

Education News

Articles from Local Newspapers About or Affecting our District

June 16 – 30, 2009

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Breaking News

Board hears plan for new central facility

By **NICK SLOAN**, Staff Writer

Kansas City Kansan

Posted Jun 16, 2009 @ 06:44 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — The Kansas City Kan., Board of Education approved preliminary evaluations for a new Education Center facility for the district.

The facility, which would be about 100,000 square feet in size, is located at 59th and Parallel and on the campus of F.L. Schagle High School. The centerpiece of the plan is a three-story structure, which would be built into elevation in an effort to save costs.

"These are literally six hours old and we put these together for our meeting," said Mike Belew, a spokesperson for LADCO Development. "These are strictly conceptual plans."

The new facility would serve as the district's central office, leaving its current location for the use of the Kansas City, Kan., Public Library. Departments including curriculum and instruction, student, family and community services and others would be moved to the building.

As far as how it will be funded, KCKPS Assistant Superintendent Cynthia Lane said no new funds would be used.

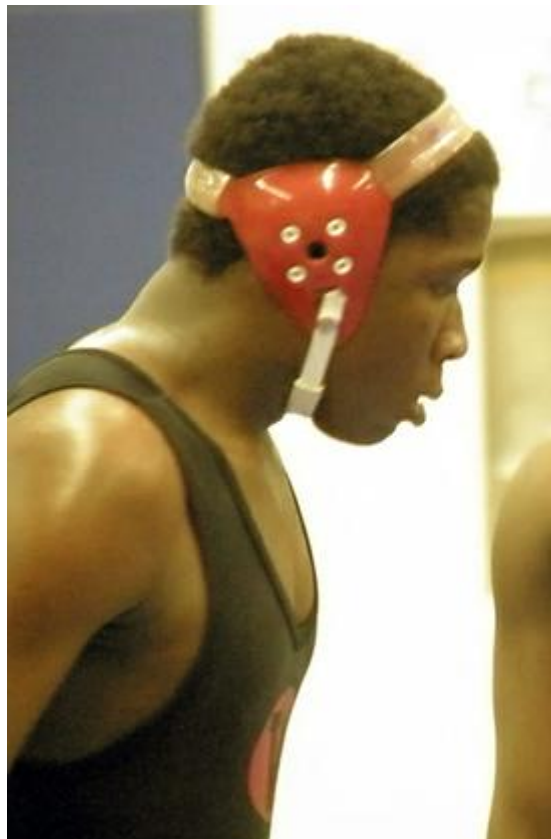
"It would be funded through certificate of participation which will use existent funding," Lane said.

The next step in the process, Belew said, is a finalized plan for the area.

"We want to comeback on June 30th with hard drawings," he said. "We want to present a plan that will meet all the needs for the district."

Kansan – June 16, 2009

High school '08-'09 recap: Wrestling



NICK SLOAN

Wyandotte High School's Jerome Newman was one of the county's premier wrestler's in 2008-09.

More related photos

http://www.kansascitykansan.com/sports_highschool/x124632237/High-school-08-09-recap-Wrestling?view=pop&photo=1



By NICK SLOAN, Sports Editor

Kansas City Kansan

Posted Jun 16, 2009 @ 12:55 PM

Kansas City, Kan. —

Over the next few weeks, we'll look back at the 2008-09 high school season in Wyandotte County. Today, we'll begin with wrestling.

At the state competition level, three schools had wrestlers who "placed," with Turner and Washington each having two wrestlers place, while Wyandotte's Jerome Newman also did well at state.

The complete list and place where each wrestler finished:

Turner

- Jason Langford, third place in 5A Kansas in 140-lb weight level.
- Luciano Gutierrez, runner-up in 5A Kansas in 215-lb weight level

Washington

- James Wauer, 4th place in 5A Kansas in 119-lb weight level.
- Bryron Roath, 4th place in 5A Kansas in 145-lb weight level.

Wyandotte

- Jerome Newman, 6th place in 5A Kansas in 215-lb weight level.

OTHER STORIES

- The Turner Golden Bears won the Wyandotte County Wrestling Tournament over the eight other local schools that was held last winter.
- The Sumner Academy Sabres prevailed in the Kansas City, Kan., League once again.
- All Wyandotte County Wrestling Team and individual awards

Wrestler of the Year: Luciano Gutierrez, Turner High School

Coach of the Year: Darwyn Thomlinson, Washington High School

103lbs

1st Team: Ronnie Enloe, Washington

2nd Team: Tony Arzola, Turner

112 lbs

1st Team: Caleb Seaton, Bonner Springs

2nd Team: Robert Arzola, Turner

Honorable Mention: Russell Brown, Turner

119 lbs

1st Team: James Wauer, Washington

2nd Team: Nick Coffman, Piper

Honorable Mention: James Lohman, Turner

125 lbs

1st Team: Derrick Weller, Piper

2nd Team: Forrest Carrol, Turner

Honorable Mention: Brooks Ballou, Bonner Springs

130 lbs

1st Team: Chris John, Turner

2nd Team: Jermaine Rhone, Schlagle

Honorable Mention: Aaron Morris

135 lbs

1st Team: Jimeal Glover, Wyandotte

2nd Team: Devan Sierant, Turner

Honorable Mention: Collin Zwart, Piper

140 lbs

1st Team: Jason Langford, Turner

2nd Team: Demetrius Clay, Schlagle

Honorable Mention: Phillip Lewis, Piper

145 lbs

1st Team: Byron Roath, Washington

2nd Team: Adam Shirley, Bonner Springs

Honorable Mention: Jesse Estrada, Turner

152 lbs

1st Team: Brian Callahan, Bonner Springs

2nd Team: Joe Mohler, Turner

Honorable Mention: Jaysson Tansey, Sumner and Alex Orel, Bishop Ward

160 lbs

1st Team: Gerardo Pena, Turner

2nd Team: Tyler Coffey, Piper

Honorable Mention: German Lira, Washington

171 lbs

1st Team: Herman Ming, Schlagle

2nd Team: Anthony Ellingsworth, Bonner Springs

Honorable Mention: David Selleck, Washington

189 lbs

1st Team: Elijah Ming, Schlagle

2nd Team: Keith Slowter, Washington

Honorable Mention: Armando Alcantara, Turner

215 lbs

1st Team: Luciano Gutierrez, Turner

2nd Team: Jerome Newman, Wyandotte

Honorable Mention: Brandon Nickerson, Schlagle

Heavyweight

1st Team: Tanner McCleary, Bonner Springs

2nd Team: Sheron Berry, Sumner

Honorable Mention: Ervin DeMata, Harmon

- Newman wins prestigious scholarship

Wyandotte High School's Jerome Newman was awarded the Jeffery C. Wicina Wrestling scholarship this season.

The \$1,500 scholarship was presented to Newman at the Mo-Kan Metro Classic Wrestling Dual earlier this year. He was one of three finalists for the award.

KCK Public Library cuts 14 more positions

By **NICK SLOAN**, Staff Writer

Kansas City Kansan

Posted Jun 16, 2009 @ 07:59 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — The Kansas City, Kan., Board of Education approved a measure to eliminate 14 more library positions tonight.

The number — along with those already eliminated this year — represents roughly 20 percent of the library's workforce. The library will have 108 employees entering the next school year, down from 134 this fiscal year.

The positions will save the district around \$400,000.

J.D. Rios, an assistant superintendent for the district, said the library will adjust to the cuts so services are not lost.

"We'll increase staff development on the public side," he said. "On the school side, we need to increase our services at the schools so they understand the value of library services in academic achievement."

Library staff on hand at the meeting said the cuts will help reduce the library budget by 14 percent. Because of economic problems state-wide and locally, the school district has had to cut millions from the budget.

The library is included in the main budget for the Kansas City, Kan., Public Schools District.

KCK students to take part in K-State even

By **SPECIAL TO THE KANSAN**

GateHouse News Service

Posted Jun 16, 2009 @ 02:54 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — Five days of engineering, math and science exploration is the agenda planned for eighth- and ninth-grade girls June 22-26 at Kansas State University.

The seventh annual EXCITE! Workshop will feature hands-on activities led by K-State faculty, as well as industry tours geared toward the six workshop tracts of biofuels, computer-gaming design, nano-sensors, robotics, green roof design and principles of flight. EXCITE! stands for EXploring sClence, Technology and Engineering.

EXCITE! is sponsored by K-State's Women in Engineering and Science Program, which receives industry support from Cerner, ScriptPro, Perceptive Software, ICM, Spirit Aero Systems, Abengoa Bioenergy Corporation, BNIM and the Discovery Center.

This year, for the first time, the Women in Engineering and Science Program will be partnering with the Manhattan Area Technical College to put on the event.

Girls from the following communities will be participating: Abilene, Auburn, Baldwin City, Belleville, Coyer, Courtland, Deerfield, Derby, Dodge City, Emporia, Enterprise, Fort Leavenworth, Frontenac, Geneseo, Great Bend, Hays, Hiawatha, Hutchinson, Junction City, Kansas City, Kan., Lansing, Lawrence, Lyons, Manhattan, Olathe, Oskaloosa, Paola, Pittsburg, Quinter, Shawnee, Spearville, Topeka, Ulysses, Wamego and Wichita.

Girls also will be attending from Littleton, Colo.; Grandview, Kansas City and St. Louis, Mo.; and Arlington, Texas.

F.L. Schagle High School sponsors Scholars' Bowl team

By **SPECIAL TO THE KANSAN**

Kansas City Kansan

Posted Jun 17, 2009 @ 12:42 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — During the 2008-09 school year, the Scholars' Bowl team at F.L. Schagle High School competed in fourteen tournaments at schools in the Johnson, Wyandotte, Leavenworth and Douglas counties, as well as the Quest competition, sponsored by Washburn University.

A Scholars' Bowl competition consists of two teams of four or five students, answering questions from academic subjects, current events and contemporary knowledge.

Members of the 2008-09 Schagle Stallion Scholars' Bowl team were Enice Fuel, Katherine Goetz, Stephon Hardridge, Adegboyega (Oye) Hassan, Trenton Hodge, Samuel Kampmeier, Adam Kloiber, Mychal Nelson, Kristina Reynolds, Kayla Simpson, Stasha Smith, Jessica Walker and Kiara Withers.

The school hosts the annual F.L. Schagle Freshman-Sophomore tournament held in January.

Scholars' Bowl competitions are sanctioned by the Kansas State High School Activities Association.

KCK Public Library cuts 14 more positions

By **NICK SLOAN**, Staff Writer

Kansas City Kansan

Posted Jun 16, 2009 @ 07:59 PM

Last update Jun 17, 2009 @ 12:46 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — The Kansas City, Kan., Board of Education approved a measure to eliminate 14 more library positions tonight.

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Library staff on hand at the meeting said the cuts will help reduce the library budget by 14 percent. Because of economic problems state-wide and locally, the school district has had to cut millions from the budget.

The library is included in the main budget for the Kansas City, Kan., Public Schools District.

One week later, Sumner Academy to appear on Newsweek list

By **NICK SLOAN**, Staff Writer

Kansas City Kansan

Posted Jun 17, 2009 @ 12:36 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — Sumner Academy of Arts and Sciences is used to making *Newsweek's* list of best public high schools in the United States.

But this year, it will come in a different fashion.

Initially omitted from the list by accident, Sumner Academy will appear in a republished list later next week.

The exact ranking is unknown, but officials from the school district say Sumner will appear in a newer list.

"We're going to celebrate it when it happens," said Jill Shackelford, superintendent of the Kansas City, Kan., Public Schools District.

Schools such as Sumner Academy are ranked based a ration of the number of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or Cambridge test taken by all students divided by the number of graduated seniors.

Each year, schools around nation are left off the initial list and later submitted into an amended list. This year, Sumner happened to be one of those schools.

Last year, Sumner appeared 180th on the list. In 2003, it was ranked as the 105th best school, 75th in 2005, 117th in 2006 and the school was 124th on last year's rankings.



Posted on Tue, Jun. 16, 2009

Kansas City, Kan., school administrators could have a new home

By MARK WIEBE
The Kansas City Star

The Kansas City, Kan., school district took a step Tuesday toward finding workspace for administrators, many of whom are in the former Indian Springs shopping center that is slated for demolition.

On a 6-0 voice vote, the school board approved preliminary plans for a 100,000-square-foot building at 59th Street and Parallel Parkway.

The move does not commit the district to constructing the building, but it does signal an intention to examine alternatives to a proposal to build administrative space as part of a mixed-use office and retail complex in downtown Kansas City, Kan.

Located in the 500 and 600 blocks of Minnesota Avenue, the proposed downtown development has stalled because of the recession.

School officials said they need to begin exploring an alternative to the downtown plan to meet a goal of moving out of Indian Springs by Dec. 31, 2010.

"We're just exploring all options," said assistant superintendent Cynthia Lane. "We need to set a firm direction in the next 45 to 60 days."

Lane stressed that the downtown option is "not completely off the table."

No estimates have been established for the building at the 59th and Parallel site. The district would share the cost with Wyandotte County's unified government, which acquired Indian Springs through eminent domain and plans to demolish the building to make way for a mixed-use development.

The school district building would house 200 to 250 administrators who would come not only from the Indian Springs site but also from the district's administrative offices at the downtown Kansas City, Kan., Public Library.

The building would be on district property, forming a campus of sorts with Schlagle High School, the Technical Education Center and a transportation center. Lane said the consolidation of administrative functions at that site would allow the district to share the cost of some functions with the other buildings.

However, the building would not house a lab school or a student-run business that have been planned for the downtown facility.

To reach Mark Wiebe call 816-234-7745 or send e-mail to mwiebe@kcstar.com.



Posted on Wed, Jun. 17, 2009

KCK Public Library plans to cut a dozen employees

By MARK WIEBE
The Kansas City Star

The Kansas City, Kan., Public Library will begin its next fiscal year July 1 with 27 fewer positions than it had beginning last year — a 20 percent staff reduction.

Although most of the reduction has come through attrition that has occurred over the last year, library officials say they must lay off 12 employees to cope with a shrinking property tax base.

“We tried many scenarios where we didn’t have to cut staff at all,” said Associate Director Helen Rigdon. “It just came up that we couldn’t make the cuts without affecting patron services. And we just didn’t want to do that.”

The library received permission Tuesday from the Kansas City, Kan., Board of Education — which oversees the library system — to begin the process of laying off the dozen employees. Rigdon said those employees would be told that their last day would be Aug. 1.

None of the layoffs will affect the library’s frontline services — librarians who serve the public. Nor will the hours of the library system’s five branches be affected.

The staff cuts came at the request of the Kansas City, Kan., School District, which has had to eliminate teaching and support positions in the face of a \$16 million cut in its budget.

The library’s budget crisis is largely due to a reduction in property tax revenue, a product of lower appraised property values in Wyandotte County.

To reach Mark Wiebe, call 816-234-7745 or send e-mail to mwiebe@kcstar.com.

Shackelford to testify at legislative commission

By **KANSAN STAFF**

Kansas City Kansan

Posted Jun 19, 2009 @ 04:06 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — Kansas City, Kan., Public Schools Superintendent Jill Shackelford will testify later this month to the 2010 Commission in the Kansas Legislation.

One of 11 superintendents state-wide selected, Shackelford will testify about the budget cuts enforced within the district.

The testimony will be made June 29.

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Posted on Mon, Jun. 22, 2009

Sumner Academy could join Lincoln College Preparatory Academy on elite list

This much is certain: The Kansas City School District's Lincoln College Preparatory Academy has earned a high ranking in Newsweek's list of the top U.S. high schools.

And all indications are that Sumner Academy in Kansas City, Kan., will find a place on the list as well.

Newsweek admits it sometimes misses a few schools as it tries to sort through data.

As of Monday, Lincoln was No. 130 — highest in the area. Sumner, 180th last year, expects to be added soon.

| Joe Robertson, jrobertson@kcstar.com

Star – June 22, 2009

Once in danger of dropping out, this scholar is beating the odds

By MEREDITH RODRIGUEZ

The Kansas City Star



Photo by Keith Myers

Aaron Farish thinks his desire to learn sets him apart. He has become a voice in the Hispanic community and plans to attend college at Truman State University.

It's the smart ones who often find trouble.

At age 14, Aaron Farish did something he imagined was totally original. A bored freshman, he set J.C. Harmon High School's bathroom trash cans on fire, a cardinal offense just below bringing a gun to school.

After a week in juvenile hall, a month on house arrest, nine months on probation and a semester at the Fairfax alternative school, Farish was surprised to learn the stunt had been pulled by punks before.

"I said to him, 'What makes you think it's new?' " said school librarian Mary Sternshein, who became a mentor to Farish. "He said, 'I thought I did something unique.'

"He's really embarrassed about it now."

It was what he did next that was truly unusual. He left Fairfax with straight A's and re-enrolled at Harmon High his sophomore year. He hasn't earned lower than a B since.

He's active in politics and is gaining stature in the local Hispanic community.

"Aaron is the type of student that if you looked at all the statistics and you look at all the stereotypes, he shouldn't have made it," Sternshein said. "He should've dropped out of school in ninth grade."

An urban success

As an 18-year-old high school graduate, Farish now avoids boredom by searching for scholarships.

His adult temperament and thirst for knowledge have helped him earn more than his fair share.

He won a \$10,000 scholarship from the National Council of La Raza, the largest Latino advocacy group in the country. He won \$1,000 in a Sobriety Rocks contest for performing a song about his father's alcohol-related death. And he's won more than a half-dozen others.

"I've been on some of the scholarship committees," said Gilbert Guerrero, education coordinator for Guadalupe Centers in Kansas City. "His stories are insightful, hilarious. That comedy sense is also because of his intelligence."

Farish has chosen Truman State University to begin his path to graduate school. This summer, he's a student leader intern with Youth Volunteer Corps of America.

His accomplishments are especially noteworthy in the context of his urban community, where, according to mentor Raul Murguia, "you come out of prison and you get respect. You come out of college and everyone says, 'Oh, so you think you are smarter than all of us now?' "

Farish has shattered even his family's expectations, according to his half-sister and legal guardian, Angela Rome-Pyper.

Farish's older brother Andrew was known as "the smart one." He edged out Aaron and earned the highest score at Harmon in the Accuplacer test a couple of years ago. But last year he was arrested after a robbery spree with his buddies and is serving 1½ years in a Kansas prison, waiting for a harsher sentence in Missouri.

It was devastating, Rome-Pyper said, and a fate the family had expected for Aaron.

"Aaron had this way about him. We always thought he was going to be a thug."

He now uses his charisma at places such as a Rotary Club meeting, where he made a speech to vie for a scholarship.

"He did a 100 percent perfect job," his sister said. "He's egotistical. ... He does the little, 'Hi, I'm Aaron' thing. He goes around shaking hands. Aaron acts like he's 50 ... and has been doing this his entire life."

Books saved him

Farish thinks his desire to learn set him apart at a young age. And the library supplemented what an urban curriculum often lacks.

He reads nonfiction with all the zeal of a Harry Potter fan, his current favorites being "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens" and "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff."

When they were young, he and Andrew found refuge in books. These days, the library is where he and his sister go to relax.

“We didn’t grow up with very much,” Farish said. “We saw the benefits of getting involved with libraries and reading.”

Farish’s father died before he could remember, and his mother is terminally ill. Still, Rome-Pyper said, Aaron has them to thank for his mounting library fees. He was unwittingly influenced by the stacks of books that cluttered their home.

“The boys don’t even realize it,” Rome-Pyper said. “They grew up around it constantly.”

His mom helped him in another way. After his bout with the law, the judge told her that it was her responsibility to make sure he did not violate probation.

“My mom, she is militant. If they say, ‘Do it,’ she will do it,” Rome-Pyper said. “It was like they (Aaron and his mother) were chained together. What a great punishment.”

Dedicated to Hispanics

Farish is half-Irish, but he has endeared himself to many leaders in Kansas City’s Hispanic community.

Farish has been leading 20 peers in Escalera, a career development program, to advocate for the Dream Act, a bill in Congress that would open college opportunities and a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants who attended public high schools. He spent a week in Washington meeting with legislators on the topic.

“I think he is going to be somebody who is definitely noticed in his community,” Rome-Pyper said. “He really feels like Hispanics got the short end of the deal.”

Farish even stopped drinking after he realized what his Sobriety Rocks song, which he performed for a scholarship, meant to people.

In his characteristically analytical way, Farish sees his actions more as a matter of initiative than empathy.

“If I see something wrong, even personally, I will take action,” Farish said. “A lot of people don’t take action.”

While working for Barack Obama’s campaign last fall, Farish discovered another passion, and perhaps his life direction. It made him want to be a legislator or “something that makes a difference in people’s lives,” he said.

He plans to major in his favorite subject, philosophy, at Truman State. Money for college will continue to be a concern, but he won’t have to worry about moral support.

“I can’t tell you how many cheerleaders he has on his team,” Sternshein said.

“He could’ve stood back and said, ‘World, you owe me something.’ ... Instead he’s standing there saying, ‘What can I give back? I’m alive. I’m smart. I have something to offer the world. What can I do?’ You can’t help but admire him for that.”