

# Education News

Articles from Local Newspapers About or Affecting our District

July 1 – 15, 2009

**Table of Contents:** *(You may click on a page item to go directly to that page)*

KCK library budget presented to board (Kansan 7/1) .....	2
Schraeder gets farewell from board, district (Kansan 7/1) .....	3
Sumner comes in at 109 on Newsweek list (Kansan 7/1) .....	4
Children’s Campus [photo] (Wyandotte West 7/2) .....	5
JUGGLING ACT . . . [photo] (Wyandotte West 7/2) .....	6
news briefs: 15-YEAR-OLD DIES FROM GUNSHOT WOUND (Wyandotte West 7/2) .....	7
news briefs: JUVENILE IN CRITICAL CONDITION FROM GUNSHOT (Wyandotte West 7/2) .....	7
news briefs: 7-YEAR-OLD GIRL VICTIM OF HOMICIDE JUNE 26 (Wyandotte West 7/2) .....	7
F.L. SCHLAGLE HIGH SCHOOL SPONSORS SCHOLARS’ BOWL TEAM (Wyandotte West 7/2) .....	8
SUMNER ACADEMY RANKED AMONG NATION’S TOP SCHOOLS (Wyandotte West 7/2) .....	9
Parkinson announces two percent cuts in education (Kansan 7/2) .....	10
Davenport hopes to turn Harmon's fortunes around [football w/photo] (Kansan 7/2) .....	11
Kansas schools lose an additional \$39 million in state funds (Star 7/3) .....	13
Class of '99 gets to share 10 years of experiences (Star 7/6) .....	14
ART EXHIBITS ON DISPLAY AT LIBRARY (Wyandotte West 7/6) .....	15
Excerpts from Community Calendar for July [KCK Arts Network Art Walk to be July 10] (Wyandotte West 7/6) .....	16
Excerpts from Community Calendar for July [Class reunion scheduled in July] (Wyandotte West 7/6) .....	16
Mt. Carmel grant seeks to reduce youth smoking in KCK (Kansan 7/7) .....	17
Public Safety   Homicide victim was 14 (Star 7/7) .....	18
Eight children sent to hospital from Wednesday morning fire (Kansan 7/8) .....	19
Teens Pushing for Fields of Dreams – Reaching 4 Excellence [w/link to video] (Fox4news.com 7/8) .....	20
An event-filled Art Walk in KCK [w/photos] (Star 7/9) .....	22
Kansan nominated for federal education leadership post (Star 7/9) .....	24
Second Friday Artwalk this week (Kansan 7/9) .....	25
Newsweek Ranks Sumner Academy Among Top Schools In the Nation (Record 7/9) .....	26
KCK students among Kauffman seniors (Kansan 7/10) .....	27
Keeping well-trained teachers in urban schools (Star 7/12) .....	28
KCK Public Library to offer amnesty for overdue fines next month (Kansan 7/14) .....	29
KCKPS budget workshop on Thursday (Kansan 7/14) .....	30

## KCK library budget presented to board

By **NICK SLOAN, Staff Writer**

**Kansas City Kansan**

*Posted Jul 01, 2009 @ 11:46 AM*

*Last update Jul 01, 2009 @ 12:01 PM*

Kansas City, Kan. — This year's proposed budget for the Kansas City, Kan., Public Library will contain a 13.8 percent cut.

The budget was presented to the Kansas City, Kan., Board of Education at a special meeting on Tuesday afternoon. Because of the possibility of a \$1 million debt after 2013, the library staff was asked to cut the budget.

The overall budget for next fiscal year is \$8,832,599, a near \$1.5 million decrease from last year's \$10.2 million budget.

The largest areas of cuts come in personnel, operation and equipment. Earlier this month, it was announced the library would slash positions to help shrink the budget. Just over 19 percent of the personnel line-item in the budget was cut going into this year's fiscal year.

Assistant Superintendent J.D. Rios said services for the library will not be eliminated, pointing to the 14 percent increase in the programming area entering next year.

"The quality of services will improve and will be at less costs for the community," he said. "We're not sacrificing (the services) for the patron. They need us more than ever."

KCK Public Library Account Officer Bridgette DeSmet said usage of the library has increased by 50 percent this year.

"Patrons are using more sources than ever," she said.

Prior to forming the budget, library staff explored the possibility of taking a 3-5 percent salary cut across the board in order to prevent job cuts. However, the salary cuts would not put the library at the desired budget level.

One program that is likely to be cut from the library this year is the Book Mobile program. Required repairs to the mobile would cost the library thousands of dollars. Improvement to the library's technology and online resources will be made, DeSmet said.

## Schraeder gets farewell from board, district

By **NICK SLOAN, Staff Writer**

**Kansas City Kansan**

Posted Jul 01, 2009 @ 04:36 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — When Kansas City, Kan., Board of Education President Gloria Willis first encountered outgoing KCK board member Meredith Schraeder, it was during an effort to save Mark Twain Elementary School from closing.

Over a decade later, Willis led a board and district contingent on saying farewell to Schraeder.

Board members and former officials from the Kansas City, Kan., Public Schools District gathered during the board's meeting on Tuesday to offer a goodbye to the 12-year member of the board.

"You were a great part of (educational reform) part of that," said Ray Daniels, former superintendent of the school district. "You will be replaced but you will still be a part of things."

Schraeder was elected to the board in 1997, the same year as current board members Linda Pendleton and Vicki Meyer. Since being elected, she was involved in discussions with the district's First Things First reform, benchmarks and the Laptops for Learning program.

"We came on together and learned to appreciate your thought and love for our district," Meyer said. "I love you so much and you will be missed."

Due to health reasons, Schraeder chose not to run again for a position.

"I have enjoyed everyone from top to bottom," she said, in departing remarks. "I was just another person."

Current superintendent Jill Shackelford pointed to Schraeder's independence on the board.

"Meredith always had a different angle on things," she said.

A graduate of Wyandotte High School, Schareder was on the "Save Our Schools" campaign in the mid-1990s when the board was looking to close facilities within the school district.

She was presented with a pencil sketching of Wyandotte High School buy Wyandotte principal Mary Stewart.

Willis presented the Schraeder with a plaque, which was dedicated to her service.

"We are going to miss you so much," she said.

## Sumner comes in at 109 on Newsweek list

By **SPECIAL TO THE KANSAN**

**Kansas City Kansan**

*Posted Jul 01, 2009 @ 03:24 PM*

Kansas City, Kan. — Sumner Academy of Arts and Science, a college preparatory school that is part of the Kansas City, Kan., Public Schools, has made Newsweek magazine's top six percent list of public high schools in the country.

The June 8 issue of the national news magazine includes its annual Top U.S. High Schools section with rankings and listings for the top 1,500-plus high schools. On this year's list, Sumner Academy ranks 109th.

The schools are ranked according to a ratio devised by Jay Mathews of Newsweek. The ratio, called the "Challenge Index," is the number of Cambridge, International Baccalaureate and/or Advanced Placement tests taken by all students at the school (during the past year) divided by the number of graduating seniors.

It measures which schools are giving their students the "most value" according to Mathews. The Challenge Index was developed and first published in 2003, and since that time, Sumner Academy has been among the top 200 schools listed each year.

Sumner's overall ratio of students taking AP or IB tests continues to climb each year. In 2003, it was 2.340. Currently, it is 3.714.

To view the article and the top 1,500 list, go to Newsweek's web site at <http://www.newsweek.com/id/201160/?s=kansas&q=2009/rank1/>.

Wyandotte West – July 2, 2009



## *Children's campus ...*

The Children's Campus of Kansas City has started construction on its multi-level building at 5th and Minnesota Avenue. This will be an \$80 million project to serve children and their families with early childhood development and community programs. (Photo by Bettse Folsom)

## Wyandotte West – July 2, 2009



### JUGGLING ACT . . .

Brian Wendling entertained more than 50 adults and children while he performed juggling and comedy on [June](#) 20 at the West Wyandotte Library, 1737 N. 82nd. During his performance, as part of the summer reading program, he encouraged children to continue with their reading and education. The library will be closed on July 3 through 5. (Photo by Bettse Folsom)

## Wyandotte West – July 2, 2009

### news briefs

#### 15-YEAR-OLD DIES FROM GUNSHOT WOUND

The victim from the shooting that occurred June 29 in the 400 block of North 10th has died, according to the Kansas City, Kansas, Police Department.

The victim was identified as Kansas City, Kansas, resident Edgar Carmona, 15.

The police department's major case unit is asking anyone with information about the incident to call 913-573-6020 or the TIPS hotline at 816-474-TIPS.

#### JUVENILE IN CRITICAL CONDITION FROM GUNSHOT

Kansas City, Kansas, police officers responded to a shooting call about 6:38 p.m. June 29 in the 400 block of North 10th.

Upon arrival they found a juvenile victim suffering from a gunshot wound, according to a police department statement.

The victim is in critical condition at a hospital. His identity will not be released pending identification and family notification.

The police department's major case unit is asking anyone with information about the incident to call 913-573-6020 or the TIPS hotline at 816-474-TIPS.

#### 7-YEAR-OLD GIRL VICTIM OF HOMICIDE JUNE 26

A 7-year-old girl is the victim of a homicide that took place June 26 in the 2600 block of North 13th, according to the Kansas City, Kansas, Police Department.

The girl has been identified as Laraya Wilson, a Kansas City, Kansas, resident.

A police spokesman said the girl was one of five persons who were shot at the location just after midnight June 26.

Four gunshot victims were taken to a hospital with non-life-threatening injuries, according to the police spokesman.

Anyone with information about the shooting is asked to call the major case unit at 913-573-6020 or the TIPS hotline at 816-474-TIPS.

## Wyandotte West – July 2, 2009

### F.L. SCHLAGLE HIGH SCHOOL SPONSORS SCHOLARS' BOWL TEAM

During the 2008-09 school year, the Scholars' Bowl team at F.L. Schlagle High School competed in 14 tournaments at schools in 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 Schlagle 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 holds the annual F.L. Schlagle Freshman-Sophomore tournament in January.

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

**Wyandotte West – July 2, 2009**

**SUMNER ACADEMY RANKED AMONG NATION'S TOP SCHOOLS**

**by Mary Rupert**

For the sixth year in a row, Sumner Academy has been ranked among the top of the nation's schools by Newsweek magazine.

No. 109 on the list of the top U.S. high schools, Sumner Academy has the highest ranking of all metropolitan area high schools, according to Gene Fite, principal.

In comparison, Blue Valley Northwest High School is ranked 375, Blue Valley, 722, and Blue Valley West, 840.

Each year Newsweek names the top 1,500 high schools in the country, measuring which ones are giving the students the "most value."

Fite said the magazine looks at the number attending the school, comparing it to the number who take higher level exams such as advanced placement and international baccalaureate tests.

Also considered is the percentage of free and reduced lunches at the schools, and other details.

Sumner Academy's overall ratio of students taking the advanced placement and international baccalaureate tests is increasing each year, according to district officials.

"They pull off 15 percent of the schools, probably less than 10 percent of all high schools in the country are considered, and we're in the top 6 percent of that group," Fite said.

The ranking suggests that a higher percentage of students at Sumner Academy take these placement exams, Fite said.

"We expect all of our kids to raise to that level, and I think that's what makes us unique," he said. "And in fact they do – they're very great kids."

## Parkinson announces two percent cuts in education

By **NICK SLOAN**, Staff Writer

**Kansas City Kansan**

Posted Jul 02, 2009 @ 02:17 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — Due to a near \$160 million budget deficit, Kansas Gov. Mark Parkinson announced further cuts in education today.

The state will cut \$39 million in K-12 funding, while funding for public universities will lose \$15 million. Over the past two months, the state has had a revenue shortfall of over \$135 million.

In a video statement on the state's Web site, Parkinson explained his reasoning behind the cuts.

"The problem is that you really can't exclude those very important agencies, and that's because 51 percent of our budget funds are kindergarten through 12th grade system, 14 percent of our budget funds colleges, and 23 percent of our budget is our safety net for the poor and disabled; so if you excluded those people you would exclude 88% of the budget and there just wouldn't be enough else to cut in order to balance the budget," Parkinson said.

School districts across the state and Wyandotte County have already prepared and implemented budget cuts in response to state aid already lost.

Parkinson said he expects nearly \$70 million in revenue via federal dollars pumped into Kansas and through the transfer of some resources.

Overall, both new cuts represent a two percent decrease in state aid to K-12 education and public universities.

## Davenport hopes to turn Harmon's fortunes around

By **NICK SLOAN, Sports Editor**  
**Kansas City Kansan**

Posted Jul 02, 2009 @ 05:25 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — In his first head coach position, newly hired J.C. Harmon football head coach Calvin Davenport knows a challenge awaits him.

Coming off a season where the Hawks were 1-8 and outscored 365-96, Davenport begins his second season at the school. Last year, he was an assistant coach at Harmon.

Davenport, who played football at Ottawa University, originally began coaching football at LaCrosse, Kan.

"I knew I wanted to be a football coach after my playing career," Davenport said. "I didn't know how or where I would get a job."

Following his coaching stint in LaCross, he was brought on board to J.C. Harmon by former head coach Terry Witherspoon.

"Coach Spoon was a great man who brought me in," he said. "It was a bigger opportunity and it was in the inner-city where I could help those kids out."

While Davenport looks for success on the field, he hopes to be more than just a head coach.

"Coming from a single parent home I know how it feels not to have a father," he said. "I want to be a role model for these kids."

Although his team and the Kansas City, Kan., League's other four rosters aren't finalized, Davenport said he has a pretty good idea of what the league will be about this season.

"I feel like this year in the KCK League we'll have to deal with skill positions," he said. "It'll be about speed, speed and speed. We'll have to contain that."

League wins have been tough to come by for the Hawks recently. Harmon's had recent success against Wyandotte, but the gap between them and Washington, Schlagle and defending league champion Sumner Academy has remained there for the decade.

Davenport promises change in that area, however.

"The KCK League will be competitive this year," he said. "And Harmon will be a part of it."





Friday, Jul. 03, 2009

## **Kansas schools lose an additional \$39 million in state funds**

By DAVID KLEPPER

The Star's Topeka correspondent

TOPEKA | Kansas Gov. Mark Parkinson announced more cuts to schools and universities Thursday in the face of lower-than-expected tax revenues.

He said lawmakers may have to look at rolling back tax breaks or raising some taxes if revenues continue to flag.

K-12 schools across the state will lose \$39 million in state funds, a 2 percent reduction. That's on top of \$124 million in cuts passed by lawmakers this spring. School districts have already eliminated 3,700 teaching and staff positions.

Public universities and colleges will see state funding cut by \$15 million more, on top of \$85 million in earlier reductions. Last week, the state Board of Regents voted to raise tuition in reaction to those cuts and in anticipation of new ones.

The state will also reduce highway funds by \$30 million.

Many school districts were expecting Thursday's bad news, said Mark Tallman with the Kansas Association of School Boards. Some may eliminate after-school activities, student support services or bus routes. Others may dip into emergency reserves, he said.

Jill Docking, chairwoman of the state Board of Regents, said Thursday's funding reductions will mean more "painful adjustments."

"Class offerings have been reduced, employees have been laid off, and students are generally receiving fewer services as a result," she said in a statement.

The reductions are part of a \$160 million plan to balance the state's budget. Lawmakers cut spending by hundreds of millions last spring, but then saw revenues for May and June come in \$126 million below estimates.

State law gave Parkinson, a Democrat, the authority to slash spending without the Legislature. Unless revenues stabilize within 12 months, he said, lawmakers will have to consider raising taxes or closing some tax breaks.

Many Republicans had called for deeper spending cuts earlier in the year, and they've rejected calls for raising taxes or ending tax breaks. Rep. Kevin Yoder, an Overland Park Republican who leads the House budget committee, credited Parkinson with taking quick action to shore up the budget. But he wants to see Parkinson make additional cuts later this summer or fall if revenue continues to flag.

"I don't think any of us relish these cuts," Yoder said. "Let's hope this is the last time we have to do this, but it may not be."

Parkinson left spending on social services and law enforcement largely intact Thursday, saying more cuts could cripple those programs. Education eats up more state dollars than anything else and received large amounts of federal stimulus money.

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To reach David Klepper, call 785-354-1388 or send e-mail to [dklepper@kcstar.com](mailto:dklepper@kcstar.com).



Monday, Jul. 06, 2009

## Class of '99 gets to share 10 years of experiences

By LEWIS W. DIUGUID  
The Kansas City Star

Krista Howard walked into Palmer's ice cream café with poise, confidence and professionalism.

A lot has changed since we first met in the mid-1990s at Washington High School in Kansas City, Kan. The shops, movie theaters and other attractions at the Legends didn't exist when I followed her Class of 1999 for four years to learn what it was like to be a teen and teacher.

I hope to see many of the students again this weekend at their 10-year reunion. They have endured a lot, including skyrocketing college costs and the worst recession since the Great Depression. But they've soldiered on, and despite demographic shifts many still live in Kansas City, Kan.

Howard was president of the Class of 1999. She has been working since September with classmates Kendon McClaine and April Dotson to bring the class together for its first reunion.

"We are very eager to reconnect with all of the classmates," said Howard, who works at Carlisle Tire & Wheel in Edwardsville, is married and has a 2-year-old son. "We hope everyone will be excited and they will come."

The reunion organizers have used the Internet, MySpace and Facebook as social networking tools to bring people together. One invaluable Web site has been [www.classcreator.com](http://www.classcreator.com). I was added as an honorary classmate to the site and even had e-mail waiting.

These electronic social networking sites didn't exist when the now-nearing-30 young adults were teens. But they're essential now.

The three organizers hope at least 100 people from their class of 180 will be as curious as they've been over the last 10 years and will attend the Friday kickoff. On Saturday, they'll have the more formal reunion. The organizers want people to register online, show up, have a fabulous time and reconnect.

"Everybody wants to know how everybody's doing," said Dotson, who went to nursing school, has a 5-year-old son, and for two years has been an administrative assistant for Wyatt Pharmaceutical. "I hear a lot of classmates say it doesn't feel like 10 years. But it feels like 10 years to me."

The Class of 1999 Web page says: "You'll laugh, cry and reminisce with some of your oldest friends. You won't have to lie about your age. Rekindle or begin new relationships. Enjoy an evening without the kids."

To help get an idea of what the Class of '99 will face, last month I went to the reunion of the Washington Class of '47 for perspective.

June Lewallen, '47 reunion attendee, said the young people "shouldn't worry about whether they've made a big success of their lives." That will come later. "Just be yourself, and enjoy the moment."

Renewing relationships is the key, said Pat Theroff, a '47 reunion organizer. "In the end, that's all you have," she said.

Bill Smith, president of the Washington Class of 1947, promised the younger generation a "wonderful experience."

"But you know they keep changing," he added with a wry grin at his reunion in Wyandotte County Park. "They get older ever year." The Class of 1999 "kids" are older, too. Many have school-age children of their own. McClaine is among them. The Check-N-Go manager has a 7-year-old son in second grade at Hazel Grove Elementary School in Kansas City, Kan. He and his wife also have a 4-year-old daughter and are expecting a third child this summer. Like other people in the class, he is going back to college for a degree to better himself and his family.

Howard said: "I've completely enjoyed reconnecting with April and Kendon. You think you know how you'll turn out and who you're going to be. Essentially God and the world have a whole 'nother life for you."

The reunion will help the Class of 1999 discover that, renew old ties and form new ones for a better future.

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Lewis W. Diuguid is a member of The Star's Editorial Board. To reach him, call 816-234-4723 or send e-mail to [Ldiuguid@kcstar.com](mailto:Ldiuguid@kcstar.com).

## Wyandotte West – July 6, 2009

### ART EXHIBITS ON DISPLAY AT LIBRARY

From July 2 through 29, “Flowers and More,” paintings by Janet Manson, and “Quindaro Founding Families,” presented by Jesse Hope, will be on display at the West Wyandotte Library, 1737 N. 82nd. Library hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. The exhibits are free and open to the public.

## Wyandotte West – July 6, 2009

Excerpts from Community Calendar for July

### **KCK Arts Network Art Walk to be July 10**

The Main Library will be a stop on the “KCK Arts Network Art Walk” on Friday, July 10. Artwork by Lorrie Boydston will be on display at the Main Library, 635 Minnesota. The artwork will be on display until July 16. The Art Walk will run from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Visitors may meet the artist at the exhibit.

### **Class reunion scheduled in July**

The Wyandotte Class of 1974 will have its 35th class reunion celebration July 17-19 at The Airport Marriott. Plans include a Friday night "get together," a bus tour of Kansas City, Kansas, a Saturday night dinner-dance, and a Sunday inspirational service, immediately followed by a barbecue lunch. For further information, contact Janet Walker Lasley at [jaywalker56@hotmail.com](mailto:jaywalker56@hotmail.com), Scott Mackey at [scottmackey08@yahoo.com](mailto:scottmackey08@yahoo.com), Debbie Sands Evans at [evan5239@aol.com](mailto:evan5239@aol.com) phone: 913-721-3669, or Lori Scott Whitson at [hearts456@yahoo.com](mailto:hearts456@yahoo.com) phone 913-938-4460. Reunion reservation deadline is June 20.

## Mt. Carmel grant seeks to reduce youth smoking in KCK

By **STAFF REPORTS**

**Kansas City Kansan**

*Posted Jul 07, 2009 @ 11:05 AM*

Kansas City, Kan. — From a press release received earlier today:

Mt. Carmel Church of God in Christ recently received a grant of \$1,200 from the Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition to implement youth activities targeted for tobacco use prevention in Kansas City, Kansas. The Mt. Carmel Youth Group, made up of 12 – 18 year olds, is part of TASK, a statewide youth movement against tobacco.

Tobacco use remains a leading public health issue in Kansas. The 2007 Kansas Youth Risk Behavior Survey found that 21 percent of Kansas high school students smoke. The mini-grant goal is to encourage creativity in youth-led projects that focus on activities that protect teens and their peers from becoming addicted to cigarettes and tobacco products.

The Mt. Carmel Youth groups' goal is to educate their peers on the health risks of tobacco use. Risk such as emphysema, mouth cancer, etc., and the likelihood of being addicted to tobacco as adults if they use tobacco as a teens. Creating a music video highlighting the medical conditions developed by tobacco use is one of the avenues the youth group will use to educate their peers about tobacco use prevention.

A member of the Mt. Carmel Youth group, Danae Douglas, age 13, talks about the importance of Mt. Carmel's Youth group receiving the mini-grant. Ms. Douglas said, "It is important to make people aware of the dangers of tobacco use. Using tobacco can prevent you from participating in normal daily activities."

The Tobacco Free Kansas coalition, Inc. (TFKC) received a grant from the American Legacy Foundation®, a national public health foundation devoted to tobacco use prevention and cessation, to support youth tobacco prevention efforts in Kansas. Additional funding to TFKC for this youth empowerment project comes from the Kansas Health Foundation.

# **The Kansas City Star – July 7, 2009**

## **Public Safety**

### **KANSAS CITY | Homicide victim was 14**

Police on Monday identified a 14-year-old found shot to death Sunday evening on a sidewalk at Linwood Boulevard and College Avenue as William L. Parker of Kansas City, Kan.

Detectives were investigating a possible connection to a report of shots fired in the 2900 block of Indiana Avenue.

## Eight children sent to hospital from Wednesday morning fire

By **SAM HARTLE, Editor**

**Kansas City Kansan**

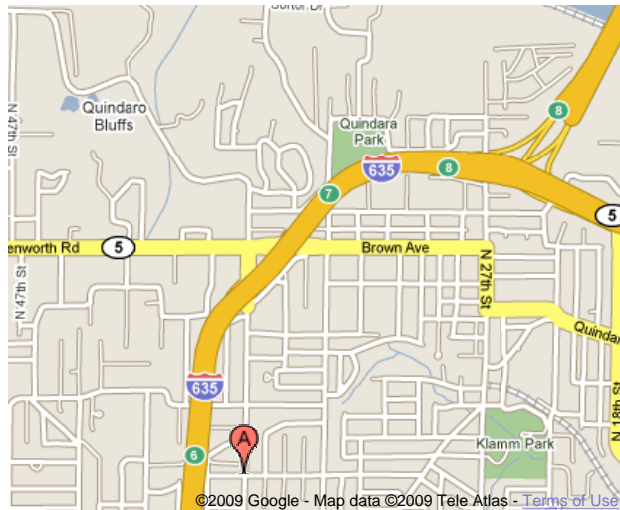
Posted Jul 08, 2009 @ 11:07 AM

Kansas City, Kan. — A Wednesday morning fire in the attic of a residence at 2407 N. 38th Street sent eight children and at least two parents to the hospital with fire-related injuries.

At least four Kansas City, Kan. Fire Department ambulances were dispatched to the fire, which started shortly before 10 a.m.

Reports indicate non of the injuries were serious.

More information when its available.



[View Larger Map](#)

# WDAF

## Teens Pushing for Fields of Dreams

[Phil Witt](#)

July 8, 2009

Kansas City, KS

Margaret Mead, the iconic anthropologist, wrote, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." That wisdom is certainly true of a handful of students out to change Harmon High School and its surrounding community in a big way.

These members of the school's 20/20 Leadership team are the FOX 4 Young Achievers of the Week.

There are big dreams at Harmon High School in Kansas City, KS that one day soon the football field will also be the school's soccer field, with artificial turf and vastly improved facilities for both sports.

"Our school and our community is heavily Hispanic," says graduating senior Aaron Farish, a member of the Harmon 20/20 Leadership Team. "This community loves soccer and that's what we want to give to them." And there's another field of dreams nearby -- more of a nightmare really -- the field that the soccer teams now must share with the Harmon baseball team.

"It's pretty embarrassing for us," says Stephanie DeSpain, also a Harmon 20/20 Leadership Team member and graduating senior. The students want it to be for baseball only but it's rocky, weedy, uneven, has poor drainage and needs a ton of renovation for new dug-outs, bleachers and amenities.

"Whenever we have other schools that come and play, they're like, well, this looks like a pretty rundown place and we're just going to beat them," says DeSpain.

"I kind of have my own little saying to myself," says Harmon 20/20 Leadership Team member Xochitl Saldivar, a graduating senior and past captain of the Harmon girls soccer team. "Don't complain if you can do something about it. So, I'm like, OK, let's stop complaining and let's do something about it."

So they did. The students are part of a large metro-wide youth organization called 20-20 Leadership in which members have to address significant challenges in their schools and communities. The Harmon students created The Harmon Hawk Project and developed an ambitious, complete game plan to get the athletic fields renovated. They recently took the gold medal for most outstanding project among this year's 20-20 Leadership projects at the organization's 20-20 Olympics annual meeting.

"I've worked with students for 32 years now," says Harmon 20/20 Leadership Team Advisor Mary Sternshein. "I have never seen such commitment. I have never seen students so willing to do the work."

The Harmon 20-20 Leadership Team has taken on quite a challenge. The school district has found \$200,000 in a strained budget to use as seed money for the athletic fields project. Now all these student leaders have to do is come up with \$600,000 to complete it.

"We're confident, very confident," says Harmon 20/20 Leadership Team member Manny Munoz. They have a winning game plan for that, as well, a marketing and fundraising plan that centers on selling commemorative

bricks and laying the groundwork for big grants from sports organizations and contributions from major givers.

"It's all about networking," says Harmon 20/20 Leadership Team member Jeremiah Palmer. "That's what we learned in the 20-20 Leadership program. The networking and the ability to go to others to seek out what we need and get it."

And all of it is anchored in a remarkable can-do, never-say-die attitude they vow to keep even when most head off to college this fall.

"And we can come back here one day and watch soccer and watch football and a baseball game and say-- we did this," says Aaron Farish. All of this from a small group of thoughtful, committed young citizens out to change their world.

Meantime, last year's juniors on the team will keep The Harmon Hawk Project going full steam next, including the bricks sales. Go to <http://kancrn.kckps.k12.ks.us/harmon/harmonweb/2020webpage/2020page.html> on the Web for all the information on the project, how to donate and how to buy a commemorative brick.

FOX 4 news is Working 4 You to spotlight outstanding young people and their positive accomplishments. In our weekly report called Reaching 4 Excellence we meet young achievers in subjects like academics, the arts, leadership, community service, volunteerism, career exploration, overcoming obstacles and heroism. Watch for Reaching 4 Excellence every Wednesday on FOX 4 News at 9 p.m. and every Thursday on FOX 4 News at 5 a.m. and 5 p.m.

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Posted on Wed, Jul. 08, 2009

## An event-filled Art Walk in KCK

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA  
The Kansas City Star

The Second Friday Art Walk in downtown Kansas City, Kan., is heating up with exciting exhibits to explore during an evening out. An exhibit at the YWCA of Greater Kansas City will highlight Chinese history.

"We want to celebrate the history and heritage and some of the current things going on in China," said Patrick Alexander, the YWCA's arts and events coordinator. "Our role is to bring it closer to them."

In an exhibition that has spirituality as its theme, the Kansas City, Kan., Main Library will feature Lorrie Boydston, who uses water as a metaphor for renewal and cleansing. The artwork, she says, is "a reminder of our need to slow down and see the beauty in the current moment — wherever we choose to be."

Carol Kariotis, executive director of Kaw Valley Arts and Humanities Inc., which runs a downtown gallery, said, "We've been doing this for several years now, and just like First Fridays in the Crossroads area, it's become quite the place to come on second Fridays.

"There's lots of food and drink, and we have things going on afterward like live entertainment.

"There are galleries on all four ends of the art walk now, and because of this, there's this great circular area. And there are a lot of places that are showing works, and then restaurants started to get involved and offer specials, so it's a real nice night out."

During the past few years, downtown has seen an influx of artists and galleries. For example, Kariotis said nine artist studios have opened in the old Kansas City Kansan building.

Here's where to find the Friday happenings:

- Tomasic and Rehorn, 419 N. Sixth St.: textile sculptures by Jill Putzier.
- Fiero's Insurance, 226 N. Seventh St.: oil paintings by Adan Solar.
- El Centro, 650 Minnesota Ave.: Kaw Valley Arts and Humanities collection.
- Wheat State Pizza, 612 N. Fifth St.: Wyandotte Arts Association exhibit.
- YWCA 6th Street Gallery, 1017 N. Sixth St.: The traveling exhibit "Uncompromising Courage" includes several international artists who portray China's brutal persecution of Falun Dafa. Also, Nancy Loo Bjorge's dynamic artwork, rooted in the Chinese tradition of paper folding, will be on display.
- Fat Matt's Vortex, 411 N. Sixth St.: "After ArtWalk Party" after 8 p.m. featuring live entertainment.
- Associated Youth Services, 803 Armstrong: "Looking Through the Window" by Ada Mahmud Shakir.
- Kaw Valley Arts and Humanities Gallery, 756 Armstrong: Lee Knox's work, "KCK ... and Beyond," portrays local and international cityscapes. Kendra Bulgrin's "Want and Fear" explores the concepts of identity and memory.
- Pressroom Studios, 750 Armstrong: Studios of Darrell Truby, George Morris, Michael Brantley, Ronald Smith, Jose Faus, Lacey Lewis, Kim Eichler-Messmer and Carol Kariotis.
- S2 Studios, 750 Armstrong: images by Steve Larson and Steve Curtis.
- Imago Dei Arts Center, Granada Theatre, 10th Street and Minnesota Avenue: Youth Art Initiative.
- Town House Gallery, 1021 N. Seventh St.: William Wilmott's "The Past Is Always Present."
- KCK Main Library, 625 Minnesota Ave.: Lorrie Boydston's work.

### to learn more

The Second Friday Art Walk runs 5 to 8 p.m. Friday in downtown Kansas City, Kan. For more information, call 913-371-0024.

To reach Rodney Muhumuza, send e-mail to [rmuhumuza@kcstar.com](mailto:rmuhumuza@kcstar.com)

# Kansas City Star – July 9, 2009

## Fine Arts

### An Event-Filled Art Walk in KCK



Artist Lorrie Boydston will be on hand at the Kansas City, Kan., Main Library during Friday's Art Walk. Her work, including "New Horizons," above, and "Low Resolution," below, will be on display until July 16.



The Kaw Valley Arts and Humanities Gallery is part of the art walk at 756 Armstrong. This month, art lovers can see Kendra Bulgrin's oil-on-panel piece, titled "Want & Fear 2009," above, at the gallery.



At the Kaw Valley Arts and Humanities Gallery, Lee Knox is showing her watercolor paintings of cityscapes and architectural features, including "Baptist Temple KCK," above.





Posted on Wed, Jul. 08, 2009

## **Kansan nominated for federal education leadership post**

The Associated Press

TOPEKA | President Barack Obama has nominated Kansas' education commissioner for a key job in the U.S. Department of Education.

Commissioner Alexa Posny declined Wednesday to discuss her nomination, which requires U.S. Senate confirmation. She would be assistant secretary for special education and rehabilitative services.

Posny served as director of the federal agency's office of special education in 2006-07, before the state Board of Education hired her as Kansas' top public school official. She already enjoyed a strong reputation among educators and legislators when she took the commissioner's job because of previous work for the state Department of Education. She was director of special education for the Shawnee Mission School District from July 1997 to June 1999.

One legislator worried how Posny's departure would affect the state agency and Kansas' school system. The state's financial problems have forced four rounds of budget cuts in seven months, including reductions in aid to public schools.

"Schools are having a lot of problems, especially funding problems, and there needs to be strong leadership at the Department of Education," said Senate Education Committee Chairwoman Jean Schodorf, a Wichita Republican.

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*The Star's Jim Sullinger contributed to this report.*

## Second Friday Artwalk this week

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By **NICK SLOAN**, Staff Writer

**Kansas City Kansan**

Posted Jul 09, 2009 @ 11:10 AM

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Kansas City, Kan. — The "KCK Arts Network Art Walk" will be presented this Friday. The main branch of the Kansas City, Kan., Public Library will be one of the primary hosts for the event.

The art walk will begin at 5 p.m. and conclude around 8 p.m. The KCK Public Library will display art from Lorrie Boydston.

"The underlying theme of my work is a practical search for spirituality--often using water as a metaphor for renewal, rebirth and cleansing," Boydston said in a press release. "The innocence of children in honest play provides an atmosphere of living in the moment and positive redemption from an otherwise monotonous space and stressful daily routine."

Other locations for the art walk.

Kaw Valley Arts Gallery  
756 Armstrong Ave.

Pressroom Artists' Studios  
752 Armstrong Ave.

S2 Studios  
Photographs by Steve Larson and Steve Curtis.

Imago Dei Arts Center  
10th Street and Minnesota Avenue

KCK Public Library  
625 Minnesota Ave.

Town House Gallery  
1021 N. 7th Street

YWCA of Greater Kansas City  
1017 N. 6th Street Flourish

Tomasic and Rehorn  
419 N. 6th Street

Wheat State Pizza  
612 N. 5th Street

Songbird Cafe  
1315 Fairfax Trafficway Kyla

Jay WaLe Bakery-Bistro  
503 N. 6th Street

El Camino Real  
Authentic Mexican Cuisine  
903 N. 7th Street

7th Street Casino  
Inside the 7th Street Casino

Fat Matt's Vortex  
411 N. 6th Street After Art Walk Party

## **Newsweek Ranks Sumner Academy Among Top Schools In The Nation**

Sumner Academy of Arts and Science, a college preparatory school that is part of the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools, has made Newsweek magazine's top six percent list of public high schools in the country.

The June 8 issue of the national news magazine includes its annual Top U.S. High Schools section with rankings and listings for the top 1,500-plus high schools. On this year's list, Sumner Academy ranks 109th.

The schools are ranked according to a ratio devised by Jay Mathews of Newsweek. The ratio, called the "Challenge Index," is the number of Cambridge, International Baccalaureate and/or Advanced Placement tests taken by all students at the school (during the past year) divided by the number of graduating seniors. It measures which schools are giving their students the "most value" according to Matthews. The Challenge Index was developed and first published in 2003, and since that time, Sumner Academy has been among the top 200 schools listed each year.

Sumner's overall ratio of students taking AP or IB tests continues to climb each year. In 2003, it was 2.340. Currently, it is 3.714.

## KCK students among Kauffman seniors

By **KANSAN STAFF**

**Kansas City Kansan**

Posted Jul 10, 2009 @ 03:39 PM

Kansas City, Kan. — Kauffman Scholars Inc. will celebrate the admission of 125 Class 1 Kauffman Scholars into colleges and universities across the country on Saturday, July 11, 2009, in a “Senior Send-Off” from 5 to 7:30 p.m. at Bartle Hall, 13th and Central, in Kansas City, Mo.

The students are graduates of schools in the Kansas City, Mo., and Kansas City, Kan., public school districts. Most are first-generation college students. As Kauffman Scholars, each student will have college scholarship assistance, awarded either from outside resources or KSI. Scholars will incur no college-related debt.

Ninety-five percent of Class 1 Scholars have been accepted into colleges or universities. Eighty percent are headed to four-year higher education institutions.

“We are tremendously proud of our first class of Scholars; they have traveled such a long way since our journey together began six years ago,” said Dr. Steve Green, KSI President and CEO. “There are five Valedictorians and one Salutatorian in this group. We have Scholars who have received multiple scholarship awards, including DeKiyra Love from Sumner Academy, who will study aviation at Purdue University, with an award from the Tuskegee Airmen. Stephanie Pounds, one of our Scholars who is attending Howard University, has been selected to receive the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarship that is renewable for up to five years for an undergraduate degree in any discipline, and up to six years for graduate study in specific fields.”

Scholars who are Valedictorians of their classes include: **Jessica Chambers, F.L. Schlagle; Stephanie Pounds, Sumner Academy; and Xochitl Saldivar, J.C. Harmon, all in Kansas City, Kan.;** and, Aubrionne Donahue, Hogan Prep Academy; and Arianna Jackson, University Academy, both in Kansas City, Mo. Latisha Smith, Paseo Academy in Kansas City, Mo., was named Salutatorian.

The ratio per state of where Class 1 Scholars have been admitted includes: Missouri, 38 percent; Kansas, 30 percent; Arkansas, 5 percent; Oklahoma, 4 percent; District of Columbia, 2 percent; Virginia, 2 percent; California, 1.5 percent; Georgia, 1.5 percent; Indiana, 1.5 percent; Louisiana, 1.5 percent; Nebraska, 1.5 percent; Texas, 1.5 percent; and one Scholar each attending in Alabama, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina and Ohio. (more)



Sunday, July 12, 2009

## Keeping well-trained teachers in urban schools

By HUGH ZIMMER

The University of Missouri-Kansas City's School of Education is addressing the current Pre-K-12 urban public education crisis in the Kansas City area through its Institute for Urban Education.

To date, the institute is far surpassing initial expectations. Since 2005, the institute has partnered with the Kansas City, Kansas City, Kan. and Hickman Mills school districts to provide trained educators to teach in the partners' schools.

Institute for Urban Education scholars have a passion for working with urban students. In exchange for their commitment to teach in urban schools for at least four years after graduation, the institute students receive a substantial four-year scholarship and complete a carefully designed curriculum that prepares them as they begin their teaching careers.

The institute training is targeted specifically to meet urban classroom conditions and includes very strong math and science preparation. Institute students – now totaling 55 with 20 more enrolled for fall 2009 – also receive significant “on-the-job experience” throughout the four-year program, accumulating 1,400 hours of teaching experience before graduation. The institute model provides for teacher specialization, capitalizes on each student's commitment to Kansas City and affects the community by providing schools with new teachers.

Research indicates that in the fourth to sixth year of teaching, beginning teachers reach their stride and begin to have the greatest impact on increasing student achievement. Unfortunately, research also shows that many urban teachers leave the field within three years because of inadequate preparation and discouragement.

The university program addresses these issues with support beyond graduation. During an entire teaching career, the Institute for Urban Education is there to help.

There are at least three compelling aspects of the university program. First is the opportunity to give a deserving young person, sometimes from a difficult background, an opportunity to get a fine college education that will prepare him or her for a respected career.

The second aspect is that the same student, after graduation, will go back into the urban core for four years and more to help young people and create opportunities for them to persevere despite the environment.

Third, the institute is a promising national model, with diversified investment partners, which holds great promise to make a difference in the educational and work force challenges of our urban center.

I look forward to witnessing many graduating classes of institute students take their passion, knowledge and commitment to educational change into urban classrooms.

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*Hugh Zimmer is chairman of the Zimmer Companies and chairman of the University of Missouri-Kansas City Chancellor's Institute for Urban Education National Advisory Board. He was chair of the UMKC Trustees for three years. He lives in Kansas City.*

## KCK Public Library to offer amnesty for overdue fines next month

By **NICK SLOAN, Staff Writer**

**Kansas City Kansan**

*Posted Jul 14, 2009 @ 09:58 AM*

Kansas City, Kan. — KCK Public Library to offer amnesty for overdue fines

The Kansas City, Kan., Library and Turner Community Library will offer patrons with overdue fees a complete amnesty of those fees during the first two weeks in August.

For fees to be forgiven, patrons must turn in the overdue material, whether it be books, DVDs or other items available at the library.

"Sometimes patrons are reluctant to come back to the library if they owe fines but by having an amnesty period, patrons can return the materials, wipe the slate clean and start taking advantage of all the services KCKPL library offers," said Helen Rigdon, associate director of the library. "And in these trying financial times, every little bit helps our patrons."

The amnesty will begin at the libraries on Aug. 1 and will last until Aug. 15. Patrons of all ages can take part in the event. While fees for overdue items will be forgiven, fees for damaged items will not be and patrons are responsible for those.

According to the library, this will be a one-time offer for the "foreseeable future."

## KCKPS budget workshop on Thursday

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By **STAFF REPORTS**

**Kansas City Kansan**

*Posted Jul 14, 2009 @ 04:33 PM*

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Kansas City, Kan. — The Kansas City, Kan., Board of Education will hold a special budget workshop this Thursday.

The session will be held beginning at 4 p.m. on the third floor of the Kansas City, Kan., Public Library's main branch. Board members may go into executive session during the budget hearing.

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