

KES Town Hall Meeting - Thursday, January 21st

Updates:

Two big focuses: literacy and social emotional

Dyslexia training with staff in December - hit on the core of reading instruction. The next step is two online modules from the district. There will be a focus on how the brain works to get to a point of proficiency in reading. Our next steps is to ask how things will look different - will it be tier I instruction/interventions with students struggling.

Would parents be interested if we did a professional development on the science of reading, like a Parent Academy of sorts? (parents respond in the chat) This could build up the understanding of the why behind the what. It's important to know why we're doing something before we choose how we will deliver instruction.

As a school, we have seen less of a slide in literacy than in math. One thing UCPS is going to focus on is the discrepancy in being on grade level in math. UCPS is offering tutoring for math. They want as much virtual tutoring as possible but elementary principals are pushing back on that because we know students see the greatest gains face-to-face.

If there was tutoring offered in the school, when should that take place? During the day/after school/Saturday morning? [Link to survey](#)

Last year, about this time, we had plans for a Strategic Planning Saturday. It would have been about three hours long to focus and brainstorm as a whole school community. Where are we/define new school vision/establish a mission statement/identify our core values.

Site based team - grade level chairs and two parents get together to talk about [School Improvement Plan](#).

EOGs will all be computer-based tests this year. All students will have to take the test in the building. UCPS is requesting there be no minimum number of students from each building that need to take it and that there won't be accountability with growth like in past years.

Tests taken:

ELA EOG: 3rd-5th

Math EOG: 3rd-5th

Science EOG: 5th

Social emotional learning: We are doing our morning meetings. We have more ideas but require more space. Talked about buddy classrooms/sensory spaces/groups set up with Department of Social Services counselors. For now, Ms. Hamilton is doing the best she can to reach out to kids in need. We can't have the therapy dogs in the building again for now but hope to have them back in the future.

Questions from Families:

Is there a date set for 5th grade graduation? There is a committee set up but we are waiting to see what will be allowed.

For tutoring, can it be fun, play-based activities? The district does have a curriculum and they are looking at research-based plans.

Will there ever be a full virtual day on Friday (student finishes very quickly)? We are trying to protect Friday. Teachers are with kids all day M-Th. Teachers are doing a lot of their planning and meetings on Fridays.

Does KES offer discussion/workshops on social media/online use? Eric Traceski from the US Secret Service usually talks about cyberbullying with 3rd graders. Ms. Hamilton is working to schedule virtual lessons for 3rd graders in the month of March. Mrs. Taylor, our Media Coordinator, usually delivers instruction on research strategies and also digital citizenship to 4th and 5th grade each year and has just started that back up. Officer Kevin also works with 5th graders through the DARE program and mentions internet safety. We can definitely do more with the heavy focus on technology our students are experiencing. Advice for those struggling with kids and technology: if you can establish no group chats (that's where the trouble usually comes from). We are looking at scheduling a Parent Academy that educates parents on the latest trends in technology among young people and how to deal with it.

Will kids go back to eating in the cafeteria? Our cafeteria is now reorganized so that kids can safely distance so they can get their food. Classroom supplies are also temporarily stored there because of space issues. We've tried to think about staggering classes coming in but with having to work out so many different factors, it's hard to make a plan.

Will the Living Tree STEAM fundraiser ever come back? District went away from Donors Choose and other fundraising platforms and used Living Tree for more accountability of where resources went. Boosterthon's focus was STEAM. We funded our STEAM lab from the Boosterthon! We are waiting on 3D printers to round out our vision. Unfortunately, because of the way we are doing specials, we are debating whether it's conducive to tap into resources now or wait until fall. For this year's fundraiser we are focusing on using funds for literacy instruction and also for making changes to the media center.

Can students have picnic lunches once the weather gets nicer? Yes, that may be an option in the spring.

Does the school use Teachers' College? Yes, that's what the state leans into and most teachers are trained using TC. Slowly, they are making a change to that. As the science of reading has

come into focus, we are trying to systemically think of our scope and sequence and the foundational skills they need.

Is homework coming back? Yes, we said after winter break teachers could assign this. Encourage reading at home and make it fun.

(Comment) Car rider is getting better. Mrs. Williams said we shaved five minutes off of arrival time.

Is it better to come later at dismissal time? We are usually done by 2:35pm. There are a good number of students on buses. We encourage you to have your children take the bus.

Will we have any NC Check Ins this year? No, they are optional. Why take that time to test them when we can see how they're growing in other ways. There's not enough useful information from the check ins that we're not already getting and we need every possible day for instruction.

Last minute thought from Mr. Vaughn: If we can get parent donated snacks, we can get munchie Monday snack cart back (individually packaged).