

## **Kyrene Parent Network November 2007 Highlights**

**Tutoring options** in our schools and community was presented, with special guests Sunita Sinha, Director of Mathnasium in Awatukee, and Amanda Cook, Director of Huntington Learning Center, also in Awatukee. Please find attached a handout with a list of possible options for tutoring that was provided to guests. These are simply a list of some tutoring options for parents and KPN doesn't recommend one over the other.

KPN was also privileged to have Dr. Schauer, Superintendent of Kyrene give a presentation on the **Middle School Model**. A brief history, a summary of results from the first and second year evaluations, along with an outline of what will be measured as the third year of this model comes to an end, was included in this presentation. (For more information on the first two evaluations, look under "Kyrene" on KPN's website: [www.kyreneparent.org](http://www.kyreneparent.org)) Here is a brief summary of Year 3 objectives that will be measured:

1. Increase % of proficient students & reduce % of novice in Reading, Writing & Math.
2. Reduce variability in academic achievement among schools (% of meeting/exceeding, proficient, novice)
3. Other Academic Indicators
  - Increase % from Meets to Exceeds and from Falling Behind to Approaching
  - Look at high school placement

### Data Sources for #1-3

- AIMS and MSS/CASS for 2005/2006, 2006/2007, 2007/2008
- High School transcripts

4. Maintain or reduce # of disciplinary referrals

Data Source: District discipline records for class and passing to class

5. Maintain high level of teacher professional satisfaction

Data Source: On-line teacher survey (April 2006, April 2008)

Finally, **a couple questions were handed in by our guests at the end of the meeting.**

We would like to thank Kyrene School District for assisting KPN in answering these:

**Question/Comment #1: Suggested topic for future meeting: How can parents successfully advocate for foreign language and/or instrumental (orchestra or band) in the Elementary schools?**

There are several ways parents can advocate for subjects such as these; however it's important to keep in mind, schools' budget constraints along with state and federal regulations dictate priorities in decisions. We welcome ideas from the community on providing quality education for our students and we are regularly exploring ideas for ensuring that this is the end result.

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1) Discussing ideas or suggestions with the school principal or attending Site Council and PTO/PTA meetings to discuss ideas is the way many parents provide their suggestions, ideas and concerns. Principals then can bring these to their regular district-wide meetings for further discussion and consideration as appropriate.

2) Another option for receiving input from parents is to participate in a district committee. There are many opportunities to participate in ongoing and finite district work and we welcome parental and community involvement. Normally, we advertise when there are openings, but if a parent really has an interest in participating, they should contact either their principal or the District office (contact: Nancy Dudenhoefer, Communications Program Supervisor, extension 4175) and we will help interested people make the right connections. We are also looking for any partnerships, grants and other possibilities that would have a minimal impact on scarce district financial resources. For example, the Strings Program, a partnership with ASU and Tempe Union, -provides 4th through 6th grade Kyrene students with after-school instruction for orchestra and is a great enrichment opportunity for students from identified schools at no additional cost to the district.

3) Some other ways parents may provide their input is to attend community forums when offered, send a note to their principal or our District office, or attend a board meeting where sometimes there is an opportunity before or after the meeting to talk directly with a school or district administrator.

We understand the importance of instruction in foreign language, music and all subjects. Unfortunately, time and money doesn't always permit what we all would like to see today in education. The best use of peoples' time might be on reaching out to the legislature asking for increased, consistent funding for schools (instead of the mad scramble every year at the last minute) and an improved school funding formula (currently being worked on by ABEC and others).

**Question/Comment #2: What to do when you know your child's teacher is not using the districts' adopted curriculum?**

Speaking with the teacher would be the first step and often times this discussion will help create better understanding about what is being taught and why. The next step would be to contact the school principal. Principals know that teaching the Kyrene curriculum is an expectation for all teachers and routinely conduct regular classroom visits so they have a good understanding of what is going on in each classroom. However, if the curriculum isn't being followed and the principal is not addressing the situation, the best thing to do is to contact Dr. Gina Taylor, who is in charge of Instructional Services, at 480-783-4107 or [gtaylo@kyrene.org](mailto:gtaylo@kyrene.org). We expect the curriculum to be taught in all areas regardless of what is tested by AIMS.

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