



Title I Schools Eligible for Federal School Improvement Dollars

(The following story is excerpted from a Kansas Department of Education press release, which contains information about schools eligible for Title I School Improvement Grants. All identified schools have been notified.)

The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) is required to release a list of schools that meet the federal definition of “Persistently Lowest-Achieving.” This list is a result of federal law and regulation in order to access federal school improvement dollars. Only schools that are on the list are eligible for these funds. When announcing the availability of the School Improvement Funds, Secretary Arne Duncan said, “States and school districts have an opportunity to put unprecedented resources toward reforms that would increase graduation rates, reduce dropout rates and improve

teacher quality for all students, and particularly for children who most need good teaching in order to catch up.”

Many of the schools on the list have made significant gains in student achievement on the state mathematics and reading assessments over the past few years; however, due to the way of calculating the list of schools, they are considered persistently lowest achieving.

The list of schools is divided into 3 groups or tiers. Each tier has its own criteria for identifying schools. Below is an overview of each tier; the complete definition, “Defining Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools,” is posted on the KSDE website at <http://www.ksde.org/Default.aspx?tabid=3498>.

The Tier I schools come from the list of 2009-2010 Title I schools that are already identified as being on improvement, corrective action or restructuring.

There are 32 Title I schools from which the Tier I schools are selected. The state identifies the five schools with the lowest performance on the state reading and mathematics assessments for the last three years combined as the Tier I schools.

The Tier II schools are selected from all the high schools in the state that are eligible for Title I which is a federal program. In Kansas, approximately 270 high schools are Title I eligible. From this pool of schools, the state selects the 5% that have the lowest performance based on state mathematics and reading assessments for the last three years combined. In addition, to the 5% of schools based on state assessment results, high schools are included in Tier II if their graduation rates are less than 60% for the last three years.

The final group of schools on *(Continued on back)*

Board of Education News

Budget Reduction Ideas Presented to Board

Ideas about how the KCK Public Schools can cut \$14.6 million out of its budget for next school year were presented to the KCK Board of Education at its meeting on February 23. Some ideas were developed by a committee of principals and department heads, while others came from districts across the state.

A district-wide furlough was one prospect presented. It would mean closing the district for one to two days, saving the district \$650,000 in salary costs. Other ideas included reducing the district’s summer school program, cutting the school resource officer program and changing the preschool calendar to save some transportation costs.

The Board will consider these and other ideas at a future meeting.

In other action, the Board:

- Recognized Employees of the Month for February *(see related story in this issue)*.

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District Schedules Community Budget Forums

The Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools will host budget forums next month, in order to inform the community about the district’s budget situation, the challenges that the district is currently facing, and the process that is in place to address those challenges. Two forums will be held:

- Monday, March 8, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., at Washington High School
- Thursday, March 11, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., at Wyandotte High School

District staff will present information about the district budget, and discuss areas that may be impacted by potential budget reductions. The community will have an opportunity to provide input into the budgeting process, and the impact of potential reductions on the district’s goal of getting all students to higher levels of achievement. Residents, district staff, students and parents are all encouraged to attend.



Problem Solvers ...

Students across the district practiced their skills in algebraic concepts, numbers sense, trigonometry and more at the 6th Annual Math Relays held February 20 at Wyandotte High School. A total of 1,350 students signed up for the event.

Board of Education News

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- Approved proposed policy changes to the Board of Education’s policy for Graduation Requirements effective for the graduating class of 2014. Changes include the completion of a mathematics course during the senior year of high school, as mandated by the Kansas Board of Regents. The new policy also includes changes in the requirements for science to include one unit of biology, at least one physical science and one additional course from a series of rigorous offerings.

February Employees of the Month

Congratulations to February Employees of the Month: **Karen Rogers**, school psychologist at White Church Elementary School and several other schools; and **Carlos Olivas**, head girls’ soccer coach at J.C. Harmon High School.

The following are excerpts from their nominations:

Karen Rogers

“This is her first year at White Church and she has been a tremendous asset . . . When teachers ask her for advice or to observe a child, they know that she will be on it as soon as she can. She gives feedback and communication in a very timely and productive manner . . . She works great with all the staff in our building. She runs all of our meetings very professionally and in a very personable manner . . . The staff here appreciates the support we get from her. Even at times when there are differing viewpoints over testing or qualifications, there

are never issues due to how she handles herself and how she explains things very thoroughly and thoughtfully.”

Carlos Olivas

“Since the beginning of the school year, Carlos Olivas’ investment in the J.C. Harmon Girls’ Soccer Team has gone above and beyond what any time clock or contract may specify . . . He coaches classroom excellence first, soccer second. This is reflected in the number of scholar athletes the girls’ soccer team has produced in the past few years . . . When the ladies have an issue, they do not hesitate to talk to him; he always takes time to actively listen . . . He has also taken time to visit college campuses with a few young ladies and their parents. He doesn’t think twice about paying out of his pocket for equipment the team needs . . . Last year he coached the girls’ soccer team to capture the district’s first girls’ soccer league title.”

Volunteers Needed to Pack One Million Meals for Haiti

The Salvation Army in Kansas City is partnering with Numana, Inc., an international hunger relief organization, to provide one million meals to Haiti earthquake victims in a mass food packing event February 26-27.

The food packing event will take place from noon to 8 p.m. Friday, February 26 and 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, February 27 at the American Royal Center, 1701 American Royal Ct. in Kansas City, Mo., in the Governor’s Expo Hall.

More than 12,000 volunteers are needed to serve one-hour shifts, packing the meals in an assembly-line fashion. No registration is required. Just show up!

200 “Red Shirt Leaders” are needed to train and lead other volunteers. Red Shirt Leaders serve a four-hour shift. To sign up to be a Red Shirt leader, go to www.salarmy-mokan.org.

Title I Schools

(Continued from front) the list is the Tier III schools. These are the other 27 Title I schools on improvement, corrective action or restructuring which were not included in the Tier I list. These schools are on the improvement list for not making Adequate Yearly Progress for two years. Several may go off improvement this year if their assessment scores

continue to improve and they make AYP. The Tier III list of schools also includes some Title I eligible high schools with lower performance that were excluded from Tier II because the number of students taking the state assessments was less than 30.

February 28 through March 6 is National School Social Work Week.



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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