

Minutes of February 7, 2022, GCA Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President Julie Lee at 7:33 pm.

Speakers

The speakers were introduced: Dr. Melaney Mackin, Principal of Carlin Springs Elementary School; Maureen Nesselrode, Principal of Campbell Elementary School; and David McBride, Principal of Kenmore Middle School.

Maureen Nesselrode, Campbell Elementary School

Maureen Nesselrode spoke first. She has been Principal at Campbell for 10 years. Attendance at Campbell is based on a lottery, with no priority except for siblings or students attending Pre-K at Campbell. The Pre-K program uses a separate lottery for admission.

Campbell has an Expeditionary/ Outward Bound focus and an outdoor learning program. It partners with the Long Branch Nature Center, with visits from Nature Center staff to the school and for classes to the Nature Center. The school uses outdoor learning spaces, including an outdoor cafeteria.

There are approximately 420 students with three classrooms at each grade level. It is a Title 1 school with a diverse population and a relatively high percentage of students whose family incomes are below the poverty line for Arlington County. The largest group are Hispanic, but there are growing numbers of Middle- Eastern, African, and Arabic-speaking students.

Campbell has an active PTA that funds many initiatives. There will be a virtual tour coming up, but no in-person tours have been scheduled during the Covid pandemic.

Dr. Melaney Mackin, Carlin Springs Elementary School

Dr. Melaney Mackin is in her second year as Principal at Carlin Springs. The school population is a microcosm of the community, with Spanish-speaking students the largest group. Enrollment of 510 is lower than normal; in the past it has been 600 to 650. Ms. Mackin has hired many new staff members this past year.

Carlin Springs is a Community School with a coordinator for its 21st Century Grant. The school receives \$400,000 (in addition to Title 1 funds), which pays for after-school clubs and programs including soccer, art, theater arts, homework help, etc. and provides late bus transportation. Last year all students received school supplies.

It has been a big challenge for students returning after quarantine for covid- 19. The school has initiated an intervention program based on below grade-level test data in math and reading. Staff training has been provided by a school intervention coach, utilizing research-based programs. There are also enrichment-based programs for those at grade level. All teachers are receiving "Responsive Classroom" training. Children are offered leadership opportunities, such as broadcasting morning announcements to all classes.

David McBride, Kenmore Middle School

David McBride, Kenmore Principal, reported that students are back in school full time. Kenmore has an Arts and Communications Technology focus. It was an early adopter of

student iPads and computers. Last year, students performed the junior production of Mary Poppins.

The theme for this year has been “The Big Comeback.” There have been behavior challenges (as always in middle school), handled by the compassionate and dedicated staff. An intervention program in reading and math, similar to that at Carlin Springs, was initiated.

There are currently 940 students, although capacity is 1050. There is a program called Act II, offering semester-long elective classes after school on Tuesday and Thursday. The school will be asking for additional funding for STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) classes, such as robotics and coding, and art and science fairs. Continued support and partnership from the community is needed and appreciated.

Q. What do you think about using strategies that are not technology based for dealing with learning loss?

A. Ms. Mackin: There are good resources for online learning that allow children to start at their own level. Of course, younger kids need manipulatives.

A. Ms. Nesselrode: Our intervention block is in person, not online. The biggest losses have been social and emotional. The youngest children are having to learn school behavior, such as being in a group and following school norms. We are dealing with kids who've never left their home before. We use lots of outside and hands-on learning, supplemented by technology.

Q. Carlin Springs' PTA doesn't have the depth that other schools have. How can the community offer support?

A. Ms. Mackin: We have changed from a PTA to a PTO, which doesn't require dues. The staff were doing the work (of the PTA) when I began. We are trying to get more parents involved. We would love help from community volunteers.

Q. Are students who walk home along Carlin Springs Road given guidance about safety?

A. Mr. McBride: I am on the APS Transportation Committee. We do give guidance on using crosswalks and using good manners while walking through neighborhoods. There are no buses provided for middle school students who live within 1.5 miles of the school. There is an Arlington County police officer patrolling by car during dismissal. The school provides passes for the ART bus.

A. Ms. Nesselrode: It is actually good exercise to walk. Also, it allows children to get some extra time at school to finish things up if they are not running for a bus. Because the schools start at about the same time, there is tremendous added traffic.

Q. What are the schools' philosophies of integrating nature?

A. Mr. McBride: Kenmore participates in the American Schoolyard Initiative. We have a sensory garden. Students participate in water studies and Outdoor Lab field trips.

A. Ms. Mackin: We have a Garden Club. It is important to learn about the outdoors, to introduce kids to nature. It's a priority.

A. Ms. Nesselrode: It starts with an appreciation of nature. Our kids take tons of walking field trips. Animals wander over from the park, which provides opportunities to familiarize the kids with them. Many of the younger ones are just getting used to being outdoors. We engage the older ones in conservation, composting, recycling, organic gardening, and being active outside. We have butterfly gardens, a pond, and turtles in the courtyard space. Outdoor learning is our niche and is integrated throughout the day.

Q. Can the schools help integrate their students' activities with the Glencarlyn Library?

A. Mr. McBride: We would love to partner with the library.

Q. Are there going to be any in-person tours for parents with kids entering APS?

A. Ms. Mackin: No. We will have virtual tours with teachers present for Pre-K and K combined.

A. Ms. Nesselrode: Same as Carlin Springs. It was not a school decision.

Julie Lee expressed appreciation to the principals for their time and for sharing important information about their schools with us.

Old Business

Approval of minutes. Julie Lee asked for approval of the December 6, 2021, minutes. There was a motion to approve, it was seconded, and a vote approved the minutes.

Treasurer's report. Tim Aiken was not present. Julie Lee reported that there are 213 dues paying members and a balance of \$25,925.25.

Civic Federation. No report this month.

Neighborhood Conservation Committee report by Kathy Reeder. On 4th St., the storm water improvement work is going well and quickly. Curb, gutter and sidewalk installation is proceeding at both ends of the 5600 block and starting on the 5500 block. The contact persons are Jasneet Singh - 703 228-3661 or jsingh@arlingtonva.us or Laura Simpson - lsimpson@arlingtonva.us. The Kenmore Woods/S. Manchester St./S. 2nd St. project is going to the Board for approval this month. The scope will then be refined.

The County Manager is seeking community input on Arlington's 10-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Residents can share their thoughts on how Arlington should invest in major infrastructure at [How Should Arlington Invest in Major Infrastructure for the Future? | Engage Arlington \(arlingtonva.us\)](https://www.arlingtonva.us/How-Should-Arlington-Invest-in-Major-Infrastructure-for-the-Future?).

Village View report by Brandon Hemmel. The deadline for the next issue is February 10.

Steering Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion, report by Brandon Hemel. We are discussing potential upcoming programs on Asian-Americans in Arlington and on anti-Semitism. We are looking for ways to involve more neighbors living west of Carlin Springs Road.

Glencarlyn Directory report by Courtney Holmes. Edits have been received and updated, and some messages received from people who wanted to add their information. Pete Olivere's help with formatting is appreciated. The directory will be going to print soon, following a draft review in the next three days. Julie Lee expressed gratitude to Courtney Holmes, Michelle **Nolan** and Pete Olivere.

Snow Shovel Brigade. Julie Lee reported that a new volunteer came forth today. Email Julie at jfblee@aol.com or Courtney Holmes at courtneyleeholmes@gmail.com to volunteer.

New Business

Glencarlyn Days, June 3 and 4. Report by Julie Lee. We need someone to chair the parade planning.

Spring Events. Report by Julie Lee. The annual Spring Stream Clean-up of Four Mile Run will be on Saturday, March 19. Brandon Hemel will oversee the planning which includes obtaining and distributing supplies and, afterward, providing hot dogs and marshmallows for the volunteers at the pavilion. So far, one volunteer has responded, and Brandon has reached out to Cub and Boy Scout troops. There will be a Spring Celebration on May 1. The library will be open with a story time for children. There will be games and a plant sale. Volunteers and organizers are needed. A community yard sale will be held on Saturday, May 14. Volunteers are needed to post signs and notices. There will be some reserved spaces outside at Carlin Hall. LaTonya McGowan is arranging for a company to pick up items that are unsold. A neighborhood ivy pull is being organized by the Tree Committee, Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. Volunteers will come to your house to pull English ivy from the base of your trees. Reach out to Nancy Davis (nandaviswriter@aol.com) to set up an appointment.

Steve Young announced that the county will present a panel of county staff and Animal Welfare League members to speak on the deer problem on Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. See the GC Updates for details.

Glencarlyn Attire Sales. It has been 10 years since we have had apparel for sale. Julie Lee has asked for a volunteer to organize a new apparel sale. Artwork is needed. The community will be able to place orders online.

Nominating Committee report by Kathy Reeder. Also on the committee are Steve LeSueur and Barbara Martinez. GCA officers and delegates will be elected for one-year terms at the May meeting. An article will be in the March Village View about the nominating process. All are invited to express interest or suggest names of candidates for the offices.

Upcoming Meetings. March 7: Arlington Neighborhood Village with Pete Olivere as moderator. They provide volunteer assistance - such as performing odd jobs and providing transportation - to keep seniors in their homes. April 4: Photojournalist and neighbor Lloyd

Wolf will share his work since 2007 documenting the diversity of the Columbia Pike corridor community. May 2: GCA officer elections and brainstorming session on improving the GCA.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm.