nd elevator that provides access to the west wing of the building was officially in use Friday, December 19, 2014.
- **Restrooms:** The custodial supervisor, Ms. Tipton was informed about the conditions of the restrooms on the lower level earlier this month and is currently addressing the issue. Feel free to report any issues to me.

• **Good News:**

- Kennard Classical Junior Academy has been included in the article titled "The 50 Best American Public Elementary Schools" by TheBestSchools.org. TheBestSchools.org selected Kennard Classical Junior Academy based on several weighted factors, including academic excellence, extracurricular richness, geographical and demographical diversity, and reputation. TheBestSchools.org is a leading resource for prospective students seeking a college or university degree. Many schools in the

United States reference our rankings including Auburn University, Boston University, Texas A&M University, Fordham University, and many more.

- Kennard/Classical Jr. Academy has been nominated by Missouri to join the esteemed community of [National Blue Ribbon Schools](#). Kennard is one of **8** outstanding public schools nominated from Missouri for the 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools award. National Blue Ribbon Schools are public and non-public elementary, middle, and high schools that are producing outstanding results for all students. They have demonstrated consistent excellence, and made progress in closing gaps in student achievement. The National Blue Ribbon Schools recognition program is part of a larger U. S. Department of Education effort to identify and disseminate knowledge about effective school leadership and promising instructional practices. Our school was nominated as an **Exemplary High Performing Schools**. For more information about award criteria and eligibility, please visit the [U.S. Department of Education Eligibility and Criteria website](#).
- **Lunch room Update:**
 - In November the Student Council with support from Ms. Batres and Ms. Spitznagel shared suggestions to reduce "wait" time during lunch caused by more students eating and more healthy choices. As a result, the Second lunch line times have improved quite a bit from the beginning of the year. The two second grade classes go to the cafeteria right after related arts. They are let in a little after 12:10 and most of them are through the line before the three third grade classes arrive.
 - The Third lunch line times have decreased by a few minutes, but are still taking about 15 minutes due to the large number of students. There are six classes at this third lunch, and almost all of the students eat a school lunch. Two classes enter the cafeteria around 12:40, but are waiting a few minutes for clean-up to finish. This is still an improvement of about 5 minutes from the beginning of the year when all of the 4th and 5th grade students had to be lined up silently outside of the lunch room before they were allowed to enter.
- **Nurse Update:**
 - Although Nurse Deidre Brookins was appointed full-time nurse at Kennard and began her duties Thursday, November 20, 2014; I was informed today, effective immediately, that Nurse Brookins will service Kennard **Monday-Friday from 9:00am until 3:00pm** until further notice.
- There is a plan being formulated to get a set of iPads for the fifth grade in the 2015-16 school year.
- Laura Brink: Is there any training on keyboarding for the computers? LeFlore: They looked into a keyboarding program last year, and they need to look at it more seriously. It's very important that students are comfortable taking tests on-line.
- Cheryl Levine: I think the technology teacher last year purchased a keyboarding program with her enrichment money. LeFlore: I'll check.
- Claralyn Bollinger: Can you make sure there are trash cans in each girl's restroom. LeFlore: I will double check on that. They should be there.

Treasurer's Report, Myra Belgeri

- The PTO has \$3,790 in the primary account, \$900 in the debit account, \$17,000 in the Friends of Kennard account. The PTO's total balance is \$21,000.
- Fifth grade account has \$17,000 in it (held separately from PTO funds)

OLD BUSINESS

Outdoor Learning Garden, Tiffany Tibbs/Punita Patel

- Punita Patel: She is a youth educator at Gateway Greening. She also helped create the garden at Malinckrodt. They started with 1 bed 5 years ago; now there are 20. This year Malinckrodt has decided to incorporate gardening lessons into STEM programming. Gateway Greening will provide lesson plans correlated with state learning standards. The garden functions almost as a science lab. It takes a lot of work, and you need the support of the principal, the teacher, and the parent volunteers or the garden becomes an eyesore, not an asset. As a Gateway Greening youth educator, she can help us create a sustainable garden if we decide we are committed to one.
- Nicole Scott: Is the green space that we have at Kennard enough to have a full-fledged garden? Patel: We could look at container gardening.
- Dale Greenbury: he'd be interested in getting involved in this. We could turn our weakness into a strength by getting creative.
- Melissa Von Rohr: At the MRH gardens that are successful, they have a teacher on staff for whom part of their job is the garden. My concern about having an outdoor learning space is that there are teachers that really use it and implement it into their curriculum. Patel: We deal with that at Malinckrodt. But we started small with one bed and added to it as interest and confidence grows. Think of the garden as a lab. You keep learning indoors about the science of gardening during the winter.
- Tiffany Tibbs: What can you tell us about the time and money needed? Patel: Gateway Greening is stretched pretty thin, but we do have grants. Every year you can apply for a grant for things you need (materials, grow-lights, compost bins). Gateway Greening could potentially help us kick start how to plan a garden as a one time support. Patel said that she could provide us with the lesson plans they've already created for Malinckrodt (water cycle etc.).
- Cindy Heidenry: Is there a particular grade that's a good idea to start with if we're starting small? Patel: the teacher is the most important component; younger students tend to be more enthusiastic.

Fund Drive Update, Gary Siddens

- We've raised almost \$21,000 but our goal was \$28,000. We sent out another appeal letter; those who already gave are certainly not expected to give again, but those that haven't are asked to give. We only have 30-40% participation right now and we would like much more.

Plans for Volunteer Appreciation, Nicole Scott

- We love to show our appreciation to our volunteers after the PTO meeting on April 1. We'll have a small dinner and raffle off an iPad mini.

NEW BUSINESS

Enrichment Officer Resignation and Appointment, Tiffany Tibbs

- Enrichment officer Nick Miller resigned for personal and scheduling reasons. The PTO board is grateful for his service, and we want to thank Cheryl Levine for agreeing to serve on the board until the end of the year's term. She was appointed by the board to fill the term.

Changes to the Bylaws, Tiffany Tibbs

- The main change we want to make is to add a 12th board member, a Communications Officer. We feel this will make the PTO Board more sustainable by lessening the already significant duties of the president.
- People have two weeks to review the change, and at our next PTO meeting in March we will vote on the change. We will need a quorum at that meeting and it requires a two-thirds majority.

- There might be future changes to by-laws, but not right now.

Nominations for PTO Officers, Tiffany Tibbs

- At our March meeting, we will take nominations for officers.
- Tiffany has enjoyed working on this board, and she encourages people to think about running for the board.
- The president, vice president, and treasurer must be parents or guardians; all other positions are also open to teachers. There are some positions we know are already open, but you should feel free to run too (that's the point of an election).
- All board positions must be nominated at the March meeting and must be accepted in person or in writing at that meeting. The list of nominees will be circulated and the election will be held at the April meeting. Contested races will have a vote by secret ballot. The term is from May 1-May 1.
- Current office holders described their current board positions and whether or not they'd run.
- People can nominate themselves or have friends nominate them.
- Sarah Vora: If people are competing for a position, will they make a speech? Tiffany: usually each candidate can speak for a moment or two at the April meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Volunteers for Art, Tiffany Tibbs/Sarah Frost Sullivan

- Sarah Frost Sullivan has been working collaboratively with Ms. Nelson, our art teacher. She supports the art program at Kennard in any way she can. Ms. Nelson said parents are welcome to help with specific projects if they are approved volunteers. She also needs parents to hang up or take down work. The fourth grade will be working on scenery for the fifth grade musical and parents could help with that.

Kennardwear Sales, Kara Buckeridge

- There are some additional Kennardwear items still available and she'll be bringing those to one of the next couple meetings. You could also contact her directly.
- Penny's mom: Will they be doing resale again? I think at the summer playdates and the ice cream social before school starts. They can put donations on the shelf above the lost and found.

Indoor Recess Bins, Alissa Rowan

- It's an ongoing process of figuring out what is most helpful, and we'll be continually replenishing the bins. They can give donations to Alissa.

Book Fair, Melissa VonRohr

- We are still in need of volunteers for many hours; please sign up on-line. We need coverage during the day and then also during conferences. We need three volunteers for each time slot. kcjabookfair@yahoo.com is the email address to contact the chairs.
- LeFlore: Another email blast about the book fair will take place next week.
- Kim Whitrap: Do we get a bigger profit for Kennard for book fair than regular book orders? Book orders support than individual teacher, the book fair goes to the PTO for the purchase of school library books and also for the teacher libraries.
- Cheryl Levine: do we have an email list of all approved volunteers? Tiffany: Not exactly, but events are posted on Facebook and emails to all parents. LeFlore: We have an approved volunteer list in the office. Levine: The book fair is a really important way to support our library since it doesn't always get a lot of support from the district.

Yearbook Pictures, Myra Belgeri

- You can still submit photos for the yearbook.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Gary Siddens seconded by Stephanie DeChambeau.
Meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Granich-Kovarik
PTO Secretary, 2013-14