

10/17/2008 KORT Minutes

- Attendance: Steve Ruder, Jay Kerschner, Tiffany Millen, Rick Stewart, Jennifer Buerer, Brenna Taylor, Erin Glenn, Heather Stockman, Michelle Apel, Leshundra Haughton, Brittney Davey, Erva DeShaziler, Maribel Zill, Judy Romero, Lynda Malka.
- In our introductions and check in, the consensus of the group was that we have gotten into solid teaching routines with our children and have settled down from the craziness of opening the year at temporary facilities.
- I discussed the need for me to step down as KORT facilitator due to constraints on my time and focus this year. The basic roles of the facilitator are:
 - Helping to move the meeting along so that individual topics do not consume too much time.
 - Helping to monitor discussions so that they remain issue centered and civil.
 - Keeping notes of what occurs at meetings and following-up with issues.
 - Sending out minutes after meeting and asking for agenda items.
 - Sending out reminders and agendas in advance of meetings.
- If you are interested in be considered as the new facilitator, please send an email to me by Monday, November 3 with a short list of your experiences and your goals as facilitator. I will compile all biographies into the agenda email sent out in advance of the meeting so that we can have a secret vote on the new facilitator at the end of the November meeting. Prospective facilitators should make a strong attempt to attend the November KORT meeting so that people can connect a face to your name.
- We discussed the interest in informal teaching and socialization opportunities. While we may have limited availability of a large space at PACT this year, check to see if an event that you are interested in can be scheduled at our site. If the event cannot be scheduled at PACT, alternative spaces available range from your home for small events to local library rooms to churches. Remember, these activities can be small and informal. Talk to people around you and see if they share similar interests. Home schooling has many advantages, but a child always working just for their parents probably isn't one of them. Upcoming opportunities and areas of interest:
 - Tiffany Millen described the Report Rally and Park day events she has planned to be help next week at Gateway church. Her current group consists mainly of children in 1st through 3rd grade. If the event grows to include students in older grades, she said she would work to have age groups broken into different presentation groups.

- I announced Dani's upcoming Andrew Pudewa training series for his writing method. Those of us who were fortunate enough to have students in the co-op class run by Mrs. Couch last year know how powerful the Pudewa method is when teaching children who are stressed about writing or who "blank out" when a blank paper is put in front of them. After the training, the Pudewa method uses a series of DVD lectures that require simple facilitation from the instructor. Please consider going to this training.
 - I agreed to organize a science fair this year if it can be scheduled at the new site. I will have more information at the next meeting. If the event cannot be scheduled at PACT, I am willing to help arrange an offsite event. I would try to schedule this event so that the project can be showcased at the PACT Extravaganza in May
 - Michelle Apel asked if we could organize a spelling bee. While we have probably missed the deadline to become involved in a national bee, if someone is interested in organizing an in-house bee this year it could be a low pressure and fun practice run.
 - Brittney Davey suggested that we consider a 50 states exhibit fair. In addition to the traditional 5th grade standards state report, students could make a full 5 senses exhibit of items from the state and dress as a famous character from the state. Her description of the event sounded like a great learning experience and a lot of fun.
 - Thinking long term, I suggested that we begin the process of exploring the possibility of finding a debate coach and forming a debate team.
 - Following the meeting, Leshundra Haughton mentioned that she attended the Odyssey of the Mind meeting and is trying to get a team together. Odyssey of the mind is an international competition involving school age groups emphasizing team based problem solving. For more information, check out the website at <http://www.odysseyofthemind.com/> or email Leshundra at alhaughton@att.net
- We discussed general procedural issues for KORT. The consensus was that the group does not want a long series of meetings to discuss how KORT should function. Here is a general list of topics to consider between now and the November meeting to vote on:
- To avoid "rubber stamping" requests for KORT funds, we need a set of criteria to guide our decision. Suggested guidelines in the past have included:
 - Determining the true need of the request.
 - Questioning the number of students that the request will serve.
 - Asking for a demonstration that comparison shopping was done.
 - Determining that the KORT budget is the appropriate place to pay for the request.

- When making any important vote, establishing criteria for when and how the vote is held. Suggested guidelines have included:
 - The issue must have been included in an agenda sent out well in advance so that parents knew the issue would be voted on.
 - Whether or not to allow votes by parents who are unable to attend the meeting (using surveys, emailing the facilitator or advisor, etc)
- A separate issue is whether critical issues should either be vetted or decided by an elected KORT steering committee.
- Please email me any thoughts, changes, or additions to these questions. I will include these changes in our next KORT Invitation/Agenda. Remember to give these issues consideration before the meeting so that we can finalize these policies in an efficient manner and move on to more interesting topics.