

Kennard Classical Junior Academy PTO Meeting

April 1, 2015, 6:00 pm, Gym
MEETING MINUTES

PTO Board Members present: Jennifer Anania, Myra Belgeri, Lisa Granich-Kovarik, Nicole Scott, Tiffany Tibbs, Nicole Colbert-Botchway, Jennifer Beffa, Gary Siddens, Johnni Walker-Gillespie. 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

- None added

Acceptance of Minutes from March PTO Meeting

- Motion to accept by Jerre Parsons, seconded by Erin Bihr. Motion passed.

REPORTS

PTO President's Report, Tiffany Tibbs

- **Thank you's – specific names in the most recent PTO newsletter**
 - To *Sarah Custis and Laurie Erhard* and teacher appreciation committee for meals during parent-teacher conferences. Teachers truly enjoyed the pasta night the first night, and delicious sandwiches and salad the second evening!
 - To our Book Fair organizers and volunteers: *Dale Greenbury, Melissa Von Rohr, Aletha Mason*, Thanks also to *Antony John*, for devoting a full 2-day author signing to our Book Fair. And to all of *our teachers, administrators, and staff* who supported the event!
 - To *Myra Belgeri* and *Tiffany Tibbs* for assisting the school administration with the Blue Ribbon school application. And thanks to our teachers and administration for their hard work every day at the school, and their demonstration of this work in Kennard's application.
 - To *Maggi Carfield, Amy Breuer, and Tiffany Tibbs* for submitting the Green Schools Quest contest report to the Missouri Gateway Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council. Also thanks to our Green committee of parents, our student-led Green team, our excellent teachers Ms. Spitznagel and Ms. Meyer, our mentor Mary Ann Lazarus, and the support of Dr. LeFlore for these efforts. Ms. Spitznagel has reached out to Punita Patel to be the garden leader contact at our school. See a summary of our report in newsletter.
 - Mr. Clement asked me to mention thanks to: Kevin Tibbs and Lindsey Lawrence for chaperoning the Feb. 25 Equations trip. Carol Davidson for chaperoning the March 12 trip. Carmen Keoshkerian for treating the teams to ice cream.
 - Also I want to thank Mr. Clement for his hard work on Equations this year –Kennard finished the *Equations'* season with a strong performance at the Gifted Resource Council's (GRC) Academic Challenge Cup Equations Tournament held on Thursday, March 12. The GRC's *Equations* Tournament is the largest elementary math contest held in the St Louis area. *Equations* is a dynamic math problem solving game, where students use number cubes to create equations. Students challenge the mathematical logic of opponents' equations, and defend their own. Over 300 elementary students from public and private schools competed

at Washington University's College Hall in the final day of the elementary division contest. *Equations* has gotten so popular with schools across the area that the GRC has expanded its contest days to include the week of February 23.

- The GRC awards the top 3 performing teams in each of the third, fourth, and fifth grade divisions. Six Kennard teams, made up of 5 players each, took two of three spots in each division. 10 Kennard students were recognized for individual achievement in the contest:
- Kennard also had three teams place at the February 25 contest. At the February 25 contest 3 students were also recognized for individual achievement.
- To *Kari Kraichely and our tour guide committee*, for giving tours throughout the school year.
- To all of the *parents and teachers* who have submitted photos for the yearbook.
- To all of the *PTO Board members who have served this year*, and all of the *PTO Officer candidates who are running for office* at our April 1 meeting. We appreciate your interest in helping our school!
- In honor of Volunteer Appreciation – we want to thank *ALL of our volunteers* – for making our school a great place!
- **Upcoming events/dates**
 - Next PTO General meeting – April 1 – Elections and volunteer appreciation
 - What to expect at next meeting:
 1. We will be in the gym for meeting and volunteer appreciation
 2. Childcare provided for meeting, and through volunteer appreciation till 8:30 (at latest)
 3. PTO Officer elections – and I will discuss one open position (later in agenda)
 4. Update about Kennard name – will be discussing this issue later in agenda
 - April 9 – Newly accepted families open house
 - May 14 – deadline for turning in reimbursement requests to Myra
 - PTO picnic – Friday, May 15, 2015, 4:30 to 6:30; Old and new Board members expected to work the picnic. Met with Jerre Parsons and Sarah Vora last week to provide them with planning documents and answer questions. Expect them to be in contact with you all – please sign up to volunteer for shifts – great plan, successful community building event.
 - May 19: Field Day – Contact Amanda Miller or Nicole Colbert Botchway if you would like to help volunteer
 - May 22 - Last day of school.
- Final updates:
 - Website updates to come – Board gave feedback to Susie Anderson-Bauer who is working with Amanda Miller on website updates/improvements. If you would like to help, contact Susie. Will keep you posted on developments.
 - As we finish the last few months of school, the PTO will be reaching out to parents to plan for the 2015-2016 academic year – particularly regarding leaders for various PTO committees and events. If you served as a committee chair this year, and want to continue to do so – we welcome your continued involvement and experience. We also welcome new leaders to join our experienced leaders – so if you have always be interested in a certain committee or event, and think you might want to co-chair that committee, please let us know! The Vice President typically sends out a flyer to recruit chairs & co-chairs in May to all of the parents in the school, but if you already know now, please let Nicole (current vice president) and Jerre (candidate for Vice President know).
 - Last meeting I officially lead as president – so I wanted to say it has been such a pleasure to serve as president and on this Board and with you all. I am sad to leave this position, but so glad to continue on the Board by running for Secretary, which will allow me to balance the exciting professional job opportunities in my life right now too! I wanted to thank all volunteers this year because:
 - As a leader, having good volunteers has made my job so much easier, because I trust your work and I see that you do good things for our students and school.

- As a parent, so grateful for the ways that my children's education has been enhanced through the many events, activities, and donations provided by this active PTO.
- On a personal note, I have been so thankful for the community and friendships that have been created here.

Principal's Report, Dr. Wanda LeFlore

- **Scholastic Book Fair:** Thanks to Dale Greenbury, Aletha Mason, Melissa Von Rohr, and all the volunteers that made the Book Fair a huge success; and a very special thanks to our visiting author Antony John!
- **Academic School Year Calendar** The proposed School Year Calendar for the 2015.2016 and 2016.2017 school years are available for preview and feedback on the SLPS website at: <http://www.slps.org/Page/28112>. You may also provide your feedback regarding both of the proposed calendars by calling (314) 345-4636. All comments shared with the District will be presented to the Special Administrative Board (SAB) prior to a vote at the April meeting.
- **Assessments**
 - **Star Reading by Renaissance Learning** is an adaptive computerized reading assessment administered to students in grades K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th. The final STAR test was administered the week of March 23.
 - **Missouri Assessment Program (MAP)** is a summative assessment that measures specific skills defined for each grade by the state of Missouri. All students in grades 3-5 will take the on-line grade level assessments. English Language Arts and Mathematics are administered in all grades. Science is administered in grades 5 and 8. The testing period begins April 21 and ends May 15. Additional testing information will be sent home next week.
 - **MAP** snacks will be provided by the school.
- **Before and After School Y Club for 4 Year Olds** Cheryl A. Roe, District Director of Child Care Services @ South City Family YMCA informed a parent that SLPS is looking into the items that would be required to meet the Licensing Regulations. If SLPS are able to make the adjustments YMCA can then look at filing for the change of license again. This process can't take place until the items are complete then it is up to DHSS to start the process - with changes with the state we have been finding that it can take up to 2-3 months for State Fire and Sanitation to even make a visit. Then the DHSS Licensing Rep has to conduct another inspection. So, applying again for a Pre-K License will take time and the chances of the program being ready by the first of school in August or September is very slim. Yvonne Green, the Interim Director of Operations, is the SLPS contact person to better understand what steps are required for Kennard to obtain certification for the YMCA Latchkey program for 4 year olds for the 2015-2016 school years.
- **Budget** I received a 12.78 check from Lands' End School Uniforms. The dividend was from qualifying purchases made between February 2014 and January 2015.
- **New Families Open House:** New families accepted to Kennard for the 2015/2016 school year will have the opportunity to pre-register and tour our campus from 9:30 -3:30 on Thursday, April 9. If you would like to volunteer for this event, please contact committee members: Lindsey Lawrence, llawrence13@hotmail.com; Dawn Brandt; dawnbrandt@sbcglobal.net or Liz Toolan; ertoolan@gmail.com. Also note that since the window for MAP Grade Level Testing is April 21 – May 15 and building tours will be suspended, please invite interested families to the April 9 Open House. We welcome all newly accepted and interested families!
- **Promotion Dates (pending final approval):**
 - Thursday, May 21 – Kindergarten Promotion @ 9:45am
 - Thursday, May 21 – Pre-Kindergarten Promotion @ 11:00am
 - Thursday, May 21 – 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade Awards Program @ 1:30pm
 - Friday, May 22 – 5th Grade Promotion @ 10:00am

- **School Name** 3/11/15: I contacted Patrick Wallace and thanked him for all the support he provided at the March PTO Meeting. I inquired if it was correct to state that the next step involves researching the current legal name of the school and contacting me with your findings? I also asked how long will this process take and is there anything I can do since our next PTO Board Meeting is March 25 and the General PTO Meeting is April 1. Mr. Wallace informed me (the same day) that he was in the process of researching to see if the name was officially changed in 1989-90 when Kennard was reopened. He also said he spent 3 hours searching through microfilm and was unable to find board action regarding Kennard's name and planned to go to the archives and see if he can find hard copies of board books from that period. He also asked Mr. Gaines at a recent SAB meeting if he remembered any action being taken. He did not. He left the board in 1989. 3/24/15: Mr. Wallace has been unable to find a vote taken by the Board of Education to officially rename Kennard as Kennard Classical Junior Academy when it reopened in 1990. The archive room was closed several years ago and he did a search of my own through micro film but came up empty. His advice would be to recommend to the Superintendent to officially change the name of the school to Kennard Classical Junior Academy. This could be done as a procedural move with little fanfare and would eliminate any concerns about having students attend a school named after a confederate soldier. If the option is to rename the school after another person that would require getting permission from the person's descendants, who could be tricky if the person's descendants are hard to locate. He stated that he has not spoken with the Superintendent about this option, because it needs the concern needs comes from the school level and should be directed to him by the principal and/or PTO. 3/31/15: Informal Kennard Name Survey of teachers was conducted yesterday consisted of the following: In favor of a name change, not in favor of a name change, why or why not? I received 19 responses: 1 for a name change, 17 against a name change, 1 with no response but a question/comment.
 - **Denise Brooks:** How was the question posed? LeFlore: Are you in favor of a name change? Not in favor? Why or why not?
 - **Nicole Colbert-Bochway:** I was told by my son that there was a discussion about this at school. Is there an effort being made to get opinions about this?
 - **Lisa Granich-Kovarik:** The results of the survey of teachers may have been influenced by the fact that only two options were given, when actually there are more options than that.
 - **Theresa Grabau:** True, but my student doesn't really even know the school is named after Samuel Kennard so this isn't an issue that needs to be brought up to him.
 - **Nicole Scott:** I'm not sure this is a conversation I want to have with my child yet; I think age appropriateness is important. I'm not prepared to have that conversation with my child. Maybe the conversation for preK-2 looks different than conversations in the 3-5 grade age group.
 - **Johnni:** I have a fifth grader and conversations of race shouldn't be shielded away from at that point. They can understand it at that age level.
 - **Jenny Beffa:** My fifth grader also came home talking about it and I would've rather it hadn't come up. I don't see why we're digging in and looking for something negative.
 - **Gary Siddens:** I think this is actually a great history lesson for our kids; history isn't all black and white.
 - **Lisa Granich-Kovarik:** Just because conversations are uncomfortable doesn't mean we shouldn't do it. History isn't about heroes and villains, it's about human beings. I understand why people might not want to solicit

opinions of students just yet, but maybe we can solicit opinions of the parents in a well worded survey.

- **Denise Brooks:** In black history month, we have a lot of discussions about race, there are definitely uncomfortable conversations being had. These are important and discussions about the name should be part of those discussions.
- **Derrick Brooks:** I respect people's opinion on this, but just because it's uncomfortable doesn't mean we shouldn't talk about it. Ignorance is NOT bliss, and we should empower our children. It's my duty as a parent to provide knowledge to my child when they need it.
- **Stephanie O'Brien:** We did have a discussion in our classroom about it after the newspaper article, but it wasn't ever a race issue.
- **Theresa Grabau:** We DO have conversations about race in our family, and sexuality, etc. I just don't know that we need to talk about this in particular.
- **Blythe Burkhardt:** I have a second grader and we talked about it because it came up, and he was able to understand the underlying race issue. We can't pretend these issues don't exist. We have a chance to address it.
- **Tiffany Tibbs:** Question to LeFlore: What would a committee look like for this? **LeFlore:** I think there could be a committee with parent involvement and teacher involvement to determine the next steps. **Nicole Scott:** We could combine this committee with the diversity committee. That's part of the mission of the committee. People should reach out to Nicole Scott of the diversity committee if they'd like to work on this issue.
- **Spring Musical:** The 5th graders will present *Disney's Peter Pan Jr.* on Tuesday, April 14 instead of Tuesday, April 7 because of voting in Kennard's gym. Please bring the family and enjoy the performance! Contact Annette Silver-Betts for additional information.
 - Cast 2 will perform at 10:00am
 - Cast 1 will perform at 6:30pm
- **Summer School:** SLPS confirmation letters to attend the Summer Enrichment Academy has been sent to families. As we get closer to the start of Summer School, parents will receive another notification with program specifics such as bell times, transportation information, grade level programming, etc. Since spaces were filled on a first-come, first-served system and due to limited capacity, a waitlist has been created. Please feel free to contact Danielle Harris at 345-5719 for additional information

Treasurer's Report, Myra Belgeri

- The PTO has \$18,662.28 in the primary account, \$634.97 in the debit account, \$13,655.63 in the Friends of Kennard account. The PTO's total balance is \$26,459.56 (once pending checks are cleared).
- Under Kennard Community, you can see we raised over \$2000 from our book fair, which will go to the library for new books.
- Overall, we're doing really well financially. We won't need to cut anything out of our budget.
- Fifth grade account has \$4,972.34 in it (held separately from PTO funds)

OLD BUSINESS

Fund Drive Update, Gary Siddens

- We've raised \$24,140; we've raised \$3000 from the last appeal. That's 86% of goal.

Volunteer Appreciation, Nicole Scott

- I hope you can stay and enjoy the cake, food, and prizes (an iPod mini). We appreciate your efforts because your efforts are what make Kennard, Kennard. All the prizes except for the gift card were donated.

Changes to Bylaws, Tiffany Tibbs

- Tiffany thanked people for the approval of the changes to the by-laws at the last meeting. There will be a few more minor changes (no dues will be charged, minor wording changes etc., small changes to committees). Those will be posted by mid-April so they can be reviewed for two weeks before we vote at the May meeting.

Update on Kennard School Name, Various

- Taken care of during the principal's report.

NEW BUSINESS

PTO Officer Elections, Tiffany Tibbs

- List of candidates was provided on the back of the agenda, and consisted of:

List of PTO Board Officer Nominations

Nominated at PTO general meeting on 3/4/15

Posted on 3/9/15

- **President:** Dale Greenbury
 - **Vice President:** Jerre Parsons
 - **Secretary:** Tiffany Tibbs
 - **Treasurer:** Myra Belgeri
 - **Information Officer:** Jennifer Anania
 - **Security Officer:** Jennifer Beffa
 - **Parliamentarian:** Lisa Granich-Kovarik
 - **Enrichment Resource Officer:**
 - **Nominee for Enrichment Officer withdrew nomination after March 4 meeting.*
 - **District Affairs Officer:** Lauren Rea Preston
 - **Room Parent Relation Officer:** Lara Fuchs
 - **Fund Raising Officer:** Gary Siddens
 - **Communications Officer:** Denise Brooks
 - ***2nd nominee for Communications Officer withdrew nomination after March 4 meeting.*
- Every position except for Enrichment has someone nominated. Per our by-laws, nominations were closed at the end of the March meeting. Thus, the option we have as a board is to appoint someone to the Enrichment position for 2015-2016. We want the general PTO to be aware of this. This was also listed in our April newsletter.
 - Elizabeth Ernest, Keica Jones are interested but others can throw their names in as well for consideration to be appointed for Enrichment Resource officer. Interested volunteers should contact Tiffany. Discussion about possible appointees will take place at the April 29 Board meeting, consisting of old and new board members. The new board will vote electronically after May 1 to appoint an Enrichment Officer, in time to announce this at the May 6 general PTO meeting.
 - We will have a voice vote for the slate as printed on the back of the agenda. Lauren Rae Preston could not be present because she is teaching a class at Webster University. She is committed to the position and the PTO, and Tiffany read her message regarding this to the PTO membership. All other candidates were present.
 - Amy Breuer motioned we accept the slate of new officers, seconded by Blythe Burkhardt. Voice vote was unanimous.
 - Old board members will help train and transition new board members. New board begins their term May 1.

Buzz Book Policies and Plans, Jennifer Anania

- A reminder that the buzz book is for the use of the parents at Kennard only and should remain private.
- Next year we will likely move to a system called MySchoolAnywhere. The new system could be linked off of our website. Every family gets an individual password, and the information would all be updated on-line as the children progress through the school. It has terrific capabilities, allowing even for paypal payments (without them taking a cut). It allows you to volunteer on-line through the same portal. You can have several administrators of the site, with several different levels of security. Jennifer has contacted three different schools who use it and they all love it.
- **Cost:** \$400.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

School Picnic, Sarah Vora

- The school picnic will be Friday, May 15, 4:30-6:30. Jerre Parsons and I are co-chairing with the help of other PTO board members. We will be looking for volunteers for supervising, set-up, clean up, face painting, food. We will have a volunteer site available mid-month if you're interested in volunteering.
- We'll have food, games, activities; it should be a lot of fun. If you have any questions contact Jerre Parsons or Sarah Vora

Diversity Committee, Nicole Scott

- People interested in addressing the Kennard name change should contact Nicole Scott.

Missing Lights, Tiffany Tibbs

- There are some blue and white LED lights missing that were used in the *Frozen* performance; if anyone knows where they might be, please contact Tiffany Tibbs. They belong to the YMCA Latchkey program.

Summer Camp, Tiffany Tibbs

- Ms. Recke is running a summer camp at Concordia Turners with a variety of activities. Contact her if you're interested in more info. Flyers were available at the main table.

Book Fair, Dale Greenbury

- We were able to provide the teachers \$821 in books; they were able to get most of the items on their wish list. Antony John was nice enough to bring several of his personal books that he wrote to sell to students and donated the proceeds directly to the PTO; he signed them all personally. We sold about \$200 on-line. We'll also probably get a performance bonus.

ADJOURNMENT (with volunteer appreciation to follow)

Motion to adjourn made by Melissa Von Rohr seconded by Erin Bihl.
Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Granich-Kovarik
PTO Secretary, 2014-15