

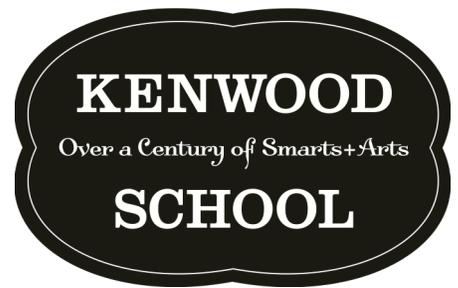
# Kenwood Courier

2013 Penn Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55405

kenwood.mpls.k12.mn.us 612-688-2760

---



Dear Kenwood Families,

Happy New Year! It's an honor to be a part of the Kenwood Community as your Interim Principal. Thank you for taking the time to introduce yourselves to me at arrival and dismissal, in the cafeteria, in your notes and phone calls, and when you happen to pop into the office. I've appreciated our conversations and your perspectives on what makes Kenwood shine.

It's been a joy to have everyone back in school. The students look rested and delighted to be with their friends, and (sometimes secretly) grateful to be following their school routines and rituals again. I hope your vacation was everything that you'd hoped it would be, and that you had ample time to relax with loved ones.

Here's what I've noticed in our first week back in school: our teachers are growing student leaders and creating authentic opportunities for them to problem-solve with peers. The adults in the building guide all children, not just those in their classrooms. Kenwood students are happy to be in school: they walk through the doors of the building holding well-loved books, wearing cool hats, and smiling. We have *so many* parent volunteers who dedicate hours of their time to enrich the lives of the young people we serve. This is just a sampling of the Kenwood story! I'm delighted we have the chance to share this narrative with prospective parents of upcoming kindergartners on Thursday, January 18. The kindergarten team, family liaison Lori Smith, and current parents will spend the evening sharing what they love about our school community to encourage families to choose Kenwood. Let's tell that story as often as we can, not only to prospective parents, but also to each other.

This month we're honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who urged us all to choose a loving path toward justice. I was reminded of his legacy as I read Ms. Sullivan's note to the Kenwood Student Council's families, written after the KSC hosted the Laney Leaders, a student leadership group at Lucy Laney Elementary. She wrote:

*You know when something wonderful is happening right in front of your eyes and you are actually present enough in the moment to appreciate it? That was today! It was so wonderful! Our little KSC was so welcoming and curious. The Laney Leaders were confident and open. Both groups were genuinely interested in the other and the lives of the others.*

The Laney Leaders came to Kenwood upon our student council's invitation to discuss how they're advocating for an improved plan to build a new boulevard next to their school. The existing plan fails to protect the safety interests of the children and families that walk to Lucy Laney and New Horizons Daycare.

I couldn't be prouder to be a part of a learning community that advocates for the safety and well-being of all children, and seeks out the narratives of others for a richer understanding of our city. I know that the students from both schools will remember this day as one of meaningful connection, and perhaps the beginning of a powerful collaboration. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has," said Margaret Mead. Thank you, Kenwood KSC, for modeling curiosity, collaboration, and action.

Over the next several weeks we'll begin to engage in conversations related to creating a school budget that captures our values and priorities. There's a poem that guides me when I face challenging decision-making, written by a Serbian-born poet and humanitarian, Boris Novak. I hope this brings you some peace as well, and perhaps a smile to your face.

– Heidi Johnson

*Decisions* by Boris Novak (tr. Dintinjana)

Between two words  
choose the quieter one.

Between word and silence  
choose listening.

Between two books  
choose the dustier one.

Between the earth and the sky  
choose a bird.

Between two animals  
choose the one who needs you more.

Between two children  
choose both.

Between the lesser and the bigger evil  
choose neither.

Between hope and despair  
choose hope:  
it will be harder to bear.

## Dining for Dollars – The Lowry Wednesday, Jan. 17<sup>th</sup> 4:00-9:00pm

2112 Hennepin Ave - Minneapolis, MN 55405 612.341.2112 [www.thelowryuptown.com](http://www.thelowryuptown.com)

Join us for our next Dining for Dollars event. 20% of all sales will be donated back to Kenwood PTA, which supports our arts programming. No flyer necessary, and call ahead seating is available. Thank you to The Lowry for their continued support!

### Kenwood Auction: Saturday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

Mark your calendars for the annual Kenwood Silent and Live Auction. This adult only event is a great time to socialize with other parents, bid on some wonderful items, and support Kenwood all at the same time. In order to make the auction a success, we need more help. Please consider volunteering to help in one of the areas below. It's a great way to meet new people and make a real difference.

**WANTED: Your time & talents for the Kenwood Auction.** The annual Kenwood Auction is on **Saturday, March 3, but planning starts NOW!** This is the largest fundraiser of the year (and happens to be an awesome reason to party late into the night) and we need your help to make it a success. **Specifically, we need to fill the following positions ASAP:**

- **CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP co-chair/chair** - a flexible role that can be taken on from home, as fits your schedule. Helpful, but not necessary to have some neighborhood/local business contacts/relationships.
- **DATA ENTRY - co-chair** - this committee makes certain everything is entered correctly in the Ready Set Auction system (online database). This is a key role!
- **WINE WALL - chair** - a really fun one! Responsible for securing wine donations from families and local businesses, and setting up and overseeing wine wall the night of the event.

Please contact Cindy White [cdocteurwhite@gmail.com](mailto:cdocteurwhite@gmail.com) or Melanie LaMere [lameremel@yahoo.com](mailto:lameremel@yahoo.com) if you are interested. Get involved in the auction. It's an awesome cause and a great way to meet other parents.

### FAST Testing: January 16th-24th, Grades 1-5

FAST stands for Formative Assessment System for Teachers and was created in 2010 by the University of Minnesota with a goal of making it easier for teachers to collect and use data more effectively. It is used as a district-wide universal screener in math and reading for students in Kindergarten through eighth grade. The purpose of a universal screener is to identify students who could benefit from additional supports as well as to monitor students' growth throughout the school year. Please make sure your student is eating healthy food and getting plenty of rest. It is also important for children to be at school on time and ready to learn. More information about testing is available on the district website.

[http://rea.mpls.k12.mn.us/assessment\\_overview](http://rea.mpls.k12.mn.us/assessment_overview)

### School Start Time: 7:30am

Doors open at 7:15 for students to arrive at school. Please make sure your child has entered the building by 7:25 and is ready to learn by 7:30am. Students that arrive late to school miss out on important instruction and learning. If getting to school on time is difficult for you and your family, please contact school social worker Amanda Talan at [amanda.talan@mpls.k12.mn.us](mailto:amanda.talan@mpls.k12.mn.us) or 612-668-2784.

### District News

#### School Year Date Change

The Minneapolis Board of Education voted to eliminate the last two days of the current school year. The last day for students will now be Friday, June 8, 2018. There were a variety of reasons that went into that decision including the fact that MPS currently exceeds the state mandated number of school days, the number of absences that occur in June, the increase in temperatures during June, and feedback from the recent budget values survey. Please visit the district website, <http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/>, for additional updates and resources.

#### MPS Budget Discussions

How can Minneapolis Public Schools balance our budget? By focusing on what counts and joining with families and our Minneapolis community. Please join one of the community discussions in February to discuss why MPS is recommending changes, how they may affect learning communities, and what can be done to make changes easier. Visit the district website for more information. [http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/community\\_discussions.html](http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/community_discussions.html)

### Calendar

Tuesday, January 16 7:30 – 8:00am  
Meet and Greet with Heidi Johnson

Wednesday, January 17 4:00 – 9:00pm  
Dining for Dollars – The Lowry

Thursday, January 18 6:00 – 7:45pm  
Prospective Parent Night

Friday, January 19 7:45am  
Grade 5 Spelling Bee

Thursday, January 25 & Friday, January 26  
NO SCHOOL

Friday, February 2 7:45am  
Choir Concert (Grades 3, 4, & 5)

Friday, February 16 & Monday February 19  
NO SCHOOL