

**MKPC PTA General Meeting**  
**April 14, 2015 at Montgomery Knolls**  
*(DRAFT – Pending Approval)*

**Attendance:**

PTA Board Members and School Administrators in attendance:

Nickie Haine, PTA President (presided over meeting)  
Madeleine Santiago, PTA Vice President  
Becca Wilson, PTA Vice President  
Kate O'Connor, PTA Secretary  
Bertram Generlette, MKES Principal

In addition, approximately 20 parents attended the meeting and signed in.

The meeting was called to order at 6:45pm.

**Handouts:**

- “MKPC PTA Open Committee Chair Positions for 2015-2016” (in English & Spanish)
- “Raising ‘I Can’ Kids” (Photocopy of PEP presentation)
- PEP Schedule of classes & workshops for Spring 2015

**Nominating Committee:**

The PTA is still trying to find people interested in the recording secretary and treasurer positions for terms starting July 1, 2015. Please ask around and encourage possible candidates to contact the PTA or nominating committee. Nominating committee members include:

- Karen Durland
- Debbie Soderlund
- Jen Andelman
- Tinica Mather

**Recent & Upcoming Events:**

- May Fair: Andrea Hickman has put together a one pager, providing an overview of this year’s event and identifying volunteer opportunities. Look for this in your child’s communications folder.
- Garden Clean-Up at MKES: Thanks to Adrienne Stelmach for organizing and all of those who helped out on the day.
- PCES Spring Clean-up: Scheduled for April 18<sup>th</sup>. This is also when families can pick up plants they ordered from the annual plant sale (formerly associated with May Fair).
- Science Fair – May 30<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) at MKES, 1-3 pm. There will also be a Prep Day on May 9<sup>th</sup> to give students a chance to work on their projects. This is a low-key, non-competitive science fair. More information will be coming home soon.

**Delegate Reports:**

Key issues under discussion at the moment:

- Bus depot proposed for Blair HS.
- Amendment by MC PTA, which would change the dues for PTA membership
- PARCC testing.

Details on these topics are forthcoming from our delegates.

**Administration Announcements: MKES (Mr. Generlette)**

- Capacity Study: MCPS has launched a capacity study to determine expansion needs (need for additions? portables? etc.) in five down-county elementary schools, including PCES and MKES. MKES will have 8 kindergarten, 8 first grade, 8 second grade classes for the 2015-16 school year, which puts the school at full capacity. Capacity Study meetings will be held at MKES on Monday, April 20. One at 3:30pm in Media Center and one at 7pm in Media Center. (The earlier meeting is primarily for staff/faculty, but parents are also welcome to attend.) Translation and child care services provided.
- Ms. Booker is moving into an internship in preparation for becoming a principal. She will be moving to PCES next year to work with Ms. Houston. Arienne Clark-Harrison has applied for, been offered, and accepted the assistant principal position at MKES.
- MKES Kindergarten teacher, Amy Brooks, was nominated for and won the Shirley J. Lowrie “Thank You for Teaching” Award through the Montgomery County Community Foundation. There will be an awards ceremony to honor Ms. Brooks on April 30 at 3:30pm in the MKES media center.
- Kindergarten Orientation: April 30 & May 1<sup>st</sup>. Spread the word to families who will have 5 year olds ready to enroll for the fall.
- STEM Night at MKES: April 22
- Art teacher Ms. Bserani is looking for parent volunteers to help with a clay project on Thursday & Friday, April 23 & 24, 10:15am – 11:00am. Please contact her if you can help.

**Administration Announcements: PCES (Mr. Generlette, on behalf of Ms. Houston)**

- Capacity study meeting for PCES will be held on 4/30 at 4:00pm and again at 7pm. See details above.
- Parent Walk-through in May, focusing on Reading and Language Arts. Date TBD.
- PARCC testing will begin (second round) at the end of April.
- STEM Night at PCES: April 23rd

**Featured Program: Raising “I Can” Kids (Molly Jackman, PEP)**

- Children who succeed are those who:
  - Have close relationships with others
  - Feel valued in their communities
  - Have a sense of control
- Importance of Connections
  - Special Time: Setting aside 10-15 minutes a day of child-directed time with a parent. Child gets to choose the activity (but no screens). Don’t take it away as a punishment.
  - Listening
  - Family stories and family photos – helps children feel that they belong. If kids do not feel that they belong in a positive way, they will find a way to belong in a negative way – e.g., misbehavior. Helping kids feel connected can help counter some of the peer pressure they will encounter as they get older.
- Importance of feeling capable:
  - “Never do for a child what he can do for himself.” Doesn’t matter that the adult can do things more quickly, easily, and/or more neatly. When you do “for” the child, the underlying message is that the child can’t do it.
  - Suggestions: “I Can” can. Have kids write down things that they’ve learned to do and things that they can do and put them in a special can. Read over the list of accomplishments now and then, especially when the child is feeling down.
  - Parent / Caregiver as teacher: Help children understand what’s expected (e.g., what does it mean to clean your room); teach children the skill.

- Build on successes – remind children of things they’ve accomplished in the past, and how long it may have taken to learn a new skill.
- Parent’s job is to teach kids the life skills they will need when they walk out the door when they are 18. These skills can be introduced starting when kids are very young – learning to set an alarm and get up on their own, packing their own lunches, doing their own laundry, etc. On PEP web site, there is a list of responsibilities that kids are capable of taking on, broken down by age. See: <http://pepparent.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/responsibilities-by-age.pdf>.
- Allow Children to Do (once you have trained them)
  - Kids will learn to become responsible only if we allow them to be responsible.
  - Don’t expect perfection. Lower expectations (e.g., bed may not be made perfectly).
  - Responsibilities can increase as children get older. Grant kids the freedom they want as they show responsibility in their “jobs” – school work, work around the house.
  - Teach kids to learn from mistakes by modeling. Tell kids about times when you made mistakes, and admit mistakes you are making now.
- Helping Kids Recognize that they count:
  - Allow kids to have a voice in decisions (e.g., about how to spend family time)
  - Special Plate: Once a week, each family member gets a special plate, glass, silverware, or whatever. That night, everyone needs to mention something positive about that person. Teaching kids to see the positive.
  - Having a forum in which household issues / family problems are brought up, and allow kids to raise issues. Family meeting.
  - Encouragement: Make it specific, and focus on process and effort (not just on the result). Notice improvement. Pay attention to underlying feelings. Don’t comment on action (slamming door); investigate the underlying feelings.
- Help children develop courage
  - Encourage
  - Build on strengths
  - Model imperfection and how to deal with it.
  - Help kids learn to deal with their own problems.

Meeting concluded at 8:00pm.

Minutes submitted by Kate O’Connor, MKPC PTA Secretary.