



**KENNETT  
CONSOLIDATED  
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**LEARN. APPLY. ACHIEVE.**



## Paving the Way for a Future in STEM

The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program offered in the Kennett Consolidated School District is an alternative science curriculum that gives students the opportunity to stand out as they move towards college and choosing a career. Exposing children to STEM-oriented, hands-on training early in their education facilitates critical thinking, increases science literacy, and empowers the next generation of innovators. It has been predicted that the fastest growing occupations in the next decade will require significant mathematics or science preparation. However, there is another reason to introduce more students to this field. Currently, there is a lack of diversity among students entering STEM educational programs and careers. By introducing all students to the basic principles of these fields, the Kennett Consolidated School District takes steps to address these challenges.

The program is offered from kindergarten through twelfth grade in varying formats. At the elementary level, each grade focuses on a different discipline or area of study. Kindergartners start in the spring with a voluntary after-school program run through Project Lead the Way, a nonprofit organization that provides a transformative learning experience for K-12 students and teachers across the United States. Students who participate at the kindergarten level are introduced to the concept of force.

For an hour and a half each week, students create simple machines, which they use to explore the science behind any force that pushes or pulls.

First and second grade students use prisms to study the properties of light and sound. Third grade students participate in a project designed to take their plans from paper to product. Using a software called Canvas, the students design and then build a network of wedges, pulleys, and other simple machines with the goal of capturing a tiger. Fourth grade students explore the science of flight using gliders. They experiment with different wing and tail shapes to maximize the distance of their gliders' flight.

Fifth grade students are invited to attend a one-week camp at the end of the school year where they create a robot tasked with completing an obstacle course. Students of all experience levels can participate, and the week ends with a showcase where parents can watch alongside the students as their robots navigate the course.

At Kennett Middle School, each student receives one full quarter of STEM-oriented learning. Students use the same software that engineers use to explore concepts of flight, robotics, and physics. These exploratory courses are pro-

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**WINTER  
2017**

## Mini-THON Raises \$45,000

Approximately 300 Kennett High School students stayed on their feet from 8 p.m. Friday, February 24, to 6 a.m. Saturday morning for Mini-THON, an event to raise money for the Four Diamonds Fund to benefit pediatric cancer research and families whose children are battling the disease.

Hosted by the high school's Humanitarian Club, the 2nd Kennett High School Mini-THON was once again a huge success. Due to students' hard work and the kindness of the Kennett community, they raised \$45,307, more than tripling the amount raised last year.

Modeled after Penn State's Dance Marathon (THON), Kennett High School's Mini-THON featured ten hours packed with fun activities, music, and food for participants. Two special programs included the Community Hours session, which invited community members to experience the event, and the Luminary Walk, where students and community members could light lanterns and place them around the track in memory of a loved one. Throughout the night students enjoyed dancing, karaoke, yoga, dodgeball, and music performances.



*Kennett High School sophomores (from left) Rachel Hyzny, Julia Bulgarelli, Kyle Robertson, Matt Giovannini, and Connor Hollick had a great time helping to raise money to support the Four Diamonds Fund.*

Kennett, we're teaming up to help families with children battling the disease."

Faculty advisors for the event are Mr. Tom Brientnall, social studies teacher; Ms. Lisa Teixeira, KHS librarian and Humanitarian Club moderator; and Mrs. Erin McDonnell-Jones. Student organizers were led by senior event chair Austin Maxwell, along with junior co-chairs Erin Duffy and Anna Wilson, and Humanitarian Club seniors Molly Adelman, Michael Bellino, and Jackie Tucker.

Ms. Teixeira, as well as the entire Mini-THON team, would like to thank all of the event's sponsors, "We could not have been this successful without the financial support of the Kennett business community."

Don't worry if you missed the event! There are still fundraising events happening throughout the year. Currently, you can enter multiple raffles including a chance to win a car! Visit [www.khsminithon.org](http://www.khsminithon.org) for more information on how you can become involved and join the fight against childhood cancer.

Kennett High School senior and Mini-THON event chair Austin Maxwell said, "Cancer kills more children in the US than any other disease. And, only 4% of cancer research dollars go toward the study of childhood cancers. So, here at

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# Students Read Across the World at 30th Annual Friday Night Live

Imagine walking into Greenwood Elementary School's gymnasium on a Friday evening and seeing 110 students. No, they weren't there for a sporting event or a dance, they were there to read across the world during Greenwood Elementary School's 30th Annual Friday Night Live, an overnight celebration of reading.

In this tradition that has continued for 30 years, Friday Night Live invites Greenwood Elementary School's entire fifth grade class to spend the night at the school and complete a challenge to read as many pages as possible. This year's theme was "Read Across the World." Students were split up into groups and given a country to represent.

The night began with an opening ceremony that celebrated the 30-year milestone. Kennett Consolidated School District Superintendent Dr. Barry Tomasetti and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Michael Barber were in attendance, and each said a few words to commemorate the event. The opening ceremonies concluded with a special sing along led by Greenwood Elementary School special education teacher Mr. David Bickel who had almost every fifth grade student singing along to catchy tunes.

After the opening ceremonies, students settled onto mats and sleeping bags and began their reading sessions. Students worked together to track the pages they read as a group. At the end of the night, each page read was converted into miles traveled.

In between reading sessions, students traveled around the school and participated in exciting reading games such as a Spelling Relay and a game of Password. They also did some dancing with former Greenwood Elementary School instructional assistant Ms. Kelly Garrahan.

At 11:00, the students settled into their sleeping bags and listened to Friday Night Live storyteller Ms. Deborah Pieri, their eyes glued to her.

After the enchanting story, the girls and boys separated to get ready for bed. But what good slumber party doesn't include a pillow fight? Both the boys and girls enjoyed exciting pillow fights which resulted in the girls planning a "secret attack" on the boys' sleeping quarters—a giant pillow fight that the students will surely never forget.

Lights were out by 1:00 with everyone sound asleep dreaming of the stories they'd read and the fun they'd had.

"While Friday Night Live has evolved over the years, reading has remained the main focus. The greatest aspect of the event, however, is seeing our fifth grade students come together and begin to function as a family," says Greenwood Elementary School fifth grade teacher Mrs. Elizabeth Weaver. "Friday Night Live is truly a team building experience in which the students and



teachers alike bond, setting the tone for the rest of the school year."

Together, the students read more than 5,000 pages, completing their challenge to read across the world!

Greenwood Elementary School teachers and students would like to thank Principal Dr. Tracey Marino for her continued support, for without her this event would not be possible. Showing her dedication to her students and staff, Dr. Marino stayed for the entire event, accompanied by her two dogs, Jem and Scout. Greenwood Elementary School would also like to thank all of the dedicated parents and community members who continue to support Friday Night Live year after year.

## Regardless of Shell Color, We Are All the Same

In remembrance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, students at the Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center learned an important lesson about diversity.

To help her students understand diversity, Ms. Jennifer Daveler paired her students up. Each pair was given two eggs, one white and one brown. Together, the class analyzed the eggs and discussed what differences they noticed. Students commented on the different colors of the eggs but noted that they were similar in size and

shape. Then Ms. Daveler instructed her students to crack each of the eggs open and explain what they saw. To their surprise, both eggs had clear whites and yellow yolks inside—and were exactly the same.

Kindergarten student Karli MacNamara was amazed by the results, "The eggs are different on the outside, but on the inside they are the same—just like us!"

Students concluded by recording their observations and

writing a sentence about the activity.

"Miss Daveler did an "egg-cellent" job facilitating a discussion about diversity that was developmentally and age appropriate for our students," said Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center principal Mrs. April Reynolds. "Our teachers and students never cease to amaze me!"

### DISTRICT DIRECTORY

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For questions or comments email us at PR@KCSD.org

# CARE Room Introduces Careers Through Play

If you ask kindergarten students “What do you want to be when you grow up?,” the list will be limited only by their imaginations. From doctors and police officers, ninjas to princesses, they are full of ambition. Over time, however, the once limitless list will narrow, influenced largely by what careers the students encountered—or not—through their families, education, and the media. In an effort to increase career awareness, Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center is changing the way students learn about careers with the CARE Room.

Standing for “Community, Activities, Relationships, and Experience,” the CARE Room immerses students in a profession through one of its seven career stations. Students can become a doctor or a nurse at the hospital station complete with white coats and medical kits; a veterinarian at the veterinary clinic looking after all of the stuffed animals; an engineer or a construction worker at the construction zone complete with building blocks, hard hats, and sandbox; a chef or grocery store clerk at the restaurant/market station complete with a working cash register and kitchen; a teacher or professor at the classroom station with a whiteboard, desks, and teaching materials; or a postal worker at the post office where students can write, mail, and deliver letters to their teachers and friends.

This unique learning opportunity was designed by Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center’s guidance counselor Mrs. Kourtney Phillips. Inspired by the desire to help students develop career awareness and an understanding of their

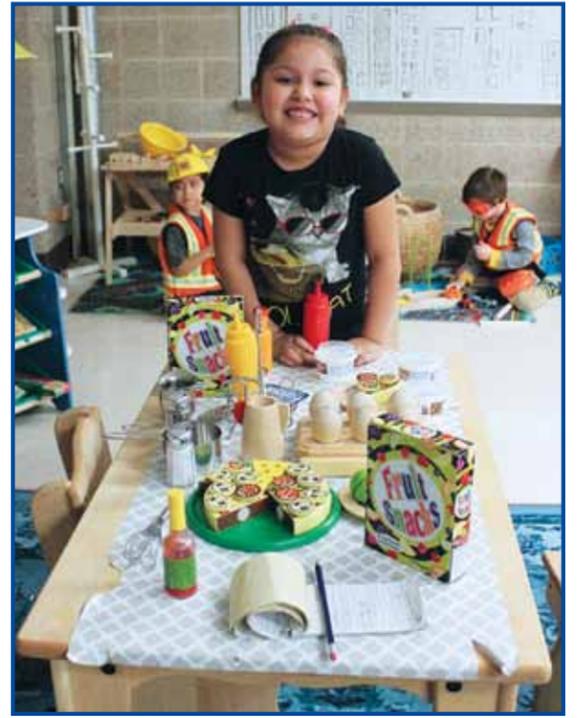
interests, Mrs. Phillips received a grant from the Kennett Education Foundation to turn her vision into reality.

“When I was planning the room, I was reading some articles about play. The article ‘The Joyful, Illiterate Kindergartners of Finland’ provided some insight into the topic,” says Mrs. Phillips. “One of the individuals interviewed in the article, Arja-Sisko Holappa, shared an old Finnish saying: ‘Those things you learn without joy you will forget easily.’ My hope is that this room will remind us of the value of play and provide students with an enjoyable hands-on learning experience. In the CARE Room, students have the opportunity to develop their academic, social, and problem solving skills as well as engage in meaningful exploration of careers all through good old-fashioned play!”

Even though the CARE Room is new, teachers have seen profound growth in their students. From improving cooperation and socialization skills to building self-confidence and new friendships, the skills students learn here help them develop and acquire positive attitudes toward school, self, peers, social groups, careers, and family.

“I have noticed that my English Language Learners really open up and come out of their ‘shells’ while playing in the CARE Room,” says Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center teacher Mrs. Kathy Drago. “It is a wonderful place!”

It’s safe to say that the entire Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center family is excited to continue playing and growing together in the CARE Room.



*Yairet Zavala Martinez is all smiles as she plays in the restaurant station of the CARE Room.*

# Local Author Inspires Students to Share Stories

Some are tall, others short. Some are interested in sports, others music. Some have grown up in Pennsylvania, others are from different countries. No matter where they come from or what they look like, all are Kennett High School students with incredible stories to tell.

This year, local author Mr. Mark Lyons inspired students to share their stories through a multisession, interactive storytelling workshop. Author of *Espejos y Ventanas/Mirrors and Windows: Oral Histories of Mexican Farmworkers and the Families*, Mr. Lyons is passionate about cultivating students’ interests in storytelling and writing, empowering them to share their stories with the world.

So when Mrs. Kelly Virgin reached out to Mr. Lyons about visiting her classes who read his book each year, he jumped at the chance. With assistance from a Kennett Education Foundation grant, Mr. Lyons came to Kennett High School several times to facilitate storytelling workshops, helping students craft and record their own digital stories. Digital stories are multimedia movies that combine photographs, video, sound, music, text, and a narrative voice. With the help of Mrs. Virgin and Mr. Lyons, students created short first-person video narratives by combining their recorded voices to tell their stories accompanied by still and moving images.

“We all have important stories to tell,” says Mr. Lyons. “For teens, it can be hard for them to recognize that their stories are important. I hope that, through our collaboration, they begin to reflect on their own stories and realize they truly do have important stories to tell.”

Students ended the project with an open house and invited Mr. Lyons and Kennett High School students, staff, and administration to listen to all 43 stories and chat with their creators.

Each story was magnificent and unique. From heartache to happiness, the stories followed each student’s most cherished or memorable experience. Some students shared touching personal stories of overcoming obstacles, while others told heartwarming stories about their best friends. It was not uncommon to listen to one story with tears filling your eyes and then listen to another with a smile appearing across your face.

Ninth-grade student Anthony Rodriguez shared his personal experience during the latest presidential election, comparing it to a basketball game. He used vibrant imagery to engage his audience during his digital story titled Basketball in Politics.

Anthony stated, “You can’t change the referee’s mind about a shot. You can yell, curse, or even attack the referee, but you still can’t change anything. But there is one thing you can change—your heart about the situation. So if your team loses, it is not the end. There are many seasons to come after this, so don’t lose hope.”

Anthony explained that it was difficult to share his personal feelings at first, but he enjoyed the project. “I am a lot more confident in my writing and storytelling now. I am



*Local author Mr. Mark Lyons surrounded by some of the high school students who took part in his storytelling workshop.*

very thankful for that!”

His classmate, ninth-grade student Monserrat Bernal, also has gained confidence in her writing and storytelling skills. “I enjoyed writing about my family and sharing our story. I will continue to write and share stories.”

“There is something magical about storytelling,” says Mr. Lyons, and we couldn’t agree more.

The Kennett Consolidated School District would like to thank Mrs. Virgin, Mr. Lyons, and the Kennett Education Foundation for giving students this opportunity.

# Musicians Selected for Region Festivals

Six incredibly talented Kennett High School musicians have been selected by audition to participate in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) Region VI Festival, February 23-25 at Strath Haven High School.

Prior to participating in the Region VI Festival (from left) junior Jimmy Rosser (tenor), junior Abbie Duckworth (alto), sophomore Mirella Petrillo (alto), senior Yvonna Liszewski (alto), junior Arielle Smith (soprano), and senior Zach Hrenko (bass) had been selected by audition to participate in the PMEA District 12 Chorus.

District 12 includes Chester and Delaware counties and is undeniably one of the most competitive in the state,

and this is the first time in recent memory that all musicians who were selected for District Chorus went on to perform at the Region level.

“The students have been very professional as they prepared for their auditions and performances,” said Ms. Katie Soukup, the choral director at Kennett High School. “Performing at this level is an honor, and I couldn’t be more proud of each of them.”



# Bancroft Elementary School Hosts Sixth Annual Guest Reader Day

In honor of American Education Week, Bancroft Elementary School continued its tradition of hosting a Guest Reader Day. The much anticipated event invited 25 local community members, ranging from firefighters and police officers to business owners and educators, to read their favorite books aloud to students. This yearly event is intended to expose students to the pleasures of reading, present positive community role models, and create relationships in a fun, meaningful way.

The guest readers celebrated their love for reading by thoughtfully selecting one or two books to read aloud to one of Bancroft Elementary School's classrooms. Each class, from first through fifth grade, prepared questions for the guests resulting in lively discussions.

"The Bancroft Elementary School Guest Reader Event is one of my favorite school events of the year," says

Kennett Consolidated School District School Board member Mrs. Heather Schaen. "It is wonderful to see so many community members interested and invested in our schools. As a former educator, I relish the opportunity to get back in the classroom to see the wide-eyed wonder and enthusiasm. I am never sure who enjoys the day more — the students or the community members!"

Bancroft Elementary School students agreed that there is something truly powerful about a policeman, firefighter, and business owner sharing with students the love for reading.



Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Michael Barber read *The Frog Prince, Continued* by Jon Scieszka to a class at Bancroft Elementary School.

## Elementary School Students Inspire Others

The elementary years are a time when students begin to develop their academic self-concept and their feelings of competence and confidence as learners. They are also beginning to develop decision-making, communicating, and life skills, as well as character values and attitudes toward school, self, peers, social groups, and family. Elementary teachers play a vital role in this process. What children learn and experience during their early years can shape their views of themselves and the world.

At New Garden Elementary School, the staff is committed to creating a culture of respect and kindness in order to ensure that students have opportunities to further their academic, social, and emotional development in a safe, secure, and engaging learning environment. From schoolwide fundraisers to inspirational morning announcements, the staff, led by Principal Susan McArdle, is dedicated to creating an environment that encourages students to be the best they can be.

New Garden Elementary School welcomed a new addition this year - a small message board was placed in the front lobby with a daily inspirational quote to challenge students to think deeper, reflect on their personal blessings, or encourage laughter or a smile.

Fifth grade teacher Mr. Matthew Jones has seen the resulting inspiration firsthand.

"New Garden Elementary School's fifth grade class is challenged to set an example of how to act for the younger grades, their peers, and, most importantly, their friends. In an effort to support our students, we have classroom discussions about taking ownership of learning and making sure to recognize important things," says Mr. Jones. "I was inspired to hear students state that they would like the opportunity to inspire other students by writing the message on Mrs. McArdle's message board."

Delighted to hear that her students were inspired to help others, Mrs. McArdle gladly handed over message board duties. Under Mr. Jones's guidance, the students prepared quotes and placed them in a binder. At the end of the day, Mr. Jones randomly selects a quote from the binder, and the student selected gets to write his or her quote on the message board.

Students started with quotes like "Play like a champion today" and "Do or do not; there is no try." Soon students began selecting even more insightful quotes, such as "If your dreams don't scare you, you are not dreaming big

enough" and "Happiness is when you stop comparing yourself to others."

Fifth grade student Hayley Kuffel says, "The message board is inspirational. It can make someone's day and is fun to write on!"

Her classmate Anahi Lopez adds, "I like that we write inspirational quotes to lighten up other students' days. It's also fun to get to read my classmates' quotes to inspire us to try harder each and every day."

The desire to help inspire other students has already cascaded to the third and fourth grades. Anyone in the entire school can now submit quotes by simply visiting Mr. Jones at the end of the day.

"The goal of the message board was to foster a conversation about how their work, skills, and actions can help to inspire others," says Mr. Jones. "This is why we have Miss Katherine Skopowski's amazing art hanging in the halls, Mrs. Kristi Pizzini's dedicated readers' pictures displayed proudly, and a daily quote inspiring the students. Now the students' quotes are inspiring the staff. As we always say, 'Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.'"

## CrossFit Kids Promotes Fitness & Health

You don't have to frequent a gym to have heard of the fitness regimen CrossFit. Developed by Greg Glassman, CrossFit consists of constantly varied functional movements performed at high intensity. According to CrossFit.com, these movements reflect the best aspects of gymnastics, weightlifting, running, rowing, and more - the core movements of life.

Mrs. Leigh Castle, Bancroft Elementary School's physical education teacher, is a certified level 1 CrossFit coach for adults and children. As a way to inspire her students and instill a love of fitness and healthy habits, she has introduced CrossFit Kids to her students.

"The overall goal of CrossFit Kids is to teach kids how to move properly," Mrs. Castle explains. "The functional movements, like squatting and pressing overhead, involve exercises that are fundamental to all things that kids do when they play—like pull, push, run, throw, climb, lift, and jump."

CrossFit training aims to develop the ten general physical skills: cardiovascular and respiratory endurance, stamina, strength, flexibility, power, speed, coordination, agility, balance, and accuracy. The movements are taught using body weights or light hand weights, kettlebells, or PVC pipes (to simulate a barbell). CrossFit Kids includes all students, regardless of physical abilities, and all movements have modifications so that each child can participate fully and feel successful. Mrs. Castle notes that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends strength training for kids ages eight and older as a safe and effective means

of both reducing injuries and enhancing performance.

Alia Forte, a fourth grade student, says she likes CrossFit Kids "because it's hard, but we have fun!"

"CrossFit Kids is a great way to teach kids lifelong fitness, especially kids who aren't necessarily interested in traditional sports," Mrs. Castle says. "And for those students who are, CrossFit Kids will build overall strength, balance, and fitness, preparing them to be more successful and less injury-prone in their sport."

Fifth grade student Bryan Calderon loves CrossFit Kids: "The workouts get our hearts pumping and give us good exercise."

Third grade student Eduardo Clemente agrees, saying, "I love these workouts, they're my favorite thing!"

Mrs. Castle's students are being introduced to CrossFit WODs (workouts of the day) to improve strength and endurance, which is her student learning objective this year. The elements of classes constantly vary (meaning no two classes are the same) to keep students engaged and excited to come back. The typical class structure



(from left) Ella Stoddard, Melany Villagomez, Rorie Smith, Tracy Aguilera-Bedolla, Kyara Garzon, and Andrea Ortiz-Reyes bring it in for a group fist-bump after a great session of CrossFit Kids!

involves a warm-up, skill work, and the WOD, which involves the skills learned. Class always ends with a game.

Mrs. Castle recently secured a \$3,000 grant from the Kennett Education Foundation, which will enable her to purchase more equipment to enhance the program, such as kettlebells, plyo boxes, and medicine balls.

# Eighth Grade Students Cast Their Votes

As the country stood in line to vote on November 8, eighth grade students at Kennett Middle School participated in an event sponsored by the Chester County Intermediate Unit for kidsvotingusa.org, joining more than a million students across the United States in this historic election.

Social studies teacher Mrs. Shana Welch explains that the eighth grade curriculum focuses on American history and that students will visit Washington, D.C., in March as part of their ongoing study of U.S. government. Leading up to Election Day, students were introduced to the U.S. Constitution, discussed the role of the Electoral College, and learned about battleground states and what they mean to a presidential election.

In addition to learning about the presidential candidates, the students discussed the candidates running for the Senate, the House of Representatives, and state and local seats. Referencing *New York Times Upfront*, a news magazine designed for social studies and language arts classrooms, the students became informed on the issues the candidates were debating.

Writing assignments gave the students a way to express their thoughts about specific issues. Mrs. Welch found that her students were most concerned about health care, the United States' role in the world economy, and

immigration. Other assignments had the students compare and contrast candidates and their stances on the issues. The students also colored their own Electoral College maps to try to predict how the country would vote.

After voting, students proudly wore their "I voted today" stickers to encourage family and community members to participate in the election.

"The students could not wait to find out if their voting mirrored that of the adults in New Garden Township," Mrs. Welch said. It did.



## KHS Resource Officer Draws on Diverse Background to be Positive Role Model

Officer Jeremiah Boyer is the new Resource Officer at Kennett High School this school year. At its most basic, this position provides security and crime prevention services to students at the high school as well as the Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center. However, Officer Boyer's role in the District goes above and beyond what most people might imagine. We sat down with Officer Boyer to talk about what he does and why.

### *Can you describe your background?*

**Boyer:** I earned my bachelor's degree in human services from Lincoln University with a double minor in sociology and anthropology. I went on to earn a certificate in history at West Chester University and completed with my master's in elementary education from Lincoln University. I also have military training with the Army, from which I was honorably discharged after an injury. After working in social services for 15 years as a mental health therapist and then as a crisis intervention therapist, I made the decision to become a police officer. Before working in the District, I spent four years patrolling Kennett Square Borough. My life, both educational and professional, is geared toward protecting and serving. My goal is to finish my second master's program in school counseling. Once I've put a few more years into this career, I plan to complete my few remaining credits and internship. Following dreams and completing goals is very important to me.

### *Can you describe your position as Resource Officer for Kennett Consolidated School District?*

**Boyer:** There are three facets to my position: law enforcement, law-related counseling, and law-related education. I am the first point of contact when it comes to any issues related to law enforcement. In the police academy, we learn that being seen is a crucial part of our role as officers. My number one duty in the District is to deter crime.

### *How does your background help you in your job?*

**Boyer:** Having a background as a therapist and experience with crisis intervention really helps me with this position. As a patrol officer, I interacted with the extremely diverse population of Kennett Square, but at the school I spend the better portion of the year not just interacting with but being involved with the students and faculty. This gives me the opportunity to focus on the bigger picture when it comes to crisis management. I get to know the students and learn to recognize when they need help. Bonding with the students makes dealing with problems a little bit easier.

### *What are some of the biggest challenges you face?*

**Boyer:** My biggest challenge is probably the world outside the District—everything from social media to news media. Controversy is the newest trend, and it allows students to draw conclusions. When I'm not in uniform, I'm a father, brother, son, and husband. I have feelings and emotions. But as soon as I put on this uniform, I become just a cop. My biggest hope is that the students will learn to take a step back and see me for who I am, not just for my uniform. I want to know my community on a different level. I believe that knowing my community is a better deterrent than being viewed as an authoritative outsider based solely on my uniform. School is a very safe place. But I also want to teach them about the real world. By being here for students, I can teach them that an authoritative figure can be a resource and not a threat.

### *What are some of the things you love most about your role in the District?*

**Boyer:** It makes my day to have students come up to me and shake my hand just to say good morning. During the pep rally, I got some of the loudest cheers. It feels really good. Recently, I had a student come to me on the verge of an outburst. He said, "You told me to come and find you if I ever felt this way. So here I am." And then I listened to him as he talked to me, not just about what was going on with his school life but what was happening at home as well. Having that opportunity to just be an ear for that student was probably a pinnacle moment for me.

### *Tell us about Banding Together Beyond Boundaries.*

**Boyer:** I've started an after-school program called Banding Together Beyond Boundaries. My goal is to give male students at the school an opportunity to be a part of the community on a larger scale, not just at school. The idea was just approved by [Kennett High School principal] Dr. Jeremy Hritz, and the first meeting was that Friday. Honestly, I didn't expect anyone to show up, but we had nine



*Officer Jeremiah Boyer with (from left) ninth grade students Victor Rios and Eric Herrera, and tenth grade student William Escobar. Ms. Wendy Kotz is also pictured.*

students! With all the controversy surrounding the police force, to see students show up was amazing. Breaking down the stereotype of the uniform is one of my greatest achievements. I am breaking down those walls.

Officer Boyer's thoughtful approach to his role in the District is invaluable. His experience gives him a unique opportunity to reach students on a different level. The Kennett Consolidated School District thanks Officer Boyer for his commitment to our students and faculty.



# Celebrating Dr. Seuss & Read Across America Week

The Kennett Consolidated School District joined thousands of schools across the country to celebrate the National Education Association's 16th Annual Read Across America celebration. This yearly event began in 1998 to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Seuss by encouraging children to read. Since its creation, educators, parents, and students have embraced Read Across America and helped to turn it into one of the largest celebrations in the world. This year, KCSD elementary schools joined in on the festivities.

To celebrate Read Across America, Bancroft Elementary School held multiple reading-based activities in honor of Dr. Seuss. Together, students and faculty enjoyed special reading-themed days like Drop Everything and Read Day, where students take small, random breaks from normal classes to read their favorite books, and Buddy Reading Day, where students spend time reading and having fun with a friend from another classroom or grade. To end the week, students participated in the nation-wide Accelerated Reading Competition, which challenged their reading comprehension skills.

Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center joined in on the fun as well. Students were invited to dress up according to planned themed days such as Cozy Up with a Good Book Day, Fox in Socks Day, Thing 1 and Thing 2 Day, Character Dress Up Day, and Funky Friday. Kennett High School students were invited to be guest readers and a few surprise guests, including Superintendent Dr. Barry Tomasetti, visited the school as mystery readers. The Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center family ended the week with an exciting Spirit Assembly.

Joining in on the celebration, New Garden Elementary School held a festive spirit week. Students were invited to dress up for planned themed days such as I Am Not Going to Get Up Today Day, On Beyond Zebra Day, Wacky Wednesday, Fox in Socks Day, and Character Dress Up Day. It was surely a memorable week for teachers and students alike!

Kennett Middle School celebrated Read Across America by hosting a spirit week leading up to a student versus faculty basketball game. Throughout the week, Kennett Middle School encouraged students and staff members to come to school dressed based on themed days such as Twin Day and Neon Day. Teachers created special classroom assignments, such as Ms. Alyse Halpin's

Historic Fiction Conundrum which combined math, history, and reading for a fun classroom activity. To end the week, students participated in the Accelerated Reading Competition.

Read Across America is a fun way for students to improve their reading comprehension skills while making memories that will last a lifetime. As Dr. Seuss wrote, "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."



*(above) Billy Carroll, Kennett Middle School custodian and a member of Kennett High School's Class of 2005, participated in Dress Like A Teacher Day*



*Eighth grade students Emma Schmidt and Kayleigh Zubrod had a great time participating in Kennett Middle School's Twin Day.*



*At Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center, The Cat in the Hat posed with Mrs. Kathy Drago (at left), her instructional assistant, Ms. Denise Westenberger (at right), and their students.*

## Paving the Way for a Future in STEM Continued from page 1

duct-based, allowing students to work through the phases of brainstorming, designing, and building a final product.

"Our program gives students insight into what STEM careers are and makes the idea of engineering tangible," says Dr. Lydia Hallman, Curriculum Supervisor of Math and Science. "Students understand, for the most part, what a teacher does. But engineering is kind of abstract. The notion that a civil engineer builds bridges isn't an accurate description of the career. This program gives students the chance to understand the logical steps, processes, and functions of engineering and other STEM careers."

At Kennett High School, STEM offerings are honors-level electives. "Since we first began offering STEM classes back in the 2013–2014 school year, we had planned to offer elective courses beyond the foundation courses, Introduction to Engineering Design and Principles of Engineering," explains Mr. Dan Folmar, STEM educator in the high school. "Before we decided which electives to offer, we surveyed the Introduction to Engineering Design and Principles of Engineering students to determine their interests. Civil Engineering and Architecture and Aerospace Engineering were the clear favorites. So last year we introduced Civil Engineering and Architecture into the curriculum, and this year we're offering Aerospace Engineering."

The Aerospace Engineering course begins by introducing students to the history of aviation and the evolution of flight. Students in the District are introduced to the science of flight in the fourth grade, so they're familiar with the Wright Brothers and basic principles, but what they don't realize is that countless other people, events, and technologies have shaped modern aviation. After conducting research and presenting their findings on the evolution of flight, students work through a unit in which they design and construct their own balsa-wood gliders. Using the gymnasium as the airfield, the students enjoy some serious competition as they vie for bragging rights for longest flight.

The next unit allows students to learn about the physics of flight by designing and testing airfoils with an online simulator which they then use to construct physical models of the design. The airfoils are tested in the new wind tunnel, and then the actual and theoretical results are compared.

Halfway through the year, Mr. Folmar surveys the student about the program. "The students are really enjoying the course," he explains. "Several of them expressed surprise that we cover as broad a range of topics as we do. Beyond the expected physics of flight, aerodynamics, and propulsion systems, we also cover air traffic control,

global positioning systems, orbital dynamics, and space travel."

With any new class, it's difficult to work out all the details and anticipate where the biggest challenges will arise. Moving forward, Mr. Folmar plans to improve the course where necessary. A recently acquired 3D printer will be used in the airfoil design project next year and will integrate the online simulation and CAD application to produce a finished product.

"Creativity is a big part of engineering that is often overshadowed," reminds Dr. Hallman. "Knowing the functions and processes is only part of the puzzle. It was only two years ago that we brought this program down to the elementary school, and the kindergarten classes filled up right away. Middle school students loved the courses so much that we found a way to expand them from 23 to 46 days. It's very exciting and very keen on student interest and what the community is telling us."

The second annual Family STEM Night will be on June 7 at 7 p.m. Prior to the event, at 6:30 p.m., there will be an informational session for parents about the new math curriculum being offered. This year, the event will host the same station-based format as last year's event. And yes, liquid nitrogen ice cream will return!

# Spot LIGHT

Kennett Consolidated School District must be doing something right if successful careers run in the family. This notion rings true for Nikki and Riana Moriello, sisters who graduated from Kennett High School in 2012 and 2010 respectively. Both have careers in fields that they love, and both say they had supportive role models in high school. These teachers did more than teach them their core subjects—they taught them about life in the real world.

Riana graduated in 2010 and went on to study psychology and anthropology with a minor in biology and evolutionary studies at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Binghamton, graduating in 2014. During her time at college, she was elected Vice President for Programming in the Student Association. Riana managed a \$250,000 budget that covered all major events for students, from beginning to end, working with an all-student team to plan major campus events with no help from adults.

“After graduating from college, I got a paying internship in New York City and moved in with two college friends. I lived in their closet for \$500 a month until I found a better paying job,” says Riana. “I began freelancing for Turner Broadcasting, a media company that manages a collection of cable television networks including CNN, TBS, TNT, Cartoon Network, and Adult Swim.”

Eventually Riana applied for and was offered a job at ESPN where she has been an event marketing coordinator since July 2015. She has settled into her new role nicely and loves it—she gets to travel at least once a month and loves seeing new cities and meeting talented people.

“The work is different every day, so it’s never boring or stagnant,” says Riana. “Our biggest event is the College Football National Championship Game. This year, my team at ESPN planned a four-day VIP program surrounding the game in Tampa, Florida. Everything was branded ESPN and College Football. It was gorgeous. We offered everything from massages to swimming with sharks—and on the day of the big game, we hosted a custom tailgate for over 1,200 people, including the 250 VIPs. We planned everything, even the things that nobody else thinks about like air-conditioned portable bathrooms.”

Riana’s goal is to advance into a management role. Eventually she has her eyes set on owning her own business, but for now the focus is on building her career at ESPN and enjoying New York.

Meanwhile, in Pittsburgh, her sister Nikki is working as an extras’ casting associate for a Netflix Original series called *Mindhunter*, set to be released this spring. Nikki helps recruit extras and organize and facilitate everything they do on the show. This includes people walking down the street, dining in restaurants, flying on planes—basically anyone without a speaking role.

“There are so many parts of the process that people don’t realize,” says Nikki. “On this show in particular, it’s a lot of work because the show takes place in the seventies. Because it’s a period piece, everyone needs to go through a costume fitting, get approved by hair and makeup, go back to the costume department for approval, and so on.”

Nikki started working on the show during finals’ week of her last semester at the University of Pittsburgh where she earned a bachelor’s degree in film and communications and minored in economics and French. She got the job with *Mindhunter* as a result of maintaining a good relationship with her internship supervisor from Nancy Mosser Casting, a casting company local to Pittsburgh.

Nikki’s interest in this line of work began at Kennett High School studying under Mr. Frank Vanderslice, her video production teacher. “He made it seem possible to make a career out of this type of work, and he taught me so much about the craft,” says Nikki. “There are so many different paths I could take in this field, but down the road, I think I want to be a producer. The director is the creative head, transforming written script into visual film, but the producer runs the show—everything from making sure the project stays on budget and is finished within the time allotted to making informed decisions about hiring, firing, wages, and making sure everyone gets paid.”

Both Nikki and Riana recognize the value of their experiences in the Kennett Consolidated School District. Riana commends her art teacher, Mr. Thomas Hironimus, for always motivating her and Ms. Christine Wilson and Ms. Deborah Roselle for helping her progress as a writer and always encouraging her to get better at the craft. Both sisters mention social studies teacher Mr. Shawn Duffy and his ability to bring real-world experiences into his classroom.

“They were more than just teachers,” says Riana. “They wanted us to learn and succeed in life and enabled us to imagine life beyond Kennett. Each in their own way, they really got us to think about that. At that age, and coming from a smaller town like Kennett Square, it can be difficult to imagine how many options and opportunities there are out there. These teachers expanded my world, and I am so grateful for that.”

“Part of the reason that I was so well equipped for college was because I had excellent classes in high school,” says Nikki. “Having the TV studio in the corner of the school and learning everything from shooting to editing gave me an advantage in college. I got the tools I would need to be competitive in the field while I was still in high school. Mr. Vanderslice and the video production program at the high school are hidden gems.”

Nikki and Riana remind current Kennett Consolidated School District students to stay positive. “We’re told that high school prepares us for the real world, but high school, day to day, isn’t what it’s like in the workforce. It’s not even what it’s like in college,” says Riana. “You



*Nikki Moriello (at left), class of 2012, is an extra’ casting associate for the Netflix Original series called Mindhunter.*



*Riana Moriello, Class of 2010, works at ESPN as an event marketing coordinator.*

have more options that allow you to learn and progress. Every time I think I’ve found myself, I’m reminded that I’m always evolving. Getting good grades is the foundation for the beginning of a great career.”

Life beyond high school can be difficult for students to imagine, but the educators in our schools work hard every day to support and encourage them to do well in school and in life. This compassion truly shows when students look back on their time here.

Know a Kennett High School alumni who we should spotlight? Please send us an email at [PR@KCSD.org](mailto:PR@KCSD.org).

## 2017-2018 Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten registration for the 2017-2018 school year began on March 1st and continue through March 31st. Parents can pick up a registration packet at the main office of Mary D. Lang Kindergarten Center or download it from [www.kcsd.org](http://www.kcsd.org).

Once the packet is completed, you must contact the Student Registration Office at 610-444-4235 to schedule an appointment to finalize the registration process.

## 2017-2018 Registración de Kínder/Jardín de Niño

La registraci3n del Kínder para el 2017-2018 empezara el miercoles 1 de marzo y continuara hasta el viernes 31. Los padres pueden obtener una aplicaci3n de registraci3n en la oficina principal en el centro de Kínder despu3s del 15 de febrero.

Cuando el paquete este completo tiene que contactar la oficina de registraci3n del estudiante al 610-444-4235 para hacer una cita y finalizar el proceso de la registraci3n.

## 2017-2018 Academic Calendar Approved

The 2017-2018 student school year will begin on Monday, August 28, 2017, and is tentatively set to end on Thursday, June 7, 2018, dependent on the need for inclement weather make-up days. The winter holiday will run from Friday, December 22, 2017 through Monday, January 1, 2018, with school resuming on Tuesday, January 2, 2018. Spring break will be Monday, March 26 through Friday, March 30, 2018. Graduation is scheduled for Friday, June 8, 2018.

Six (6) inclement weather days are added to the end of the school year. There are five days designated as “local holidays” in accordance with the ruling of the Department of Education. For more information, visit the District’s website.



# KCSD Updates

# Kennett Consolidated School District Basketball - Building Bonds that Last

School sports can unite students and school districts, even reaching as far as bringing whole communities together. At their best, school sports allow for students to immerse themselves in a cause bigger than themselves. They offer the platform for a healthy, competitive nature encompassed by a sense of camaraderie. The Kennett Consolidated School District's basketball program is proof of this notion.

Last year, Mr. Joel Perez, former member of the Kennett High School basketball team and First Team All-State player, attended a boys' basketball game. He and Mr. Sean Harvey, the Athletic Director for the Kennett Consolidated School District, discussed a Kennett Basketball family reunion. Back in 2002, Kennett High School basketball team's hard work payed off as it went on to win the state championship. Upon realizing that it was the 15-year anniversary for the team that won the state championship, Mr. Harvey and coaches of the basketball program brought the Kennett basketball family back together last month to commemorate the win. Both Mr. Perez and the coach of the 2002 team, Mr. Rick Nelms, were involved in contacting the alumni to have them attend a game.

"We had a really tight-knit team," says Mr. Jeff Thomas, Kennett High School Assistant Principal and athletic director at the time of the state championship win. "The players worked tirelessly, and their hard work speaks for itself. They only took about two weeks off between seasons before beginning to train and going on to win the championship. It was a great accomplishment for the players, the coach, the school, and the community. There were at least 12 school buses which brought

members of the community to Hershey to enjoy the game."

Current Kennett High School coaches Brian Grashof, Jacob Gray, and Chris Hancock are building the basketball program by making connections at the younger levels. On the date of the commemoration game, Saturday, February 4th, Kennett Middle School basketball team was invited to watch the game. There was a high level of energy in the gymnasium of Kennett High School for this game bringing the past, present, and future generations of the Kennett basketball family together.

"By inviting the middle school teams to come out and show their support during this game, I hoped to show them how hard work and dedication can pay off," says Mr. Harvey. "Developing basic skills and concepts like good sportsmanship and teamwork lay the groundwork for high school athletics. Having access to competitive sports programs at the middle school level builds the skills necessary for advancing to high school and collegiate level sports programs."

With the alumni and middle school teams in attendance, the energy in the room was undeniable. Unfortunately, the hometown team lost 62-60 in overtime, but the



overall day was a huge success.

"It's amazing that this many of us found it important enough to make the journey back to Kennett for this celebration," says Kennett basketball alumnus Mr. Matt White. "Of the 18 players on that team, 13 of us were able to make it. Most of us grew up and played basketball together since elementary school, and in a lot of ways, our whole lives up until that point culminated on that night, March 22, 2002. Having the chance to see everyone again—I wouldn't pass that up."

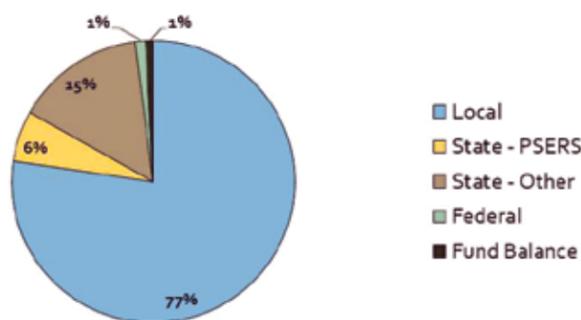
## 2017-2018 Preliminary General Operating Budget

At the February 13, 2017, meeting, the School Board unanimously approved the 2017-2018 Preliminary General Operating Budget. The approval of the Preliminary Budget that encompasses all of the District's instructional, extra-curricular, and athletic programs is the culmination of a series of monthly public Finance Committee meetings that began in October 2016.

The budgetary process is prescribed under the Pennsylvania School Code and the Taxpayer Relief Act (commonly referred to as Act 1 of 2006). Each year the Department of Education notifies every school district as to the maximum allowable real estate tax increase, which is known as the Act 1 index. The District is limited to this percentage increase unless it opts to pursue one of two options -- at large voter referendum or referendum exceptions through PDE. For the 2017-2018 General Operating Budget, Kennett is below the Act 1 index. The Act also sets in motion a series of requirements including multiple public notices, advertisements, and a total of three mandatory approvals -- a preliminary budget (February), a proposed final budget (April), and a final budget (June).

The 2017-2018 Preliminary General Operating Budget in the amount of \$84,510,237 requires the millage rate to be set at 30.0540 mills. This represents a proposed increase of 2.79% or approximately \$148 per year for the average residential property owner. The District will not be seeking referendum exceptions from the Department of Education since the approved millage increase is less than the 2.9% modified Act 1 index.

There are several key factors taken into consideration in the budget development process. The District's revenues are predominantly generated locally through a series of real estate and earned incomes tax levies (78% of total revenue). Although there is evidence of a turnaround in the residential real estate market, Kennett's tax base is less than it was in 2007. Compounding the funding dilemma is a lack of consistent revenue subsidies (21% of total revenue) from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. It is typical for the District to approve its final budget without any reasonable assurance of State support.

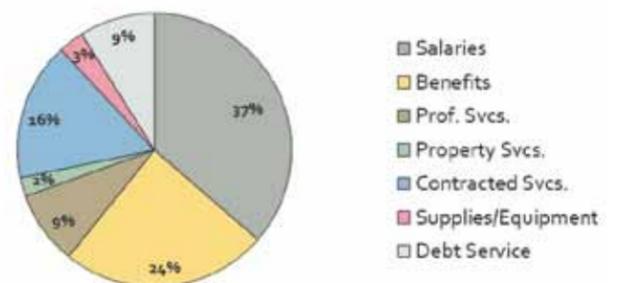


Total Revenues - \$84,510,237

The expenditure drivers in this year's budget are predominantly in areas over which the District has little control because they are directly related to State mandated programs. The single largest area of expenditure growth is tied to the Pennsylvania School Employees Retirement System (PSERS). PSERS requires the District to contribute a stipulated percentage of the salary for all employees who qualify for pensionable wages. Charter school tuition continues to deprive the District of valuable resources. The budget includes an adjustment of \$250,000 for charter school tuition due to a higher than normal number of charter school students receiving special education plus a large number of students enrolled in cyber charter schools. Special education costs continue to be financially taxing on the District. To meet the growing needs of the special education population, the District secures many educational and support services from outside institutions. These services are captured in the budget under purchased professional services and purchased property services. The primary escalation within the special education budget is for services acquired through

the Chester County Intermediate Unit and CCRES for paraprofessionals and personal care assistants. Additionally, the delivery of educational services are labor intensive; therefore, common inflationary increases are associated with employees' salary and benefits.

While this article provides you with a brief summary of the budgetary process and the 2017-2018 preliminary budget, we encourage you to visit our website at <https://www.kcsd.org/services/business-office/business-office-downloads/> where you can view our preliminary budget presentation and comprehensive preliminary budget document. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in our budget deliberations at the next Finance Committee meeting on April 3, 2017.



Total Expenses - \$84,510,237

