



Kenneth Butz Elementary School
KBES PTA Meeting
Monday, October 5, 2020

1. Call to Order at 7:00pm

Attendees: Paul Soporowski, Wendy Juniper, Craig Williams, Meghan Jordan, Susan Klotz, Audrey Kemmerer, Melissa Curis, Julie Kaniper, Joanne Rossi, Kelly Apruzzi, Kari Kirkpatric, Renee Solderitch, Alicia Carney, Jessica Dieck, Nicole Pile, Tracey Reilly, Benedict Levron, Chrstine Vandervalk, Jody Rutt, Jennifer Marshall, Michelle Stouffer, Katie Burzynski, Kate Soporowski, Karen Janis, Tara Willard, MacKenzie Guyer, Kate Hopkins, Natalie Klockars.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Welcome

- Paul welcomed Dr Riker and Resende to the PTA meeting.
- He reminded PTA members of the Board election that is going to be held at the end of the meeting.
- He welcomed Tracy, the president of the Lower Nazareth PTA, who has joined us to see how our meeting is conducted over zoom.

4. NASD Superintendent & Assistant Superintendent Presentation/Q&A

- Dr. Riker welcomed members and presented a slideshow about current school operations due to covid.
 - The district worked from March through July to make plans for returning to school in the coronavirus environment, but was met with new guidelines from the governor's office along the way.
 - On Aug 10, the district changed it's plans in response to the governor's change in guidance. At that time, the state got rid of the green, yellow, red phase and put a new system in place that used countywide covid case counts and test positivity percentages to determine how schools could safely open. Though our county met one of the metrics for full in-person learning (percent positivity), we were listed as moderate risk and state guidance was to either do a hybrid or cyber model. This data is available online and is updated regularly.

- Districts can change their instructional models based on the community virus load, and we were shown how many PA counties have fluctuated over the past months. Northampton county remains moderate. Our caseload is currently slightly higher than it was last week, but our test positivity percentage is about the same.
- Dr. Riker has committed to wanting to see a 2 week period of sustained change to move back to a full 5 day school week. We are solidly in the moderate level, but he will continue to watch the numbers.
- Today (Oct 5) was the first time that Nazareth reported a positive COVID case at one of our schools (the intermediate school). He has received information from others that in the past week there have been cases in the district, but they were not substantiated until this point. Sources for monitoring the numbers are available in the presentation that Dr. Riker gave us, which will be posted on the PTA website.
- Dr. Riker predicts that we will see changes in the learning models in districts around us in the upcoming weeks.
- Dr. Riker also apprised us of the KBES Building project.
 - The project is moving forward on schedule. Electric and water trenching is being worked on, and you can now see the future footprint of the new addition.
 - There have been some challenges in the foundation.
 - Everyone on site has to have a sticker on his or her helmet that shows that they have all the proper state clearances (5 of them) to be working on site.
 - The library redesign is well underway. The new book cases (some of which are movable) and flexible seating arrangements are in. The previously open walls are closed in with windows to let in light - a project completed by the maintenance crew at KBES. The graphics on the wall have been preserved and painted around. All the books have been reviewed and old books were weeded out. The district approved the purchase of new books for the library.
- Dr. Resende presented updates about the districts current instructional models
 - The Hybrid Program and Blue Eagle Cyber Academy both have their challenges, but everyone is doing a very good job of adapting and collaborating for a successful start.
 - The difference in class sizes between the models was an attempt to balance the space needs of the hybrid program with the needs of the cyber academy. Average class size for cyber programs across the nation is about 29.9 students per teacher. Blue Eagle cyber academy enrollment is currently at about 31 students per teacher on average. More specifically, class size averages are 30 for Kindergarten, 29 for first grade, 30 for second grade, and 33 for third grade. This is solely classroom teacher to student ratios, not including other aids and teachers in the class. Some

students have already re-enrolled in the hybrid model, so numbers are actually a little lower right now.

- Dr. Resende commends cyber teachers for their amazing job of providing a high quality education for our students, and she has recieved lots of good feedback from families.
- Hybrid Model
 - Has been successful because of student dedication to the health and safety plan.
 - Teachers have been flexible in creating outdoor learning spaces in addition to in building spaces.
 - They have received positive feedback about the asynchronous days, because teachers can dedicate teaching time to the small number of children in the classroom.
 - It is a challenge to maintain a school culture and adapt the school experience within the restrictions covid puts in place.
 - In summary, she thanks the teachers, parents and students for their hard work and dedication in making this school year as successful as it can be.
- Dr. Riker added that when the administration builds curriculum, they always build with the end in mind. The end in mind for all of us is to get everyone back into school when it's safe to do so. If school returns to full 5 days in-school, hybrid students will go back in with the teachers they have right now. The district made sure to keep classes small so that students don't have to be reassigned to a new teacher.
- Please email Dr. Riker and Dr. Resende with any questions that pertain to personal student needs. They can also respond to questions posed by the PTA.
- Questions from the PTA:
 - What happens when cyber students go back in person to classes of 30+ students? Dr. Riker answered that if students from the cyber program plan to go back, they would be equally distributed to the teachers who are in school.
 - Concerns were raised about the unequal class sizes between the online and hybrid programs.
Dr. Riker asked that this concern be brought to the administration for private discussion.
 - We have these metrics, which are guidelines. Who is the ultimate decision maker on what the school does, and are there any districts around us that are choosing not to follow the guidelines?
Dr. Riker responded that they come from the PA dept of health and that the district administration takes their recommendations based on the state guidelines to the school board for their approval. Currently Saucon Valley elementary students go to school 5 days a week and the district offers a cyber program, which in their

definition is a blended model. Bangor is the same for their elementary students. The interpretation of what a “blended model” is is up for debate. The reason we have the model we have right now is in response to the 7-12 grades. The larger districts around us (Bethlehem, Northampton and Easton) have done the hybrid method for their high school programs, and so we chose to go that way as well. Some of them are looking to go back to a different model in K-3.

- Paul thanked Dr. Riker and Dr. Resende for their time.
- Dr. Riker thanked his staff who are on the zoom for the amazing job they are doing.

5. KBES Principal Presentation

- Thanked membership for attending the meeting (*missed about 2 minutes here when my computer crashed*)
- Fire Safety week is approaching
- There is no school on Monday, October 12 for Columbus Day.
- School pictures for cyber students will be held Monday, October 19. Please sign up on the link that went out on Schoology. On picture day, parents will stay in their vehicles and teachers will walk the students into the cafeteria to have their picture taken. You can order the pictures online.
- School pictures for hybrid students will be on October 20 and 21. Ordering will all be done online and pictures will be delivered to your house.
- Halloween activities have been changed this year.
 - On October 29th and 30th, hybrid program students can bring their costumes into school. They will change into their costumes after lunches and remain in their classrooms, where teachers will take pictures of them. At home, cyber program students can wear their costumes and parents will take pictures. All pictures can be submitted for a schoolwide presentation.
 - KBES will hold a schoolwide bingo game between the classes. Mrs. Apruzzi will be the caller. Treats for the winners will be given out. More info will be given out soon.
- There is no school on Tuesday, November 3 for election day. Voting for this district is now at the firehall as opposed to the school gym.
- There is no school on Wednesday, Nov 11 for Veterans day.
- Friday, November 20, Mon, November 23 and Tuesday, November 24 are conferences. Wednesday, November 25 is early dismissal, and then school is out Thursday, November 26 through Monday, November 30 for Thanksgiving break.
- NASD got a grant for free lunches from now through the end of December. Students in both the hybrid and cyber program can order the lunches. Cyber parents can pick up their child’s lunch at school.

6. Teacher Representative Update

- Mrs. Klotz announced that Star testing dates are not completely set, but they will be occurring in the next 2-3 weeks. She thanked all the parents at the meeting for their support.

7. Be Safe Program Director Update

- Mrs. Rossi told members that the year is in full swing with some adjustments to procedure. Students love their time at BeSafe. The preschool started last week on Thursday and Friday. The preschool students are struggling with social distancing, but hand washing and sanitizing is going well. This year, they won't be inviting parents in for Halloween or birthdays, but are planning to hold a trunk or treat where the kids can dress up and go out to the parking lot. They have received more funding through the CARES act to purchase disinfectant and cleaning supplies, buy masks, or use for anything they need to maintain the program, including materials, bills, insurance, etc.

Paul reminded membership that there was difficulty signing up for membership on memberhub because it's down.

8. Secretary Update

- September Meeting minutes approval - Craig Williams moved to pass the minutes and Susan Klotz seconded.
- Review of meeting materials being published

9. Treasurer Update

- Budget and Account Activity. The report posted on the website is August through current and includes:
 - Membership dues.
 - Kindergarten virtual field trip expense.
 - We got a refund on a show from last year.
- Purse Bingo is not yet reflected in the budget

10. Vice President of Volunteers Update

- RIF is going to be happening sometime in November or December. Students will get a free book when they are in school and cyber students will get a book on their pickup day.

11. General Vice President Update

- Kindergarten assembly with Unangst Farms is going to be delivered to all hybrid and cyber students. This was a project in conjunction with Lower Nazareth because the cyber kindergarteners from KBES are being taught by LN teachers. The field trip includes activities about how pumpkins grow and more.

- Tracy Reilly, LN PTA President gave kudos to the Kindergarten teachers for spearheading this field trip. She's hoping this sets the stage for the other grades to come together with ideas for shared virtual field trips.

12. President Update

- Membership & Current standing and participation in Board elections: Membership Chair Nicole Pile told attendees that right now we have 59 members. She apologized for memberhub being glitchy and asked that people send questions on membership to her.
- KidStuff/SaveAround Coupon Book Fundraiser Results: Traditionally this has been a better fundraiser at the start of the year. It was all virtual this year, and the challenges of covid made for a much smaller return.
- Square 1 Art Fundraiser: Art projects are being finalized in the hybrid sections and Mrs. D will send home communication about how to order. We will do another campaign of reminding people in the cyber mode how to upload their image and purchase items.
- Purse Bingo/Tricky Tray Results: Alicia Carney gave an update. She said it was a very successful event even at a 50% reduced capacity. The firehall could accommodate 109 people and the event sold out and had a wait list. There were 64 tricky tray items, including an American Girl Doll, a covid cleaning basket, and 2 special raffles, one with 100+ in lotto tickets and another where 2 sets of 5 disney passes were raffled off. 10 door prizes were given away. The total income was 6170.86 (not profit). Thank you to the parents and staff at Butz, the girl scouts who helped set up, and all the sponsors. Next year, they are looking at moving to a larger firehall. The timing of the event seemed ideal, coming before the holidays. They are looking for another event chair and will start looking for sponsorships and donation again in early 2021.

13. PTA Board Elections for 2020-2021

- Conduct of PTA Board elections (must be paid PTA member to cast vote)
- Jessica Dieck informed us that the PTA is voting for the executive board positions for the 2020-21 school year. She asked for nominations from the zoom floor. Paul Soporowski added that there are two nominees for treasurer: Craig Williams and Julie Kaniper. Julie and Craig introduced themselves.
- The vote took place and results were as follows:
 - President: Paul Soporowski
 - General VP: Kari Kirkpatrick
 - VP for Volunteers: Renee Solderitch
 - Secretary: Wendy Juniper
 - Treasurer: Julie Kaniper

14. General membership comments/concerns/suggestions from the floor

None

15. Adjourn at 8:19pm.

Next General PTA Meeting Monday, November 2nd, 2020