

# Kenwood Courier

2013 Penn Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55405

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## A Note from our Principal, Heidi Johnson-

### Hello, November!

We're starting a new month in our academic journey, and there's so much to look forward to! We've completed the Read-a-Thon and are excitedly anticipating the results. The Barn Dance, Spaghetti Dinner, the Book Fair, and the Native American Arts student gallery will help our community shine on November 15. We also have a few days of rest and relaxation with family members to look forward to as we honor the fall harvest.

We are incredibly fortunate to have a school community that embraces our children, our values, our strengths, and our challenges. During this season of gratitude, please know how thankful we are to be working in partnership with you to support our students' growth, imagination, and their connection to our school community. As we celebrate our many blessings, it's also important to remember that members of our school community are struggling. Some of us have been separated from family members due to immigration laws and policies; are unsure about whether there will be enough food to eat over the weekend; are coping with serious medical conditions in the family; have witnessed violence and are working hard to recover from that trauma. Please know that your strengths and your vulnerabilities are welcome here.

### Election Day

Another important November milestone is Election Day, which is tomorrow, November 6. I asked some of our Kenwood students why it's important to vote. Here's what they had to say:

- "It's important to vote so that new people can be in office. There should be more than one opinion when people have to solve problems." Henry B.
- "You should vote even if you think it's not important. What if it was a tie and you didn't vote? You might regret it if you didn't vote." Evelyn B.
- "Voting is good because citizens get to pick what they want. If you didn't vote, someone else would pick the leader, and that wouldn't be fair, would it?" Nell Q.
- "It's important for people to understand who they're voting for – they have to get the back story and research." Emmalina S.
- "You should know if the [candidate] is mean, good, or responsible." DeParis T.
- "Voting is a way to show support for our country. The more people vote, the more likely we have a government that represents our people." Dane K.

Please vote on November 6 and share with your children why this simple and powerful act is essential to our democracy!

### Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Kenwood has been identified as a school that requires targeted support under Minnesota's school accountability system, which the federal government requires under ESSA. This is because three of our student groups (Black students, students receiving special education services, and students who are eligible for free or reduced price lunch) have not, on average, met the state thresholds for academic proficiency and growth in math and reading. This doesn't mean that we don't have students in those student groups who aren't meeting or exceeding grade-level expectations – we absolutely do.

We are required to complete a comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) prior to developing a new school improvement plan that will interrupt the existing disparities between Black and White students, wealthy and poor students, and students who do and do not receive special education services. A comprehensive needs assessment has three main steps: identify successes and challenges on the basis of data from the past five years; identify priority challenges facing the school community; and dig down to the root causes of those challenges. The instructional leadership team, the staff as a whole, the site council, and members of the PTA will participate in the CNA through December. As we explore our priority challenges and their root causes, it can be tempting to jump right to solutions, especially when we're faced with stagnant achievement/opportunity gaps and feel a sense of urgency. We need to truly understand the challenges and understand the factors contributing to those challenges before we can find the right solutions. In the new year, the same stakeholders will engage in identifying evidence-based strategies to address our priority challenges and submitting our plan for installation and implementation of the cycle of improvement. It is our intent to align our school improvement plan and our budget for the 2019-2020 school year.

A couple of questions have emerged in this process:

**Why has Kenwood been identified now?** Under No Child Left Behind, ESSA's predecessor, schools were evaluated on the basis of overall school averages for proficiency and growth. Particular student groups weren't evaluated independently. ESSA requires schools to share averages for each student group (including race, language proficiency, economic status, special education) which creates clarity about how all of our students are doing. Had ESSA been implemented five or ten years ago, Kenwood would likely have received a designation status because of the achievement/opportunity gaps that existed among some student groups even then.

**Does this mean that we can't continue our vision of Smarts+Arts?** No. Arts instruction and integration make Kenwood shine and set us apart from other schools within the district. We now have the opportunity to articulate how the Smarts+Arts vision has a positive and tangible impact on our students' academic proficiency, engagement, and overall love of school. Simple exposure to the arts won't necessarily ensure that all children are reading and doing math at grade level. Arts integration, however, can be a powerful lever for supporting all students' academic growth goals. We'll work on defining how this focus serves all Kenwood children together.

May you experience wonderful connections with loved ones this month. I look forward to seeing you at Kenwood!

Warmly,  
Heidi

## The World Has Need of You

by Ellen Bass

*everything here  
seems to need us*  
—Rainer Maria Rilke

I can hardly imagine it  
as I walk to the lighthouse, feeling the ancient  
prayer of my arms swinging  
in counterpoint to my feet.  
Here I am, suspended  
between the sidewalk and twilight,  
the sky dimming so fast it seems alive.  
What if you felt the invisible  
tug between you and everything?  
A boy on a bicycle rides by,  
his white shirt open, flaring  
behind him like wings.  
It's a hard time to be human. We know too much  
and too little. Does the breeze need us?  
The cliffs? The gulls?  
If you've managed to do one good thing,  
the ocean doesn't care.  
But when Newton's apple fell toward the earth,  
the earth, ever so slightly, fell  
toward the apple.

## Science Fair

Students in grades 3-5 went above and beyond for the Science Fair. This optional project was done outside of school, with students putting in the time and effort to learn about something new. Students could choose between conducting an experiment or researching a topic they were interested in. Topics included "Are Dogs Mouths Cleaner Than Ours?", "What is the Reason for the Seasons?", "Which Dish Soap Makes the Best Bubbles", "Dog Food Preference", "Tooth Decay", and "Crystals" to name just a few. A big "Thank You!" to Mrs. Gregory for organizing this event. Congratulations to the following students for completing their projects:

Green: Casey L., Emmerich P., Maya S., Lena S.

Gregory: Jack B., Ernie H.

Williams: Cade G., Sam J., Connor J., Amelia K., Neko K., Teo M., Magnolia T.

Suedbeck: Mercedes C., Suhani D., Everett H., MC H., Lila M., Freya T.

Adamson: Maddie B., Paloma G., Vanya G., Tommy MR., Spencer S.

Young-Walser: Sarah B., Aja C., Charlie J., Kayla K., Luke M., Carter M.

Lee: Gabe D., Kate G., Jacob H., Dane K., Mitchell N., Paige P., Harolde P., Lilah S.

## A Message from Site Council member Al Rodriguez

¡Se habla Español! Dejeme saber si quiere que le traduzca al Español alguna de las noticias en este periodico. También dejeme saber si tiene alguna pregunta sobre el colegio. ¡Gracias! Por favor contacte a Lori en el correo siguiente.

Please contact Lori Smith and she will forward all requests to Al.  
Correo: [kenwoodcommunitycoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:kenwoodcommunitycoordinator@gmail.com)  
Telefono: 612-668-2778

## Give To The Max: Thursday, November 15th

Give to the Max is a day that focuses on giving to charities and non-profits across the state. You can go to [givemn.org](http://givemn.org) and search for the organization/organizations you'd like to support. Search for Kenwood Community School to be able to give directly to Kenwood PTA. Money raised in the past has been used for ipads, digital cameras, math manipulatives, online learning programs such as Dreambox, a school-wide Science Museum residency, funds for students to attend writer's workshop seminars, and more. Every amount adds up, and together we can support all Kenwood kids.



## Family Activity Night: Thursday, November 15<sup>th</sup>

Come on down to Kenwood on Thursday, November 15th from 4:30-7:00pm for a FREE dinner, the Scholastic Book Fair, and our all school Barn Dance. The Barn Dance is the culmination of our school wide residency with ROOTS, featuring the fifth grade sword dance. It's a great time to kick up your heels and have your children teach you the dances. Kenwood kids love to see their parents dance, so please make a point to dance with your children! We are also pleased to announce that you will be able to view the third annual student art exhibit "Native American Art: Teaching in Present Tense" that evening. Look for the art in the hallway of the lower level on your way down to dinner.

- Scholastic Book Fair 4:30-6:00pm
- FREE dinner 4:45-6:15pm
- All-School Barn Dance 6:00-7:00pm  
(with the 5th grade sword dance)
- Art Exhibit 5:00-7:00pm

Please make sure you are supervising your children during Family Activity Night. Children should be participating in events, not unsupervised roaming the building or on the playground. If you need transportation, please contact Lori Smith at [kenwoodcommunitycoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:kenwoodcommunitycoordinator@gmail.com) or 612-668-2760.

## Art Residency: Native American Art: Teaching in the Present Tense

During art class, each grade level will be introduced to Dakota and Ojibwe art traditions and contemporary practices. Grades 1-4 will learn about and work with accomplished living Ojibwe and Dakota artists from Minnesota, James Autio, Gordon Coons, Aaron Erdrich, Angie Erdrich, and Marlena Myles. This residency is in honor and in celebration of Native American History Month (November). Some of the special activities and art projects are beginning before then. The finished pieces will be displayed beginning November 15<sup>th</sup>, Family Involvement Night. That evening at least three of the artists will be there to see the children again and to meet their families. The artwork will be on display until December 21. Thank you to Kenwood alumnae parents, Angie Erdrich and Heid Erdrich, who have generously given their time, talent and expertise in helping create these experiences. We would also like to thank Kenwood PTA for their financial support of this program.

## Scholastic Book Fair

The book fair is coming! The book fair will be happening at Kenwood School from November 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>. Preview days will be on Monday the 12th and Tuesday the 13th. The book fair will be open for purchases on:

Wednesday, Nov. 14th 8:00am-4:30pm  
Thursday, Nov. 15th 8:00am-2:30pm & 4:45pm-6:00pm

To find out the reading or grade level of a book, or to purchase online, visit [www.scholastic.com/bookfairs](http://www.scholastic.com/bookfairs) from November 4th-November 17th and find our school. All purchases made during that time benefit Kenwood Media Center.

## Calendar

Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup>

Turn in your Read-A-Thon packet

Thursday, November 15<sup>th</sup>

Family Activity Night 4:30-7:00pm

Give to the Max Day

Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup>

Picture Re-Take Day

True Taste Test (in lunch)

Wednesday, November 21<sup>st</sup> – Friday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>

NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Holiday

Tuesday November 27<sup>th</sup>

Chipotle (Hennepin location) - Dining for Dollars 5-9pm

Thursday, November 29<sup>th</sup>

Site Council Meeting