



Work Continues on District, State Budgets

Across the metropolitan Kansas City area, school districts are struggling with the impact of the deepest economic recession since World War II. State revenue collection in both Kansas and Missouri is off sharply, which has resulted in painful cuts to school district budgets. Thus far, the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS) has cut more than \$21 million from its budget over the past two fiscal years.

In this challenging environment, work continues on a number of different fronts, in order to secure funds and create a budget that allows the district to continue, and even accelerate, changes and improvements in academic achievement. Last week, an article in the *Staff Notebook* highlighted the work of a committee of district staff, which is working to identify potential

savings throughout the district budget.

In December, the Board of Education took the courageous step of joining Schools for Fair Funding (SFFF), a consortium of school districts from across the state of Kansas which successfully sued the state, in order to secure a more equitable funding formula for education. While the 2005 State Supreme Court decision in the *Montoy* case brought significant additional funding to KCKPS, recent state budget cuts threaten to bring district funding down to where it was before the case was settled.

Last Friday, the Supreme Court denied a motion filed by SFFF lawyers to reopen the *Montoy* case. This Friday, SFFF districts will meet in Newton, Kansas, and will consider whether to file a

To find contact information on your state legislators, go to <http://tinyurl.com/9n9en2>

new school funding lawsuit.

Meanwhile, the Kansas legislature is coming up on some key deadlines in the 2010 legislative session. As always, staff are encouraged to communicate with their legislative representatives about the decisions being made this session, and how they will impact the district's ability to help all students to reach higher levels of achievement. You can find your representatives here:

<http://tinyurl.com/9n9en2>

Getting Business Savvy

39 Students Attend BizFest

Thirty-nine high school students from the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools recently gained insight into turning their hobbies and interests into profit-making ventures through KC BizFest.

Now in its seventh year, KC BizFest is a program coordinated by the Greater Kansas City Hispanic Collaborative aimed at providing Latino and minority students with entrepreneurial experience, economic literacy, improved skills in math, reading and verbal communication and workforce readiness. The event took place



More than 100 Kansas City area business professionals served as guest speakers and mentors at the KC BizFest last week.

Feb. 10-13 at the Indian Creek Technology Center in Overland Park.

KCKPS students represented nearly half of the total students in attendance from metro area high schools.

Along with presentations on business planning, marketing (Continued on back)

Fire Prevention

Smoke Alarms Distributed to New Chelsea Families

A house fire took the lives of two toddlers in mid January and impacted many in the Kansas City, Kansas community, especially the staff and families of New Chelsea Elementary School. The children who were killed were the siblings of a kindergartner at the school.

Though the family had smoke alarms in their home, they reportedly were not working.

In an effort to safeguard other families from this type of tragedy, New Chelsea teamed up with the KCK Fire Department to provide smoke alarms to their families. Fire fighters canvassed the New Chelsea (Continued on back)

Schools Host Black History Month Celebrations

In recognition of February as Black History Month, many schools in the district are hosting celebrations and events.

At F.L. Schlagle High School, students and staff have taken part in a number of activities coordinated by the Black History Month Committee. Special Educator **Diamond Howell** is the committee chair.

They kicked off the month with a Film Festival and a Door Decorating Contest. This week, the students participated in a look-alike contest where they came to school dressed as their favorite black educator,

black sports hero or black business or organizational leader. On Friday, Feb. 19, students will celebrate with a Family Reunion Day of games and activities. The month will wrap up on Friday, Feb. 26 with The Juke House talent show.

At Washington High School, the Fourth Annual Black History Leadership Conference will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 1:20 p.m. Friday, February 26 in the large gym. The theme is "Step Into Your Future." The primary purpose of the conference is to empower students to plan ahead and

set future goals. These events aim at educating, challenging and entertaining while providing opportunities for students to learn more on the rich history of African Americans.

Session One of the conference will consist of several guest speakers, and hands-on work sessions that will guide students through each phase of the college process. Session



Two will consist of several performances of rich black history through sororities, fraternities and entrepreneurs, a fashion show, steppers and praise dancers.

For more information, contact **Jean Carter**, jecarte@kckps.org, (913) 627-7808.

School Supplies, Food Needed for Homeless

The second Semester has brought new students into the district, and more clients to the Homeless Liaison's Office.

Students beginning school in the district are often in desperate need of basic school supplies so they can complete their school work. Food items also are a constant need, especially protein foods like cans and pouches of meat. Meat is a great source of protein, which gives homeless children energy during these cold winter months.

Collection bins/barrels for the Homeless Office are

located at the Central Office and at the Education Center. Items also may be dropped off at the Homeless Office during the day. The office is located at 3101 Minnesota Ave., Unit 5 (inside Connelly Hall).

The following is a brief list of some basic items needed:

School supplies such as:

- Notebook paper
- Spiral notebooks
- Folders
- Pencils
- Crayons
- Rulers

Other food items needed:*

- Canned fruit
- Boxed cereal
- Applesauce

Canned meats such as:*

- Tuna
- Spam
- Chicken
- Beef
- Pork
- Corned Beef
- Sardines
- Vienna sausage
- Potted meat
- Baby shrimp

**Make sure fruits and meats come in easy open pouches or pop-top cans.*

Smoke Alarms to New Chelsea Families

(Continued from front)

neighborhood to pass out the alarms. If families had alarms, the fire fighters checked the batteries and provided new ones if needed, according to **Patricia Hussey**, school secretary.

Earlier this month, during Family Advocacy Days, fire officials set up a table at the school with fire prevention information and smoke

alarms. A total of 224 smoke alarms were given out during the two-day period.

"We wanted to do something to raise awareness of fire safety to prevent another tragedy," Hussey said.

In loving memory of the children who lost their lives, the school staff plans to have a plaque created this spring.

BizFest

(Continued from front)

and public relations, and start-up costs for businesses, students also learned about business etiquette, such as how to dress, the importance of making eye contact when shaking hands and how to make a good first impression.

Statistics show that 75 percent of the students who take part in BizFest go on to higher education.



STAFF NOTEBOOK

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Submissions are welcome and are due by noon on Monday for the following edition. Direct them to:

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