Kennedy Families & Friends - Principal's Welcome!

September 22, 2026, 6:30-7:30 PM, Kennedy Cafeteria

Welcome & Introductions

1. Formerly known as PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization)
2. Reach us at *KennedyFamiliesFriends@gmail.com*
3. Sign up for the KFF mailing list at our website:

KFF'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.
2. We support school staff with grants, meals, appreciation days, and more.
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.
4. We advocate for school needs with the district or school board.
5. We fundraise in order to be able to do all that!
    a. Bucky Books – $35 each, orders accepted through Nov. 1 →

Seeking volunteers - can you help? Please contact KFF if interested in volunteering.

1. Social media
2. Event planning
3. Staff appreciation
4. Gardening
5. Outdoor Education / Nature Play committee
6. Grants:
    a. Help with KFF applying for grants
    b. Review classroom grant applications from teachers

Welcome to our Principals!

Kennedy Principal **Sarah Larson** and Assistant Principal **Darlinne Kambwa**

smlarson@madison.k12.wi.us *dtkambwabell@madison.k12.wi.us*

1. About our school & staff
    a. Principals
        i. Principal Larson for 13 years at Ada Deer, classroom and reading specialist experience. Family is east siders, all kids through MMSD.
            1. Enjoy working with students and families
        ii. Assistant Principal Kambwa, 16th year in MMSD working in special ed, at Mendota for 8 years
            1. Eastsider, lived on east side majority of life
            2. Intentionally work at schools that some consider hard to serve
    b. Teacher Teams
    c. New Staff

2. Our work for 2026-2027
    a. Data for the new school year
        i. Principal Larson shared literacy data thus far this year
        ii. Goal is for kids to enjoy reading and reading at grade level
        iii. Want to work with families to have kids attend school every day
        iv. Breakfast and Lunch free for all students
            1. Highest in district for breakfast
            2. Encourage kids to take food
                a. Can take 3 things or 2 things and a milk and it counts
                b. At 64%, need to be at 70%
    b. School Improvement Plan
        i. District goals
            1. On track to graduate
            2. District is a place where families thrive
            3. African American students and youth thrive
        ii. More on goals
            1. Standards based curriculum
                i. Meet with teacher teams weekly
                b. Working on clear learning targets, academic protocols, co-planning, and looking at data
            2. Want to create a school students love coming to
                a. Using development designs
            3. Help African American students succeed
                a. Creating welcoming environments
    c. Supports
        i. Title 1 Program
            1. Get $410,000 each year to support needs of building
                a. Increase staffing
                b. EL Coaching
                c. Tools for teaching
                d. Conferences for adult learning to support instruction
                e. Developmental designs training
        ii. Community Schools Program
            1. Different staff based on Community Schools framework
            2. Provides supports to community

3. Advocacy opportunities
    a. Building for the future upcoming events - coming back for version 2
        i. Sessions available here: https://www.madison.k12.wi.us/about/building-for-the-future-boundary-review
    b. Increase funding from the legislature
    c. Increased mental health supports
    d. Community Center

In rebuilding year, want to focus on Kennedy, will let KFF know if there are any advocacy needs

Discussion around behavior

Enrollment is down, will staffing go down? Have heard that Kennedy is not being looked at this year.

Suggestion to have improved signage for families.