



Dora Kennedy French Immersion

Dora Kennedy French Immersion PTA
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DKFI PTA General Meeting Minutes 10-11-2017

7:07 pm meeting called to order

Key Notes from the Principal *(Expanded content included in Detailed Meeting Notes, below)*

- Thank you for the parental and PTA support during the first day of school.
- Volunteer help is needed during lunch, pick up and drop off. Contact the front office to help.
- We have a school nurse: Nurse Shalon has joined the staff.
- If your child is ill, please keep him or her home.
- Please ensure your child's food account funds are up to date through MySchoolBucks.com. Parents requesting reduced-cost or free meals should fill out and return the *Application for Free and Reduced-Price Meals*. For more information on free or reduced-price meals, call 301-952-6517.
- Early pick up ends at 3:15.
- Beginning November 1, the school will use MySchoolBucks.com for school-related money transactions, including field trip fees. If you are unable to pay online, you may still pay in cash.
- DKFI is among the top-rated schools, based on testing, both in the county and in the state. Congratulations!
- We have a teacher shortage, including English for 2nd and 5th grades, a vocal teacher, and French-speaking substitutes. Qualified, interested applicants should contact the front office.

DKFI PTA Meeting Outline *(Expanded content included in Detailed Meeting Notes, below)*

Board Introduction
DKFI PTA Overview and Highlights of Goals, Events, and Initiatives
Treasurer Report
Principal's Address
 Questions for the Principal
All-Pro Dads Introduction
Upcoming and Ongoing Fundraising Events
Volunteer Needs: Legislative Committee
Committee Descriptions and Sign Up
Communications Software Update

The NEXT DKFI PTA meeting will be November 8th, 7:00 pm, in the multipurpose room (cafeteria).

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From the DKFI PTA--Some important events (this list is not all-inclusive; dates, events, and times are subject to change; only events in blue are PTA sponsored)

Date	Time	Event	Location	For more information
Immediate	ongoing	Teacher and staff wishlist	https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/2047994/false#/invitation	DKFIPTA.org
Immediate	ongoing	DKFI PTA Committee signup	https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/2047994/false#/invitation	http://www.dkfipta.org/committees.html
Immediate	by November 1	The Prince George's County Language Immersion Coalition (PGLIC) parent survey	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd9BlcykT4x8EWmbNzSFy49eGBt1JemZ4vX1hK7V-AgzwwfWA/viewform	
Oct 16- Nov 7		Music Department (Vocal) Citrus Fundraiser	School	korey.cunningham@pgcps.org
Oct 19	8:00 am	All Pro Dad's Day	Media Center (Library)	http://tinyurl.com/dkfiptd stevenlockwood@me.com
Oct 25	6:30-8:30 pm	Maryland Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education final public hearing	Largo High School, 505 Largo Road, Upper Marlboro, MD	http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/26excom/html/13e-dinnov.html
Oct 27	6:45 pm doors open; 1 st round begins around 7:15 pm	Family Bingo Night	Multipurpose Room	DKFIPTA.org
Nov 8	7:00 pm	PTA Meeting	Multipurpose Room	DKFIPTA.org
Monday, Nov 13	11:00 am-9:30 pm	Franklins Restaurant Night	Franklins 5123 Baltimore Ave. Hyattsville, MD	DKFIPTA.org
Dec 17-22	store hours	Fundraiser via purchases and gift wrapping	Barnes and Noble Bowie Town Center 15455 Emerald Way Bowie, MD	DKFIPTA.org

Detailed Meeting Notes

Board Introduction

DKFI PTA President, Halima Jenkins, presented an overview of PTA goals, past efforts and events, and introduced the Bonjour Mama book fair (also noted a store in Kensington), at the meeting

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Ms. Jenkins introduced the Board members: Sophia Mensah (VP, Elementary School), Eleanor Cupp (VP, Middle School), Geraldine Hall (Secretary), Anton Veigas (Treasurer).

DKFI PTA Overview and Highlights of Goals, Events, and Initiatives

Mr. Veigas (Treasurer) presented an overview of PTA activities, initiatives, and goals.

Activities and Programming

- Euro store, where students may exchange their Euro rewards for small toys and games
- Website overview (DKFIPTA.org), including grade-level listservs, available to PTA members and nonmembers
- DKFI online presence (DKFIPTA.org, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) Links are available at DKFIPTA.org. Check the site often for updates, scheduled events, important notices, and initiatives.
- DKFI PTA aims to provide school and staff supports, including staff and teacher appreciation and wish-list fulfillment. Note that the link for teacher wishes is still open so teachers can still make wishes. Please check the PTA website for a link (<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/2047994/false#/invitation>)
- PTA has donated the water and water cooler in cafeteria, for example, cold packs for nurse's station, 5 radio communicators for dismissal, bins for Mme. Boukabara's portable libraries, headphones and storage for computer lab, etc.
- Volunteer coordination and communication support, eg 20 parents for the 1st day of school
- Fundraising events, eg, Boxtops for Education, restaurant nights (Nov 13 at Franklin's, in Hyattsville), and passive fundraising (Amazon Smile, CertifiKid <https://www.certifikid.com/> [code DORAK]), grants, including through the City of Greenbelt (ACE Grants)
- Parent support, info related to PGCPs, communicate parent concerns to the administration, resources for French, etc.

Treasurer Report

Mr. Veigas presented the monies collected, spent, and held, to date.

Principal's Address

Ms. Jenkins introduced Principal Awono.

- Welcome and thank you for support of PTA, and in particular the parents who helped out in the first day of school.
- M. Awono asked for volunteer help with lunch with kids, pick up and drop-off. Let the front office staff know if you are available to help.
- All the children should have some French by now, even Kindergarteners. Please ask your child to teach you some of their French so they practice at home and show what they've learned.
- We have lots of testing, which has already begun. DRA (1st and 2nd grade), reading test will soon begin. Instruction will continue during testing.
- Within Prince George's County Public Schools,
 - Our school came in 4th place in the PARCC exam for elementary schools, behind two TAG centers, Glenarden Woods and Heather Hills, and Whitehall Elementary School.
 - We had a 49% passing rate on the PARCC exams overall. Students are considered passing the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) if they score a 4 or 5.
 - For middle school PARCC, DKFI came first, with a 69% passing rate. We also ranked 14th of the 415 middle schools in the State of Maryland. These results are particularly impressive when one considers that all tests are given in English, and our instruction is in French. We are very proud.
- Grade-level field trips:
 - 8th grade--France and Switzerland
 - 6th grade--Quebec

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- 4th grade—Montreal
- There are investigations into a potential trip for the 7th grade in the future.
- For the 8th grade trip, we will travel together with students from Maya Angelou French Immersion, in the southern part of the county. The teachers from the 2 schools regularly meet to exchange instruction. We would like to expand that cooperative effort.
- We are short of teachers, including English for 2nd and 5th grade, and the vocal music teacher. Starting on October 12, we will have a new teacher for In-School-Suspension monitor (to allow suspended students to stay in school). Qualified, interested applicants should contact the front office.
- We have few discipline problems at DKFI; however, problems do occur. Generally, we report back to the parents; however, we are not allowed to divulge what happens to the 2nd party, for privacy reasons. Some consequences are visible, others not. Rest assured that all parties and issues are addressed.
- We have a new nurse: Nurse Shalon. To contact her, call the school.
- Health issues: if your child feels unwell or sick, please keep him or her home.
- Cafeteria: since the beginning of the school year, we have been providing lunch to all students who needed food. The school will soon begin notifying parents of need for lunch funds. Please ensure your child's food account funds are up to date through MySchoolBucks.com. Parents requesting reduced-cost or free meals should fill out and return the *Application for Free and Reduced-Price Meals*. For more information on free or reduced-price meals, call 301-952-6517.
- Beginning Nov. 1, we will use MySchoolBucks for nearly all school-related monies (for example, field trip fees, T-shirt money) to streamline and prevent student loss of monies, etc. If you are unable to pay on line, you may still send cash to school.
- Also, thank you to the 74 dads and supportive men who came to the Men-Make-a-Difference Day. The staff members were so happy to have you. We hope you will come again.

Questions for the Principal

Q: the PG Board has changed the Health and Wellness Policy to mandate at least 20 minutes of recess daily. Have the teachers been informed of this?

A: yes, generally. If there are problems with teachers not meeting that, please inform the school

Q: Is there a bee problem at the school?

A: There was a student stung by a bee. We checked for more bees, but it seemed all clear.

Q: As a new parent, I am concerned about the lack of uniform policy. Can we vote or survey the parents about uniforms?

A: That issue, the PTA can address. Ms. Jenkins reports that each time the question of uniforms has come up, the PTA has created a poll. Results (as of last year) indicated that only a small percentage of parents supported it. A dress code is included in the handbook. Handbook is available on the DKFIPTA.org

Q: At pick up, we were given a poster with the photo of our child. Should we stay in the vehicle? Some parents are getting out of the cars, which creates problems in the flow. What guidance do we have?

A: The pickup area is meant for parents to remain in their cars. The staff will bring the child to the car. It would be great for everyone to remain in the car during pick up to wait for their child.

Perhaps when we get more volunteers to help with drop off, it will be easier.

Q: When is picture day?

A: November some time. It will be announced in the e-Journal.

Q: Why is there a music fee (\$25) in addition to instrument rental fee? Can PTA help or music department raise funds?

A: that fee pays for music, repairs. Another parent indicated that the fee was optional.

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Q: What is being done to recruit those missing teachers?

A: We are working with PG County HR. Also, if you know of someone, contact M. Awono.

If you know of French-speaking adults, with at least a BA, who are willing to become a substitute, they should contact front office. We have a few candidates already starting.

Q: How do I get information on the different tests, and which happen in which grade?

A: DELF is administered by the French Government. Passing indicates proficiency and fluency in French language. (A lifetime diploma in France.)

STAMP is for middle school. Teachers pass on testing information to parents.

Q: Parent suggested that homework amount is too high. How is this being addressed? The amount my child receives in 2nd grade is beyond that listed out on the eJournal (October).

A: 20 minutes of daily homework for a second grader is really not enough. The homework duration for an immersion school may take longer since the language is foreign. M. Awono does not want to dictate to teachers on these matters and cannot mandate the teachers to limit homework time. He will, however, discuss the issue with teachers.

Even when a child has no homework, have him or her read, even if it's in English.

If there are still specific parental concerns, parents can scan homework and send them to M. Awono to review.

Q: When are results of DELF given out?

A: In Fall for the previous Spring's testing. On October 19, at Central High School, awards, including scores, will be given out.

- Citrus fundraiser is October 16-November 7.

Q and Comment: The children should not be asked to be quiet during lunch, particularly for the older children. They should be allowed to socialize. Sound level by age.

A: M. Awono will take that back to the team.

Q: When there is a situation where the children don't get along, I think there should be an opportunity for parents to get together and discuss the situation.

A: M. Awono said they are not allowed to arrange parent mediation. However, parents here form a community and may discuss issues on their own

Q: Appreciate the resolution of the water lead problem. Is testing done regularly?

A: testing was done in May, results published in June. Fountains in hallways are fine. We do not have a date for additional testing.

Q: Possible to hire more teacher assistants? Particularly for K and 1-2

A: It would be great, but at the moment, the budget does not allow.

Q: To whom do I write to address these budget and hiring issues?

A: (from parent). Write to school board member. Parent Laura Rammelsberg was introduced as DKFI Legislative Committee chair.

Q: A third-grade parent reports 2-hour nightly homework. Could homework sheet be delivered on Friday so children could have the weekend to begin

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A: M. Awono will discuss this with the team

Q: We do same fundraisers from year to year. Is it possible to have a Chik-Fil-A fundraiser?

A: PTA can address (PTA Board responded that fundraising committee sign-up will follow the presentation by the Principal)

Q: Rather than fundraising, can we just make a donation?

A: M. Awono will check on how donations can be made to school

Q: if we got enough donations, could we abolish the class-time fundraising presentations?

A: potentially

M. Awono announced that the French President offered a grant of Dual Language Funds to support teaching of French in the US. We applied for a \$10K grant. Perhaps funding for after-school program for kids. We should find out by the end of this month.

All-Pro Dads Introduction

Steve Lockwood (Dad of 4th and 8th graders) introduced All-Pro Dads Day, which meets once monthly and through which significant men and their children get together with the children for breakfast and discussion of family-related topics. Occurs on the 3rd Friday of each month (this month on the 19th, 8:00 a.m. In the media center)

- For more information, see. Tinyurl.com/dkfiapd
- Subscribe to the email of the day via the site for parenting tips
- Please sign up in advance. Not necessary, but preferred.

Upcoming and Ongoing Fundraising Events

- Music Dept has a citrus fundraiser Oct 16-Nov 7th. Anyone in the school can purchase citrus in support of the music department.
- PTA restaurant night November 13th at Franklins, in Hyattsville. We get a percentage of all purchases (store or restaurant).
- At Barnes and Nobel-- December 17th through December 22 online and in-store, we get a percentage of purchases, with entry of our school code (*to come*). As a DKFI PTA fundraiser, DKFI PTA members will offer free gift wrapping at the store (Bowie Town Center). Funds are raised through donations in appreciation of the wrapping. Please keep an eye out for a volunteer sign-up sheet
- BoxTops for Education are submitted Fall and Spring in support of the DKFI PTA.
- The year's first DKFI PTA Family Bingo Night is Friday, October 27. Doors open at 6:45; the first round starts around 7:15 pm. A ticket includes a BINGO board with 9 rounds. Winners receive toys and prizes (no cash). A final, 10th, round offers a high-end prize item.

Reminder from the front office. No early dismissal after 3:15 please.

Volunteer Needs: Legislative Committee

Parent Laura Rammelsberg described the Legislative Committee. Volunteers attend and write up Board meeting and for Capitol Improvement Fund Meetings and County Council meetings. Board actions impact our schools directly. Committee members also advocate for our school and immersion programs, often in conjunction with parents from other immersion schools. Volunteers are needed and appreciated. Laura would like to send out a survey within the next few weeks to assess legislative priorities and needs of our community, including the teachers and administration. To sign

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up, go to DKFIPTA.org home page, and click on the Committee descriptions and Sign up; or sign up at the next PTA meeting, on November 8th, at 7:00 pm.

Committee Descriptions and Sign Up

Ms. Jenkins described the committees, both needs and that all PTA initiatives and events are powered by volunteer efforts. We can all get more done if we share the effort. This year we would like to get committees up and running. Many attendees signed up for committee involvement. **More members are needed.** To view committee descriptions, go to

<http://www.dkfipta.org/committees.html>

to sign up, go to

<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/2047994/false#/invitation>

or sign up at the next PTA meeting, on November 8th, at 7:00 pm.

Current committees include the following:

- Beautification/Environment Committee
- Business Solicitation & Outreach
- Communications & Technology Committee
- Cultural Arts Committee
- Euro Store
- Events and Fundraising Committee
- French Community Outreach Committee
- Grants Committee
- Legislative & Advocacy Committee
- Recess & Physical Activities Committee
- Spirit Wear Coordinators
- Teacher Appreciation Committee
- Transportation and Safety Committee

Communications Software Update

Ms. Jenkins described what happened with the communications platform: BB District by Blackboard App overlaps with some of these communication needs and was unveiled shortly before school started. We decided to wait to assess how the County utilizes the Blackboard App so we wouldn't have redundancy. We are still assessing.

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