KCKPS TO BEGIN SPRING ENROLLMENT OF ALL STUDENTS

CREATIVE INITIATIVES MAKE READING INVITING AND FUN

YOUNG LEADERS OF TOMORROW ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE COMMUNITY
Live Local, Learn Local!
KCKCC is the best kept secret right in your backyard.

You can finish a state of the art technical certificate in 11 months and get to work! Or, finish an associate’s degree and save thousands towards a bachelor’s degree.
Choosing a better tomorrow for our children and communities is at the heart of the work of the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS).

A better tomorrow for our children requires our educational system to be responsive to our ever-changing world. We know that by 2021, 72 percent of the jobs in Kansas will require some level of post-secondary education. In the United States, 65 percent of careers require skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Our job is to get our students ready for this changing world.

STEM permeates our modern world. The jobs we do, the foods we eat, the vehicles in which we travel, the information we receive, the medicines we take, and many other facets of our lives are constantly changing due to advances in science, technology, engineering and math. Specifically, our students must know how to learn, communicate effectively, collaborate productively with others, think critically, and have the skills to leverage personal passions and talents to make the world better.

A World of Automation

A report in the Washington Post stated that jobs currently paying $20/hour or less will be automated within the next decade. Think about how rapidly everything is changing. Automobiles will soon be driverless; ATMs and Apps have replaced the need to visit an actual bank; manufacturing is increasingly done by robots; facts and content that we had to memorize has now been outsourced to our smartphones. As educators, parents, students, and as a community determined to thrive, we must pay attention to these changes, and make significant changes in our educational system to ensure our children are prepared to succeed.

Graduating Diploma+

Success for our students must include graduating with their high school diploma, plus at least one year of college, or an industry-recognized technical degree or credential completed (Diploma+). Success must also mean that the day-to-day experiences occurring in our schools are designed to produce individuals with the aforementioned essential STEM skills.

I am pleased to report that, as a result of the district’s collaboration with parents, community, and business and industry leaders, and our work to re-design classroom experiences, we are pointed in the right direction. Our students are immersed in challenging learning. Our work to ensure that real life experiences are central to what occurs in schools across KCKPS is continuing.

Graduating Diploma+

Success for our students must include graduating with their high school diploma, plus at least one year of college, or an industry-recognized technical degree or credential completed (Diploma+). Success must also mean that the day-to-day experiences occurring in our schools are designed to produce individuals with the aforementioned essential STEM skills.

Across the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools, to use President Kennedy’s words, our students and staff are sending “forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current …” The current our students ride relies on all aspects of our community working together. As we do our work, we build currents that will carry our students to a better tomorrow.

Thank you for engaging with us as we continue our day-to-day efforts to “Inspire Excellence: Every Grownup, Every Child, Every Day.”

Check out Dr. Cynthia Lane’s blog, “It’s Up to Us” at blog.kckps.org
**2016 KCKPS GRADUATION DATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fairfax Learning Center</td>
<td>May 16</td>
<td>Bridges</td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmon High</td>
<td>May 13</td>
<td>KCKCC Fieldhouse</td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schlagle High</td>
<td>May 18</td>
<td>Schlage Stadium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sumner Academy</td>
<td>May 19</td>
<td>KCKCC Fieldhouse</td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Washington High</td>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>Washington Stadium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyandotte High</td>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>Wyandotte Stadium</td>
<td>11 a.m.</td>
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*Education Connection* is a quarterly newsmagazine of the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS). Editorial copy and photography are created by the KCKPS Communications Department and produced by NPG Newspapers. To receive a copy of the magazine, call (913) 279-2242. A Spanish translation of the stories included in *Education Connection* is available on the district’s website at www.kckps.org/index.php/community-information.

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**Chief of Communications and Governmental Relations**  
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Dr. Evelyn Hill  
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Richard Kaminski  
Gloria Willis  
Dr. Valdenia Winn
KCKPS TO BEGIN SPRING ENROLLMENT OF ALL STUDENTS

Beginning this spring, the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS) will require that all students re-enroll for the 2016-17 school year. This requirement will apply to all current students in the district, along with students who are new to the district in 2016-17, including incoming preschool and kindergarten students.

Parents of current students will receive an enrollment form in April for each student enrolled in KCKPS. This form will contain information for each student. Parents will be asked to review the form, and return it to their school with any corrections. For parents who have Internet access, this process can be completed on-line. A link to the on-line enrollment site can be found at www.kckps.org/enrollment.

Students who are currently in transitional grades (PreK, 5th grade and 8th grade) will automatically be assigned to their next school, based on home address. Students who are currently attending a school other than their home school, based on a babysitting permit or other transfer, will continue to be enrolled at their current school.

Enrollment for Students Who Are New to the District
Parents who are enrolling students for the first time will need to provide the following information:

- Proof of Residence: A utility bill (gas, water, electric), rental agreement, or escrow agreement. (A phone bill is not a valid proof of residency.)
- A state issued birth certificate for each child enrolling in kindergarten or grade one — a birth certificate or other proof of age for all other students. (Wallet size birth certificates and hospital certificates are not accepted.)
- A Kansas certificate of immunization for each child.
- A physical exam/health assessment for each child nine years of age or younger. Those coming from another school in Kansas must present a copy of the physical health assessment when enrolling in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools.
- A Social Security Card for each child, if available.

Parents will not need to provide this information for students currently enrolled in the district.

Benefits of Re-enrollment
The new spring re-enrollment process will provide benefits for both families and schools. For families, parents will be able to confirm student enrollment in the spring, rather than after school has begun in August. If the family has moved, or there are other changes to student information, these changes can be communicated easily through this process. On-line enrollment will simplify the enrollment process for parents who are able to access it.

For schools and the district, spring enrollment will allow early confirmation of student numbers, which will assist with planning and staffing. It will also help to ensure greater accuracy in student records, which assists in communication with families. Additional information can be found on the district enrollment page, www.kckps.org/enrollment. Additional questions can be directed to the Student Services office at (913) 279-2248.

NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR REASONS TO BELIEVE ALUMNI HONOR ROLL

Nominations are open for the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools’ (KCKPS) 2016 Reasons to Believe Alumni Honor Roll, part of a coordinated plan to spotlight alumni successes to encourage and inspire today’s students.

KCKPS established the Reasons to Believe program in 2002 to generate pride and celebrate the progress being made throughout the district. The Alumni Honor Roll annually showcases the high caliber of graduates that the district produces, and brings a select group of them together with staff, students, community members, colleagues and key leaders for a night of honors in November.

Nominees must:
- Be graduates of a KCKPS high school
- Be successful in their chosen business, profession or life work
- Be a person of integrity and stature that KCKPS would take pride in recognizing
- Have demonstrated the importance of their education from KCKPS

Nomination forms can be downloaded from the KCKPS website, www.kckps.org/recognition/alumni or call (913) 279-2225 to request one. The deadline for returning nominations is Monday, June 13, 2016.

View the 2015 Reasons to Believe Celebration, and watch interviews with many of the 2015 Alumni Honor Roll members on the KCKPS YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/KCKPSTV.
Before school on a Monday morning, a group of 4th and 5th graders gathered in the classroom to talk about their weekend. Bright eyed and full of smiles, they recalled special moments as they unpacked boxes.

The group was Stony Point South (SPS) Elementary School’s Young Leaders of Tomorrow. They had spent part of their Saturday standing outside the local PetSmart, collecting donations for Wayside Waifs. And they were pleased with their success.

“By the end of the drive, they were standing in a line, chanting and cheering, holding up their posters,” said SPS School Counselor Molly Beuke.

It was a sight that intrigued customers and community members, and resulted in a number of resources for the animal shelter. Equally as important, it left the young leaders feeling confident and proud.

The group came away with boxes full of dog and cat treats, food, stuffed animals, toys, blankets, litter, water and food bowls, leashes and more. They also raised $150.

Young Leaders of Tomorrow is an elementary school service learning and character-building program that was launched by the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools in 2013. It challenges students to get actively involved in making a difference in their communities through projects that can impact social challenges and needs. In turn, students learn leadership and responsibility, and gain civic pride.

The school counselor leads the group, and they meet once a week throughout the school year. They work on character building and social/emotional development, and create and carry out a service-learning project. At the end of the year, the groups give a formal presentation on their projects, talking about their outcomes and what they learned throughout the process.

Here is a list of the elementary schools and their service learning projects for the 2015-2016 school year:

- **Banneker**: Reading Buddies
- **Bethel**: Collecting pop tabs for Ronald McDonald Charities
- **Caruthers**: Pennies for Tables project
- **Claude Huyck**: A Cure for Cancer
- **Douglas**: Collecting pop tabs for Ronald McDonald Charities, and mentoring kindergarten students
- **Emerson**: Collecting scarves, gloves/mittens, hats, blankets for Mt. Carmel Community Outreach Ministries
- **Eugene Ware**: Buddy Bench
- **Frances Willard**: No Texting and Driving
- **Frank Rushton**: Recycling
- **Grant**: Grant’s Kindness
- **Hazel Grove**: Family Movie Night
- **John Fiske**: Donating to Great Plains SPCA
- **John F. Kennedy**: DREAM Cancer Walk
- **Lindbergh**: Pilot Buddy Program
- **Mark Twain**: “Are You Better Than a Teacher” Part II
- **McKinley**: Collecting toiletries and purses for Hope House Domestic Violence Services
- **M.E. Pearson**: Cafeteria recycling
- **New Chelsea**: MATH (Math And Teamwork Helpers)
- **New Stanley**: Leukemia and Lymphoma Society fundraiser, “Pasta for Pennies”
- **Noble Prentis**: Project R (Raising money for new indoor recess equipment.)
- **Parker**: Community Library
- **Quindaro**: Project for the Make-A-Wish Foundation
- **Silver City**: Breast cancer awareness
- **Stony Point North**: All-school walkathon to raise money for a new school playground
- **Stony Point South**: Helping Wayside Waifs
- **T.A. Edison**: Food pantry drive
- **Welborn**: Welborn Eagles S.O.A.R. program
- **White Church**: Fundraiser for The Boys and Girls Club of Kansas City
- **Whittier**: Project Playground

Watch a video about the Young Leaders of Tomorrow program on our Youtube channel, youtube.com/kckkstv
Preparing Students for Tech-Filled Futures

More than 2,000 students in KCKPS participated in the international Hour of Code in the fall. The week-long event was dedicated to exposing students to computer programming concepts (i.e., coding). Coding skills are becoming essential in the 21st century. A number of resources, including tutorials, are available online at code.org.
Reading is the foundation for a good education. Teaching children to read and giving them a passion for the written word will impact their future of learning.

Students become engaged in reading when it is inviting and exciting. Exposure to the right reading material (that is age-appropriate) and giving students a level of comfort can enhance the process.

Structured and creative initiatives for reading are plentiful in KCKPS. The following are just a few examples.

**Strategic Reading**

In Jen Hill’s 6th Grade Strategic Reading class at Rosedale Middle School, you won’t just see students with their noses in books, reading quietly to themselves. In fact, the class looks more like a discussion group, and at times it becomes quite animated. Students converse with each other, work on iPads and have a number of physical tools at their fingertips on any given day. Grouped in fours, the students work as teams to dissect, analyze and understand text. And throughout each class period, they are listening for direction from Hill, who moves them from one reading method to another.

Sometimes the class reads in unison, which Hill calls “choral” reading. Other times they “echo” read by repeating the lines after Hill reads them. Sometimes she tells them to use their “whisper phones” to finish a paragraph. A whisper phone is a tool shaped like a small phone receiver, created out of a simple piece of PVC pipe. Students hold it to their ears and whisper the words into it. It allows them to hear a slight echo of their own voices.

“Sitting there listening and reading to themselves just doesn’t hold the interest for every student,” Hill said. “I try to give them the tools and resources they need to get invested in the work and become strong readers.”

Along with reading, she talks with students about visualizing what the words are describing, and asks them to imagine the scenes and characters. She also has them summarize the passages in writing to ensure their meaning, and also to allow them an opportunity to become writers of their own stories some day.

“Sometimes I use wordless books and have them look at the pictures and make inferences to write the text,” Hill said.

Her method of teaching is purposeful and stimulating, and it makes reading more inviting for students.

**Reading with Superheroes**

After school on Fridays, nearly three dozen students gather in Ed Henderson’s classroom at Northwest Middle School. And among them is Spiderman (a.k.a., a member of the staff, dressed in costume). The students dig through indexed boxes of comic books, looking for their favorites: Iron Man, Archie, The New Avengers, Star Wars, Wonder Woman, the Lone Ranger and Captain America, among others.

Once they find their favorites, they gather in groups or find a quiet corner, and read the latest adventure of their superheroes.

The students are members of the Northwest Comic Book Club, new to Northwest this school year. It was born out of a
survey that Henderson conducted. He was looking for a way to enhance reading for his students, so he was researching the types of books they liked to read. What he found was that many said they don’t like to read at all.

“I wasn’t an avid reader when I was really young,” Henderson confessed. “But I do remember that I liked comic books.”

A one-time comic book collector, Henderson decided to dig out his old collection and add to it in hopes of sparking students’ interest in reading. The club also provides leadership opportunities for students. There is a president, vice president, secretary and two archivists (who organize and catalog the collection). Eighth grade student Justice Thompson is the president. She has a different take on the benefits of the club.

“The club gets students involved socially in literature,” Thompson said. “It helps students express their individuality and their creative side through comic books.”

Reading eBooks on Kindles

Fourth and fifth graders at Frances Willard Elementary School don’t go to their school library to check out books. They go to check out Kindles so they can read eBooks! The school has two classroom sets of Kindles loaded with eBooks. Librarian Colleen Charlton said they are “a big hit” with students.

The school’s PTA purchased one set a few years ago and this school year, Frances Willard was awarded another set from the National PTA as a reward for the Family Literacy Night event they held. (The event brings students, staff and family members to the library for an evening of literacy and technology-focused activities.)

The Kindles rarely stay in the library very long, Charlton said. She said having access to eBooks this way makes reading more intriguing and fun for students.
TAKE A BOOK, RETURN A BOOK AND HELP PROMOTE LITERACY

Little Free Libraries have made their way to Kansas City, Kansas! The Kansas City, Kansas Public Library has teamed up with the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City Kansas Community College to pilot the Little Free Library program through the UG Transit system (the bus).

Little Free Libraries are a “take a book, return a book” exchange program that has been established in all 50 states and 70 countries around the world. The structures of the library boxes vary, but most are small, house-shaped, wooden boxes on stands that are installed along city streets, in neighborhoods and in public buildings. The goal is to promote literacy and build a sense of community.

Little Free Libraries have been installed at the five busiest bus stops on the 101 bus route in KCK (along State Avenue and Minnesota Avenue). Each library includes a variety of book selections for all ages. The idea is for residents to take a book to read, and to drop off a book to share with other residents. Books taken do not have to be returned, but if they are returned, they do not have to be returned to the same Little Free Library. Residents are encouraged to drop off a book or two throughout the year to keep the library going. There is no fee or registration process involved.

So “take a book, return a book,” and happy reading!

What’s the Location of the Little Free Libraries?
The Little Free Libraries have been installed along the 101 State Avenue Connex bus route, which goes from Village West Parkway south to State Avenue, then east along State Avenue past 21st Place to Hoel Parkway. The route then travels south on Hoel Parkway to Minnesota Avenue, then continues east on Minnesota to 3rd Street.

CHIEFS, NATIONAL DAIRY COUNCIL AWARD $10,000 HEALTH AND FITNESS GRANT TO KCKPS

The Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools has been awarded a $10,000 Fuel Up to Play 60 (FUTP60) hometown grant from the NFL and the National Dairy Council. The grant will benefit all of the district’s 30 elementary schools.

The grant was formally presented on March 7 during a special FUTP60 school assembly at Silver City Elementary School by the Chiefs Community Caring team. The assembly promoted good eating habits, healthy lifestyles and active play by way of an interactive lesson featuring Chiefs cheerleaders, Chiefs punter Dustin Colquitt, the “Voice of the Chiefs,” Mitch Holthus, and crowd favorite K.C. Wolf. Chiefs Ambassador and former linebacker Anthony Davis made an appearance to present the check to the district.

FUTP60 challenges students to take part in initiatives to increase access to physical activity (60 minutes per day) and healthy eating. KCKPS students created a farm-to-school healthy eating play, harvested vegetables from the school garden to create a healthy salsa and promoted “brain breaks” in the classroom, thus winning the “Fuel Up To Play 60” contest for their school district.
One of the most popular toys on the market helped two groups of students in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS) to practice STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) concepts, while gaining teamwork, leadership, and critical thinking skills.

Central Middle School and Frances Willard Elementary School formed teams this year to compete in the FIRST LEGO League.

FIRST LEGO is an international competition that challenges teams of students from across the world to design and program a robot using Lego kits. They must apply STEM principles to make it work, along with problem solving skills and creativity. LEGO League teams also must research a “real-world problem” such as food safety, recycling, energy, etc., and develop a solution. This year’s project theme was “Trash Trek” which focused on recycling.

At competition, Central Middle School students received the Judge’s Award in the robotics portion. This was given to them for their overall effort and “can-do” attitude to put together a project in a short amount of time. They also received a third place award in the research category of the “real world problem” part of the competition.

Central Coach Jodi Reno said the students were excited about being a part of the competition, and were thrilled to receive these awards. But their bigger accomplishments were learning to work as a team and to communicate.

Head coach Megan Schini, special education teacher, formed Frances Willard’s FIRST Lego team two years ago, but this was the first year the team went to the local competition, held at Wyandotte High School.

Other staff who help with the team are Emily Martinez, school counselor, and Ben Mitchell, 4th grade teacher.

Above: Frances Willard Elementary School’s FIRST LEGO team.

Left: Central Middle School’s FIRST LEGO team.

### 2015–2016 DISTRICT CALENDAR

**April**

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<tr>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Kindergarten Roundup</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Teacher Non-Duty Day/No school</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Last Day of School for students*</td>
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**July**

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<td>Administrators Report</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Board of Education meeting</td>
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</table>

*(If no emergency closure make up days are required). The full district calendar is accessible from the homepage of the website, www.kckps.org (click on “calendars”).
The Kansas City, Kansas Board of Education has been named an honorable mention winner in the 2016 Magna Awards program. The award recognizes the work of the Board for its leadership and vision in the district’s Diploma+ initiative. Through Diploma+, starting in the year 2021, all KCKPS students will be expected to graduate with their high school diploma plus at least one of the following: one year of college completed, an industry-recognized certification or credential, or at least a 21 on the ACT college entrance exam.

Sponsored by the National School Boards Association (NSBA), Magna Awards recognize school districts and their leaders for taking bold and innovative steps to improve the lives of their students and their communities.

“Public schools work tirelessly to improve student achievement,” said Thomas J. Gentzel, executive director, NSBA. “These Magna Award-winning districts are some of the finest examples of the creativity and dedication of our public school leaders across this nation.”

This year’s winners, three grand prize, 15 first place, and 15 honorable mention winners, were selected from three enrollment categories: under 5,000 students, 5,000 to 20,000 students, and over 20,000 students.

The complete list of winners is available online at www.nsba.org/newsroom/2016-magna-award-winners-named.
The Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools’ Nutritional Services Department will once again this year offer healthy meals to all students and children in the community throughout the summer months. The Summer Food Service Program makes food available to school-aged children during a time when many of them may not have access to healthy meals. Offerings include breakfast, lunch and snacks for all school-aged children.

Meals will be available in many areas throughout the Wyandotte County area, beginning in June and going through July. Community members, whether enrolled in the district or not, can take advantage of these meals, at a site near them. Watch for a listing of the sites for the 2016 Summer Meals program, which will be posted sometime in May at kckps.org/index.php/summer-menus.

Saint Mary has helped students find their purpose for over 90 years. At USM, KCK grads will benefit from:

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*From the Princeton Review Best 379 Colleges Guide (2015) © 2015 TPR Education, LLC. All rights reserved.
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Lansing, KS
913.727.6000

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Family Medicine Specialists
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Kansas City, KS
913-299-2100

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The Providence team of compassionate, experienced health care professionals are here to provide expert care for you and everyone in your family.

Most insurance plans (including military) are accepted.

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