



The Kyrene Parent Network Newsletter

October 5, 2007 Issue 8

<http://www.kyreneparent.org/>

About

KPN

Dear All,

Due to some time constraints, I was not able to do a September newsletter at the usual time, but we still wanted to keep you updated on some of the highlights in the month. We apologize for this.

If you have questions or comments, please let us know!

Sincerely,
Sandy Lowe, President
480-961-0388

2007-2008

Remaining Meetings

- Tuesday 11/6 9 – 11 am
- No meeting in December
- Tuesday 1/15 6:30 – 8:30 pm
- Tuesday 2/5 6:30 – 8:30 pm
- Tuesday 3/4 9 – 11 am
- Tuesday 4/1 6:30 – 8:30 pm
- Tuesday 5/6 9 – 11 am

Morning Meetings are all held at Kyrene District Office. For evening locations after December, please check our website.

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Kyrene Parent Network September 4 Meeting Highlights

Mary Wolf-Francis, of EDU Partnerships, spoke on the challenges of getting more emphasis on **Science and Math in Education**. She talked about the global perspective regarding how many industries are going overseas rather than settling in the US, plus how many of the engineering/technical jobs are being filled with professionals from outside our nation. One of her messages: education must change in these areas to remain competitive.

Dan Neville shared information about the new **Strings Project** that ASU is partnering with Kyrene on. Fourth to sixth grade students are being offered an opportunity to learn beginning strings instruments in an after-school program located at KMS and Aprende. If this program proves to be successful, there are hopes it will be expanded to other areas in Kyrene.

Mr. Scott Greenhalgh, Coordinator for **the International Baccalaureate Program**, along with Mrs. Glenn, Asst. Principal at Tempe High School, presented information about this exciting new program, where 11th and 12th graders may earn an IB degree. Tempe High will host an information meeting November 14th at 6:30 in the THS Lecture Hall to explain the benefits of this program. Registration materials for the Tempe High IB Preparatory Academy will be available at the meeting. (First priority registration is November 30th.)

KPN sincerely thanks Mrs. Wolf-Francis, Mr. Neville, Mr. Greenhalgh and Mrs. Glenn for taking time to be with us!

Don't Miss KPN's November Meeting!

When & Where:

Tuesday, November 6, 9 - 11 am
Kyrene School District Office

Topic

Middle School Model

Questions: membership@kyreneparent.org

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KPN at the Capital, Oct. 2, 2007

Hosted by APPLE

(Arizona Parents for Public Education)

Kyrene Parent Network recently had the opportunity to meet with Governor Napolitano's new Education Advisor, Lauren Kielsmeier, along with other reps from Cave Creek, Madison, Paradise Valley Scottsdale, and Washington school districts. Kyrene Parent Network board member, Jennie Doering, along with Kyrene Governing Board member, Mitzi Epstein, were there from our area. Here are some highlights:

- Watch the news for the Legislature's take on "**Excess Utilities**" – the costs of air-conditioning in our schools. The funding formula is based on standard rates from 1985, so it appears we have "excess" costs when these are the real-time costs of keeping our current schools running. Parents may want to get involved to make sure we keep the lights on—and don't have to cut even more programs to do so. Kyrene is facing a \$600,000 deficit; Tempe Union nearly \$1 million; some districts close to \$3 million.

APPLE would like to see schools negotiate a subsidized rate and/or have funding available for improvements to older buildings (better windows, insulation, etc.). With current budget deficit, however, this may prove to be challenges.

- **Per Pupil Funding:** The message was we must not accept being 49th in the country in per-pupil funding since this may effect business prospects for Arizona and it may hurt our kids when they apply to out-of-state-schools.

Since many of the programs/policies that affect our children's lives are set by our Legislators, it becomes critical to pay attention during elections, ask candidates and those in-office lots of questions, and send a strong message that we care about education in the state of Arizona, etc.

Would you like more information about what APPLE (Az. Parents for Public Education) is doing for education, receive updates on legislative issues or become more involved with issues at this level? Contact Jennie Doering jenspraydoe@cox.net or Mitzi Epstein mepstein@cltraining.net.

Around Kyrene

Kyrene Parent Superintendent Re-cap September 25 Meeting

PSC

Open Enrollment: The history of and reasons why we have open enrollment were presented. The bottom line is that open enrollment is **not** a choice for any school districts in Arizona. It is the law and is part of the bigger picture of "parent choice" (including private schools, charter schools and home schooling). One of the advantages cited for open enrollment is the significant amount of money that allows neighborhood schools to remain open and programming in place for ALL students. In addition, it was stated that open enrollment brings in money, thus allowing for more teachers for students. There have been some comments by parents in regards to discipline challenges increasing at schools; however it was stated that there are relatively few differences in regards to open enrollment versus in-boundary students. Small group discussions emphasized desire to steer away from divisive language on this issue since **all** kids in the district are Kyrene kids no matter where they come from.

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ON THIS?

SEND THEM IN to president@kyreneparent.org

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Science Foundation of Arizona presentation:

<http://www.sfaz.org/>

A New and Exciting Vision for Arizona
September 17 at Kyrene School District Office

Dr. Harris and Dr. Fine, of the Science Foundation spoke of all the challenges the United States currently has in regards to educating and graduating more Science and Technology majors in order to stay competitive in the world today.

Some interesting facts that were presented:

1. In 1965, 25% of the U.S. population graduated from college, today the number has not changed.
2. India and China have more honor students than the U.S. has students.
3. In 2003, Nintendo invested more than \$140 million in research and development, the US spent less than ½ of this on research and innovation.
4. In 2005: 600,000 engineers graduated in Science as compared to 70,000 in the US.

The bottom line message was that business, government and education MUST work together in order to ensure the United States remains a competitor player in the global market. The Az. Science Foundation is working with Arizona legislatures along with other higher-level educational institutions to help build Arizona's high-tech industry into a world competitor.

Arizona Republic Opinion Column, "Our Brilliant Future"

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/opinions/articles/1003wed1-03.html>

Kyrene Elementary Governing Board Meeting Highlights

8/28/07

- **Focus for 2007-08:**
 - Develop a compensation system that will attract and retain teachers
 - Increase efforts to support teachers in the instruction of curriculum
 - Increase professional development to support excellence in teaching
 - Provide opportunities for feedback regarding performance of staff
 - Continue communication, marketing and program initiatives to serve the community
- Dr. Knight stated the Legislature allocated additional monies for teachers and support staff. It's a **98¢ increase to the funding formula and amounts to about \$828,000.** The governing board voted to use this \$ as follows: \$550 increase in certified salary cells and 20 ¢ increase in hourly wage cells for classified staff.

9/11/07

- **The Strings Program**, collaboration between ASU and Kyrene was presented. This is an opportunity for 4th to 6th graders to learn a strings instrument in an after school program. Dr. Schmidt, (ASU) stated this program is one offering under the Herberger College for Kids and ASU, and one of the goals is to prepare string teachers to successfully fill the need for qualified string teachers across the valley and country.
- The **two parcels of land owned by Kyrene**, one located in Foothills Club West (10.50 acres.), and the second parcel on 4th Street and Thistle between Ray and Chandler Blvd. (28.51 acres.) was discussed. It was recommended, given the District can't use proceeds for M&O and has other funding in place for capital needs and given the uncertainty of how the freeway and redistricting discussions will impact the District's needs for the land, that no land transaction be considered at this time.
- **Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)** was discussed: There is a conflict of objectives between AYP, which requires that 95% of students in all sub-groups test and the Disability Act which requires accommodations be made for Special Education students. By giving this accommodation, a student may not be counted in the number taking the test. A school can be labeled excelling and fail to make AYP, but it is unlikely that a failing school could make AYP. The schools not making AYP because of this are: Centennial, Akimel, Paloma, Pueblo. Norte is in a warning year and then Lomas and KMS are in a school improvement year.

See website for more information and minutes of meetings: <http://www.kyrene.org/gb/mintues-agendas/2007.htm>

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Around

TUHSD

Tempe Union High School District Governing Board Meeting Highlights

9-05-07

- Strategic Planning Meetings for the District will begin this month where stakeholders will have an opportunity to review, evaluate and revise the Strategic Plan. Sometime after October 29, the recommended plan will be taken out to the community for comments and the Governing Board will vote on it on December 19.
- President Zita Johnson asked the board members to list their top 10 priorities for this upcoming Legislative session. These would then be compiled and then address at the 9/19 meeting.

International Baccalaureate Information Meeting

November 14, 6:30 pm

Tempe High School - Lecture Hall

This meeting will offer parents and students a chance to hear more about this program and its benefits for students. Also, learn about the IB curriculum, how to apply and how this program may be a great pathway to college success.

Registration materials for the Tempe High IB Preparatory Academy will be available at the meeting. (First priority registration is November 30th.)

For more information see their website <http://www.tuhd.k12.az.us/th/index2.html> or call Mr. Scott Greenhalgh, Coordinator at 480-967-1661.

**In Our
Community &
Arizona**

Arts Council for Youth

Online calendar of school concerts: www.artscouncil4youth.org

Yearly music scholarship for seniors

Arts Jam Festival March 1 at Kiwanis Park

Notice to our Readers:

If you ever have educational information you believe would be of value to parents; please send it in for consideration of including it in this newsletter: membership@kyrene.org