

# Kennedy PTO - February Meeting Minutes

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February 24, 2026, 6:30-7:30 PM, Kennedy School Library

## 6:30 Welcome & Introductions

1. Reach us at [JFKcougarsPTO@gmail.com](mailto:JFKcougarsPTO@gmail.com)
2. All Kennedy family members, staff, and friends of the school are part of the PTO
3. Working on the name change: **Kennedy Families & Friends**

## The PTO's work at Kennedy

1. We **host free family events** to help students and their families feel like they are part of the school community.
  - Family Arts Night on Tuesday, March 10, 6-8pm
2. We **support school staff** with grants, meals, appreciation days, and more.
  - Sign up to donate food for staff meal at conferences next Monday 3/2
3. We **serve families** by hosting guest speakers at our monthly meetings, free community meals, and supplying gift cards for the social workers to distribute.
  - 3/31 Boundary review process
  - 4/28 Helping children navigate anxiety
4. We **advocate for school needs** with the district or school board.
  - 39 written comments in support of need-based allocation model yesterday
5. We **fundraise** in order to be able to do all those things!
  - \$1698 earned at Culver's Share Night last week

## Upcoming events and how you can help

1. Teacher Appreciation Week, May 4-8
  - a. Parents working on plans for the week - if you're interested in helping, please contact the PTO.
2. Kennedy Fun Run - May 15 (rain date May 22)
  - a. Suggestions for businesses to ask for sponsorships?
  - b. Help with recruiting sponsors
    - i. If you are aware of any businesses that may be sponsors, please contact to find out if they are interested
3. Help with planning the end of the year picnic & 60th anniversary celebration
  - a. If interested in helping, please contact PTO

## 6:35 Christian Bonner, Kennedy Music Teacher, [cabonner@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:cabonner@madison.k12.wi.us)

1. Music and Arts Education at Kennedy
2. Four staff in the Fine Arts team at Kennedy
3. March is Youth Art Month and Music in our Schools Month
4. Review of art opportunities happening at Kennedy
5. Review of music opportunities at Kennedy
  - a. Some include:

- i. UW students doing practicums and student teaching at Kennedy
- ii. Had a rapper from Milwaukee at the school today (February 24)
- iii. 4th grade does WI Youth Orchestra Concert
- iv. Opera for the young will happen in 2026
- v. 2nd grade and 4th grade concerts happening in 2026
- vi. WI Arts Celebration Project \$1300 grant - First teacher in the district to earn it

**6:50 Vanessa Kent**, Kennedy Principal, [vskent@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:vskent@madison.k12.wi.us)

Kennedy updates & how the school is working to address the areas for improvement in the latest state school report card

1. **MTSS - Multi-tiered systems of supports overview**
  - a. Reviewed tiers 1-3 for academics and social and emotional

**7:05 Dr. Anu Ebbe**, MMSD Associate Superintendent for LaFollette Attendance Area, [aebbe@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:aebbe@madison.k12.wi.us) How MMSD is supporting the school in addressing the areas for improvement in the latest state school report card

Shawn Bielmeier - Assistant Director of Student Services also attended.

1. Dr. Ebbe has worked in MMSD for 20+ years, supports LaFollette feeder pattern and Office of Youth Reengagement
  2. High Level Overview of Support at Kennedy
    - a. Dr. Ebbe's role is to support principals
    - b. Sees change in Kennedy - fewer kids in the hallways
    - c. Principals can fill out support requests
      - i. How resources could be better used around the school
      - ii. Review what is happening that is giving data in state report card, culture and climate, and exams
      - iii. Universal systems coaching around what the team at Kennedy asked for
    - d. Explained supports that the school requested
      - i. Coaching
        1. Kennedy has one full-time program support teacher
          - a. Has an experienced program support teacher coming in to assist as well
1. For the upcoming year, district is following AGR class sizes - Kennedy has smaller class sizes
 

Class sizes - 16.6 for Kindergarten, 16.6 First Grade, and 20.5 second grade

The other schools with smaller class sizes are Title 1 schools
2. Discussion around what needs-based models are
3. During workbook process, work with principals to determine needs

4. Reviewed MTSS services provided by the District
5. Problem is more than what can be done in school, need strong mental health supports from the County - met with PHMDC and Alder Field, families need wrap-around services - an important piece of what needs to be done at Kennedy
  - a. Advocate for increased funding
  - b. Advocacy from county for mental health support
  - c. Momentum to build a community center near Kennedy

**7:20 Time for questions**

1. Can other pots of money be used to fund special education?
  - a. Answer: They already do that
2. What about kids that are advanced that aren't getting the support they need?
  - a. Need to look at data through that lens
3. What ideas does the district or resources to address teacher burnout?
  - a. Need to continue to leverage community schools resources, potential for tutoring opportunities at Kennedy
4. What can be done now to address the learning loss?
  - a. Need to be connecting with community resources to support families
5. What is the plan for Kennedy? How do we know if the plan is working?
  - a. At central office they look at plans and adjust as needed