

KCO Community Conversation Minutes

Date: August 23, 2018

Meeting Start Time: 6:10 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:00 p.m.

Location: Khalsa Middle School

Attendees (see Appendix for Contact List)

Director: Nirvair Khalsa

KCO Board: Ingrid Bregand (KCO Co-Chair), Matthew Dunkel (KCO Co-Chair), Sarah Wasserman (KCO Vice Chair), James McGinnis (KCO Treasurer), Audrie Terre (KCO Secretary)

KCO Members: Amy Cormode, Harmony DeFazio, Noah Fay, Charlie Garcia, Abby Green, Piyush Gupta, Rachele Gupta, Jennifer Katcher, Amrita Khalsa, Sadhu Khalsa, Amara Lauren, Sarah Martin, Stephanie Mehrabani, Emily Mortara, Debbi Ng, Guillermo Ponce, Rachel Strong, Rachel Weis, Darrell Zemitis, Gontran Zepeda

Actions

1. KCO Secretary write and distribute *Minutes* to all attendees.
2. All attendees ensure they are signed up for the listserv with Lee.
3. KCO Secretary will invite all attendees to download the *KCO Events* Google calendar (if they aren't on it already). Members can accept the invitation or not.
NOTE: Please contact audrie@terrefam.com if you haven't received a calendar invitation (be sure to check junk mail first; it may be sent there first).
4. Members who signed up on the poster boards for specific events or committees, contact each other and begin discussing how to collaborate.
NOTE: The KCO has a Trello site that is established, but not yet very active. Let the KCO Secretary or one of the other Board members know if you would like to collaborate there, and she will invite you to join the KCO group.

1 Welcome from Nirvair

Nirvair Khalsa welcomed everyone and opened the meeting. She spoke about state funding for education (how AZ consistently ranks in the bottom two states in annual funding per child, \$4,000 less per student than the national average), about the charter school funding and how it works, and how Khalsa was able to give teachers 10% raises this year. She spoke about how exciting the \$1,000,000 more in funding would be (based on \$4,000 more per student) to increase salaries further and beautify the classroom environment and outdoor environment. She gave a brief history of the KCO and discussed the importance of the organization to the school. She introduced the KCO Board and other key members, including Abby Green (T-shirts and Community-Building Committee) and Chris and Samirah Steinmeyer (Mt. Lemmon camping trips and potlucks, who got involved to spearhead a specific project dear to them).

2 KCO Co-Chairs

Matt Dunkel spoke about how he got involved in the KCO. He expressed his enthusiasm for supporting Khalsa—that what we give to the school enriches our teachers' experience and enriches our children's learning experience. He spoke about how KCO funds raised are allocated for specific things, such as building a shade structure over the Space Net. He

described the efforts of many other KCO Board members and committee members. Matt explained how each person's commitment can be with money, special skills, volunteering at or just attending events, attending monthly meetings, or planning entire events.

Ingrid Bregand spoke about how her involvement grew over the years, from volunteering in the library to co-chairing the Community-Building Committee, to now being the KCO Board Co-Chair. She noted our children are the lucky recipients of a **free** Montessori education (in a public charter school). She wondered: How do I give back to support an underfunded school?

Sarah Wasserman described attending a meeting last year and discovering she could request funds for class materials. She got so positively impressed by the KCO's efforts that she joined KCO as a Vice Chair.

3 Conversation

Audrie Terre, KCO Secretary, provided a brief description of her 10-year involvement in the KCO, from class volunteering to Room Parent, to KCO Secretary. Then, she solicited inputs from the community. She did a quick survey of attendees to discover which part of the school their children attended: 10 primary parents/ teachers, 10 lower elementary parents/teachers, 6 upper el parents, 1 middle school parent. Five attendees were brand new to Khalsa this year, 8 had been at Khalsa under 5 years, and the remaining attendees had been at Khalsa more than 5 years.

The following suggestions/ideas were discussed during the community conversation:

- Charlie Garcia, first time participant, described what he had heard, but expressed how unclear he was on how he could help. He wanted concrete guidance on how he could participate in the KCO and make a difference.
- Ingrid Bregand described the idea of the survey the KCO is putting together to solicit ideas. Attendees liked that idea.
- How do we incentivize attendance and participation?
 - Set expectation that everyone should do 20 hours of volunteering per family or provide some amount of funds instead.
 - Give people a tangible goal, i.e. "We need to raise \$20,000 for a shade structure to protect our space net."
 - Make it easy to donate.
 - Put more info on Facebook.
 - Use signup genius for more than just the carnival. Put ongoing/standing needs that people can just donate to whenever they want. Put the link in the KCO listserv announcement every week to make it easy for people to find.
 - Put full descriptions of needs for all jobs related to events, including the requisite time commitment.
 - Some people said they'd be more likely to respond to Classroom Parent, but even more likely to respond to a call from their teacher.
 - One attendee suggested better email subject lines, i.e., *We Need 10 Boxes of Kleenex!*
- KCO Treasurer, James McGinnis, described coming up with a clearer inventory of needs and attaching a price.
- Amy Cormode shared she really appreciated the May 2018 end-of-year KCO listserv announcement describing fundraising efforts throughout the year. She encouraged (and other attendees too) to disclose these more regularly as to keep our community informed and engaged in our fundraising efforts. James McGinnis shared a financial update could be put monthly on the school website.

- Several folks didn't like the idea of being a committee chair. They advocated for being a headless committee or perhaps all committees having co-chairs.
- Rachelle Gupta volunteered to be Arts Night Co-Chair.

4 Committee/Activities/Interests Sign-up Boards (New on 08/23/2018)

Committee	People Who Signed Up	Ideas Proposed
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy Cormode – Co-Chair • Audrie Terre – Co-Chair • Matt Dunkel • Rachelle Gupta • Amara Lauren • James McGinnis 	
Community Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ingrid Bregand – Co-Chair • Abby Green – Co-Chair • Debbi Ng • Rachel Strong • Sarah Wasserman 	Coffee and Muffin Munch (Amrita is an awesome baker)
Events (may be combined with Fundraising)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amrita Khalsa • Sadhu Khalsa • Emily Mortara (especially Arts Night) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachelle Gupta offered to Co-Chair Arts Night
Fundraising (may be combined with Events)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachelle Gupta • Stephanie Mehrabani • Sarah Martin • Audrie Terre (Jim Click Raffle) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephanie has off-site/off-campus fundraiser idea • Box tops • Carnival • Jim Click Raffle • Original works • Scholastic Book Fair • Silent Auction • Yard Sale
Green Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachel Strong – Co-Chair? • Abby Green • Amara Lauren • Debbi Ng • Sarah Wasserman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower EI needs compost help! • Community Garden
Selling T-Shirts (should be part of Fundraising)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matt Dunkel • Stephanie Mehrabani • Audrie Terre will help if it's ever on the weekend 	

5 Questions & Answers

Audrie received several questions that she answered individually. It might be useful for everyone to have the answers:

1. Q: Why do we need committee Chairs? Can't we just have committees?
A: We can have committees without Chairs, but at least one person needs to report progress/ideas at the monthly KCO General Meeting.

2. Q: Where can I find a list of all the events and what they entail?
A: The new Khalsa website, when it goes active. The current website has old content, but some description of the events KCO currently does.
3. Q: Who creates the directory and when do we get it?
A: The Khalsa School Directory is for both the River and Camden campuses; it's created by a small KCO committee in late July and early August, and it's currently in work. Audrie Terre was the committee chair this year until Friday, 24 August, when the rest of the team offered to finish it and distribute it. The Directory should be distributed by mid-September.

NOTE: The Directory Committee has benefited from two members (Melissa Portell and Audrie Terre) who have been on the team for at least 8 contiguous years. Their children are aging out of the school soon, so we need new people who might be interested in learning the ropes: typing up contact information and class lists, designing the cover, selling and laying out ads, and getting the Directory printed and distributed to the two schools.

6 Appendix – Attendee Contact Info

Name	Role	Email Address
Nirvair Khalsa	Khalsa Director	Nirvair.Khalsa@khalsaschools.org
Ingrid Bregand	KCO Co-Chair	ingrid@sensensoma.com
Matt Dunkel	KCO Co-Chair	mattydeemail@gmail.com
Sarah Wasserman	KCO Vice Chair, Primary Teacher	Sarah.wasserman@khalsaschools.org
James McGinnis	KCO Treasurer	2jmcginnis@gmail.com
Audrie Terre	KCO Secretary	audrie@terrefam.com
Amy Cormode	Parent Attendee	aimcat@gmail.com
Harmony DeFazio	Parent Attendee	hdefazio@yahoo.com
Noah Fay	Parent Attendee	noahfay@yahoo.com
Charlie Garcia	Parent Attendee	charlieagarcia@gmail.com
Abby Green	Community-Building T-Shirts	abigail@ryanhood.com abigailmegreen@gmail.com
Piyush Gupta	Parent Attendee	piyushgupta203@gmail.com
Rachelle Gupta	Parent Attendee	rachelle.gupta@gmail.com
Jennifer Katcher	Parent Attendee	jenniferkatcher@yahoo.com
Amrita Khalsa	Toddler Teacher	AmritaKKhalsa@gmail.com
Sadhu Khalsa	Facebook Admin	sadhukaur@gmail.com
Amara Lauren	Parent Attendee	amarailauren@gmail.com
Sarah Martin	Parent Attendee	sarahkendallmartin@gmail.com
Stephanie Mehrabani	Parent Attendee	sdstark@yahoo.com
Emily Mortara	Lower EI Teacher	Emily.Mortara@khalsaschools.org
Debbi Ng	Parent Attendee	Dng1@cox.net
Guillermo Ponce	Parent Attendee	geponce@gmail.com
Rachel Strong	Parent Attendee	rachelstrong33@gmail.com
Rachel Weis	Parent Attendee	RachelMWeis@gmail.com
Darrell Zemitis	Parent Attendee	darrellz@hotmail.com
Gontran Zepeda	Parent Attendee	gontran@general-delivery.xyz