

1,100 Students Expected to Compete in Fourth Annual Math Relays

Math can be a challenging subject. But hundreds of students in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools are stepping up to the challenge by participating in the fourth annual Math Relays. The event is set for 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 16 at Wyandotte High School.

The competition will bring together more than 1,100 middle and high school students for relays and individual number games that will help to enhance their math knowledge.

Algebraic concepts, geometric concepts, data and statistics, number sense and trigonometry are just some of the categories involved in the day-long competition.

So what's the attraction to spending a Saturday at school working on math problems? **Cecil Christwell**, Math Relays coordinator, said one of the main attractions is the competitive nature of the relays.

"We're seeing that students want to be involved in academic competitions. Sometimes I think the picture is painted that students aren't interested in those things," he said. "But once we created the situation, we found that students wanted it."

Christwell said another attraction is the competition's format. Students are grouped so that they are competing with students who are at their same academic level, based on MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) test scores.

"This type of set up allows students of all abilities

"We have to think of math as a conditioning of the mind. The more you challenge yourself on certain things, the stronger problem solver you will become. The stronger problem solver you become, the stronger thinker you will be and that's really the ultimate goal."

Cecil Christwell,
Math Relays coordinator

to compete," Christwell explained. "We have some students who are struggling in the classroom, but they are winning medals."

Medals will be awarded to students placing in the top four in each category. Traveling trophies will be awarded to the middle school and high school scoring the most points overall, and to the middle and high school with the most participants.

The most prestigious honor is being inducted into the Math Relays Hall of Fame. This program was instituted in 2006 to recognize students who have medaled in individual events four times over the course of the annual competition. Students inducted
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Thank You Community Partners. . .

The Kansas City, Kansas School Foundation for Excellence hosted a Partner Appreciation Luncheon on January 30 to thank community partners. At the event, several community partners were presented with awards of appreciation. Among them were Janet Braley (left) and Kathy Moore, of the University of Kansas Medical Center, shown here with Foundation Board member J.D. Rios.

Mark Your Calendars

Upcoming Events

- **April 22** -- KCKPS Open House
- **April 24** -- Kindergarten Roundup
- **May 9** -- Reasons to Believe Gala
- **May 16** -- KCKPS Retirement Banquet



Retirement Checklist

If you are planning to retire this school year, there are some steps you must take to make it official:

- Notify the Human and Community Resources Office by letter. This is necessary so that the Board of Education may take formal action to accept the retirement.
- Contact **Jan Remund**, 279-2200, in the business office so that the proper paperwork can be completed with KPERS.
- Mark your calendars and make plans to attend the district's annual Employee Retirement Dinner. It is scheduled for Friday, May 16 at the Reardon Center.

It's School Counseling Week

February 4-8 is National School Counseling Week—an annual appreciation week from the American School Counselor Association.

This year's theme is "School Counselors: Creating Pathways to Success," focusing public attention on the unique contribution of professional school counselors. National School Counseling Week highlights the impact that counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career.

Wyandotte Students 'Reaching 4 Excellence'

FOX 4 News is featuring Wyandotte High School students Seth Irving, Joshua Newbill, Cassie Belcher and Jalisa Haynes as the FOX 4 young achievers of the week in its Reaching 4 Excellence report this week.

The students are being recognized for their exceptional work as members of the Leadership 20/20 youth organization and the Project Pregnancy '08 campaign that they developed and are leading.

The piece premiered on

Wednesday, Feb. 6, and will air again on Thursday, Feb. 7 during the 5 p.m. newscast. It also could air during the morning report on Sunday, Feb. 10 between 7 and 9 a.m.

A link to the report will be posted on the district's website, under "Students" and "Recognition, Student" when it becomes available.

Each week, FOX 4 salutes children and teens for their accomplishments and contributions through its Reaching 4 Excellence feature. The general criteria

Recognizing Outstanding Students

There's nothing more exciting to students than being recognized for their hard work and efforts. That's why the Student of the Month program exists.

Each month, the Board of Education honors students for their distinguished efforts. The efforts can include working extra hard to achieve grade level reading status, raising their grades on their report card, helping other students in class or giving to their community. The Board looks forward to giving these students well-deserved praise, and the ceremony is something that students will remember all of their lives.

Do you know a student who should be nominated?

Student of the Month Program

There's one in every classroom, so take a few minutes and make that child's day, week or even year by nominating him/her.

Nomination forms are available on the district web site, www.kckps.org, or from the Communications Office, (913) 279-2242. Or you may fax (913-279-2085) or mail a letter of nomination. Be sure to include the name of the student, his/her school and grade level, plus a brief statement explaining why he/she is deserving of recognition.

Board to Meet at Quindaro

Several times a year, the Kansas City, Kansas Board of Education moves its regular meeting to a school or district building site. Such is the case with its next meeting on Tuesday, February 12. The meeting is set for 5:30 p.m. at Quindaro Elementary School, 2800 Farrow.



STAFF NOTEBOOK

is a weekly publication for employees of the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools. Submissions are welcome and should be directed to:

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Math Relays

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will have their names placed on a permanent plaque, and will receive a \$200 college scholarship. Four students are set to be inducted so far this year, but more could be added to this list based on their performance at the event. The Awards Competition begins at 2 p.m. in the Wyandotte auditorium.

As a math teacher, Christwell said he is always trying to come up with new strategies to build momentum in the classroom, and Math

Relays works. He said his students are already gearing up, and they are becoming better problem solvers.

"We have to think of math as a conditioning of the mind," Christwell said. "The more you challenge yourself on certain things, the stronger problem solver you will become. The stronger problem solver you become, the stronger thinker you will be and that's really the ultimate goal."