
KCO Meeting Unofficial Minutes

Date: August 31, 2017, updated September 5, 2017

Meeting Start Time: 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.

Location: Khalsa Montessori School – Middle School

Attendees

Khalsa Director/Meeting Facilitator: Nirvair Khalsa

Parent/Teacher Attendees: See attached Excel file for a list of attendees and committees for which each attendee signed up.

1 Welcome

Nirvair welcomed the group of approximately 31 parent/faculty attendees. She discussed the purpose and makeup of the KCO. The fundamental purpose is to raise, manage, and allocate funds to benefit the students of Khalsa Montessori School by providing for their classrooms and teachers. Nirvair challenged attendees to rethink the KCO, come up with fresh ideas, and find ways to engage the larger parent population.

2 Breakout Sessions

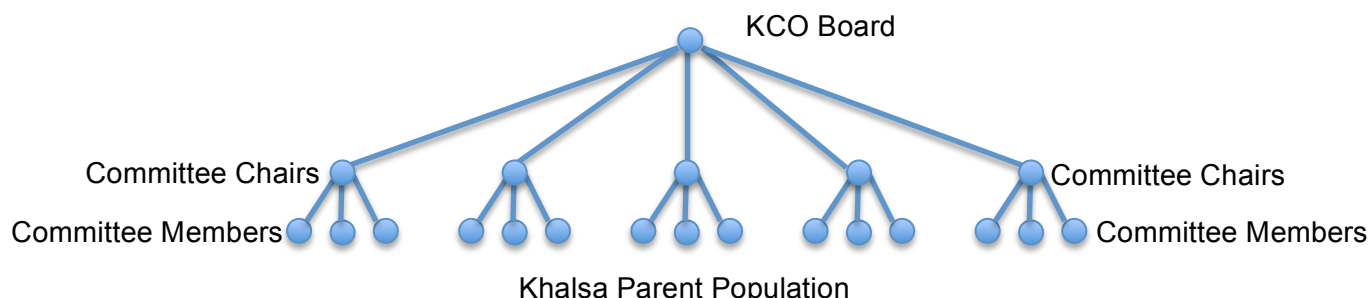
Nirvair had the attendees break out into eight teams of three or four to discuss the following question for 15 minutes:

How could the KCO engage the parent community in supporting the school and staff in their work for our children?

The following suggestions were discussed and presented by the various groups:

- Present a clear mission/vision statement: support of teachers and students. Communicate it clearly in multiple ways. It was noted that the *KCO Bylaws* have a stated purpose (mission).
- Do community building early to encourage friendships, community, cooperative atmosphere, and participation.
- Educate and encourage infant, toddler, and primary families to join and get involved early.
- Many agreed that KCO meetings could be in the evenings (with child care provided) to encourage participation from more parents. (No meetings at 3:30!)
- Room parents could be liaisons between parents and KCO to convey clear expectations of roles and responsibilities and to solicit volunteers for committees.
- School could strongly encourage/request (not mandate) 20 hours of volunteering per family per year. Maybe have it in the *Student Handbook* or in registration materials?
- Improve communication (a new committee was formed):
 - ✓ Improve communications from KCO direct to parents. Perhaps an email list. KCO messages are too “buried” in the listserv.
 - ✓ Encourage and foster better parent-to-parent communication to encourage more KCO participation.
 - ✓ Make *Minutes* more understandable to parents that aren’t able to attend meetings.
 - ✓ Send more room parent emails, and encourage participation at KCO meetings/committee meetings.

- ✓ Streamline communications. More communication methods (Facebook, email, bulletin board, etc.). The listserv isn't enough.
- ✓ Communicate KCO fiscal health and needs regularly to parents.
- ✓ People want to engage, but need a portal.
- ✓ Communicate last-minute needs to parents digitally (an app or group text?).
- ✓ Advertise all events better and have nametags at all events.
- ✓ Convey what this education is worth and how lucky we are that it's a public charter.
- Provide parent education that dovetails with classroom methodologies. The Virtues Project—have parents come in and learn strategies to implement at home to overlap with school. Have a common strategy between parents and teachers. Would need to be a joint school/KCO project.
- Fundraising:
 - ✓ Maximize fundraisers/money makers, especially the Tax Credit program. Perhaps have an accountant/attorney volunteer stand at the school gates and be at the carnival to provide a brief explanation of the school tax credits. Start now. Don't wait.
 - ✓ Delegate fundraising pieces to classrooms.
 - ✓ New ideas for fundraising and donations to teachers. Perhaps donate airline or hotel miles to teachers for conferences and continuing education opportunities.
 - ✓ Tie fundraising to a specific story or idea (much like we did for the playground structure). Communicate a story about fundraising for the shade structure.
 - ✓ Have class parents raise money within their classrooms—more money for teachers, education for teachers, classroom needs. Decentralize fundraising or a portion of it. What if classrooms were more involved/responsible?
 - ✓ Focus on high-value fundraising (value vs. time spent). Corporate sponsorship.
 - ✓ Establish an alumni network.
- Committees:
 - ✓ Organize into committees and smaller groups. Have small committee meetings.
 - ✓ Break committees out by category (i.e., communication, fundraising, events, community building).
 - ✓ Break down tasks into manageable bites so joining the KCO isn't so overwhelming or daunting:



3 Actions

The 501c3 committee, which includes Piyush Gupa, Jane Hilyard, Audrey Leavitt, James McGinnis, and Audrie Terre, agreed to meet again soon to review the Bylaws, hold elections, and discuss the way forward to maintain the non-profit status of the KCO.

Audrie Terre agreed to type up the notes (these informal *Minutes*) from the breakout sessions, and James McGinnis agreed to type up the list of attendees and send it to Audrie. Audrie will send these *Minutes* and the *Attendees List* to Nirvair and most likely all attendees of the meeting.