Gaskill Elementary School 2026-2027

PTO General Meeting

09/10/2026

Thursday, September 10, 2026 5:30 PM

President's Welcome & Update: Hillary Hendrix & Hema Visweswaraiah

Hillary and Hema introduced themselves.

Principal's Update: Mrs. Dominick & Mr. Hershberger

Leslie Dominick, Principal, welcomed everyone to the PTO and to Gaskill Elementary. Ms. Dominick shared that our district, LPS, is now accredited "with distinction." Gaskill is also in that accreditation category.

Leslie thanked Lisa Banks for turning the former SMART Lab into the Nature Nook. Ms. Banks worked hard all summer on that endeavor.

The school hosted Gudy Gaskill Day on Friday, September 4th, which was a fun event.

Ms. Banks - Introduction of the Nature Nook:

Ms. Dominick introduced Ms. Banks. Ms. Banks shared that she attended classes about outdoor learning and how impactful it can be to bring nature inside to students. She shared information about the social-emotional, physical, academic, and other benefits of incorporating nature into learning.

Ms. Banks then provided a tour of the Nature Nook, which has a building station, puzzle stations, outdoor based games, reading areas, and an exploration station with microscopes, fossils, shells, pinecones, etc. The 4th Grade has brought their students down already to enjoy the Nature Nook, and the students have been really excited to explore the newly designed space. Ms. Banks shared that teachers can tie the Nature Nook into their academic standards. Ms. Banks created a folder for the school with lesson plans. We're also developing plans for developing this further as we go.

As we integrate outdoor learning into Gaskill, Ms. Banks shared that the school intends to use the SMART Lab/Nature Nook, the courtyard behind the nature nook, the outdoor classroom, the field, playground, and neighborhood areas like local trails and parks.

Ms. Banks thanked the parents who have donated some of the supplies for the school, as well as the PTO!

Katie asked what other support we can provide for the Nature Nook? Ms. Banks said if we have future ideas, we can communicate that out.

Hillary shared that there are pictures from Gudy Gaskill Day on Facebook and Instagram. We were also gifted a Gudy Gaskill original painting, which is hanging in the Nature Nook.

Overview of PTO and its Impact:

Hillary provided a brief overview of the PTO's role. She shared that the Executive Committee meets over the summer and during the school year to plan events.

Some of our PTO initiatives including giving every student as Gaskill t-shirt, allowing every child to pick out a book during the book fair, putting on the Fall Fest, Trailblazer Trot (we are one of the only schools that coordinates our own Fun Run), and other important school events and fundraisers. We also run a teacher grant, so if teachers want to attend a conference, they can request a grant. We want to make sure that the teachers have what they need so that the kids can have what they need.

We shared that there would be a volunteer fair after the PTO meeting!

Community Events and Information

- The Mill Levy will be **Measure 4A**. This is a Mill Levy Override that will be on our ballots in November, which will give pay increases to our staff. The bond can only be used for physical construction. If passed, the Mill Levy Override will go to staff member pay.
    - Katie shared that LPS is hosting community forums to lay out the financial picture now, and what will happen if the Mill Levy passes or doesn't pass. If you want a deep dive on the financial picture, anyone in the community is welcome to attend one of those.
- A parent, Kevin Fasing presented on **Liam's Law and Safe Streets initiatives**.
    - Kevin is partnering with both Gaskill's administration and the school district on these initiatives. Kevin shared that one neighborhood has a **bike bus** that travels to school together each week. The route to school is one of the most dangerous routes in the city of Centennial, so Kevin and Caley created a bike bus to guide the kids safely across. About 15-20 kids every Wednesday participate in the bike bus.
    - Kevin shared that last spring, he led the Bike and Roll to School Day! The next big event that Kevin would like to see implemented would be **Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day**. This is celebrated November 14th, but a good day would be Wednesday, November 18th. The goal is to inspire kids to make changes in their school by walking. Kevin asked that the PTO consider providing support for that event.
    - Kevin is also working on a **Ballot Initiative** to vote on in **November 2027**. This will be a citizen-led ballot initiative. LPS supports this and wants to be involved. Let Kevin know if you want to be involved.
- **Fall Fest** is coming up! Be on the lookout for sign-ups to volunteer for that.
    - Tickets are $5 in advance. If your family is unable to cover the cost, PTO will provide some complementary tickets, so let us know if you or someone you know needs help. Day-of volunteers get a free ticket. There will be face painting, glitter tattoos, carnival games, etc. Scan the QR code and buy tickets! You can also sign up to donate prizes or volunteer.
- Also coming up is **Field Day**.
- Parents were reminded that if they're not receiving emails about volunteer opportunities or school events, please let us know.

- **Tasty Trailblazers** all day at Grand Station in Downtown Littleton on **Sept 22nd**
- **Trailblazer Trot** is **October 23rd**. This is our biggest fundraiser of the Fall. If you own or work at a business that is willing to be a sponsor, we'd love to have them be a sponsor for the Trail Mixer or the Trot. We try to raise money as a fund run.
- Our biggest fundraiser of the spring is the **Trail mixer**, which will be Luau themed.
- **The Stride** is **October 25th**. Sign up to help, sign up to run! We can earn prizes! Our theme this year will be Pajama Party, so come dressed in your pajamas!

The floor was opened to see if anyone had questions. No additional questions or comments were raised.

Next PTO General Meeting: November 12, 2026 at 5:30 PM