

EDUCATION CONNECTION



NEWS FROM THE KANSAS CITY, KANSAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FALL 2017

BACK-TO-SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

PRESCHOOLERS
LEARN TO PLAY
THE VIOLIN

SCHOOL
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Website: kckps.org

Facebook:
[KansasCityKansasPublicSchools](https://www.facebook.com/KansasCityKansasPublicSchools)

Twitter: twitter.com/kckschools

Superintendent's Blog, "It's Up to Us."
blog.kckps.org

KCKPS-TV:
Channel 18 (on Spectrum)
Channel 145 (on Google Fiber)

YouTube: www.youtube.com/KCKPSTV



MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Dr. Cynthia Lane
Superintendent of Schools

Live any length of time and we generally come to realize that change is necessary for progress to occur.

Live a little longer and we generally have experiences that remind us that change is often

difficult. We do know, as Tony Robbins stated, “Change is INEVITABLE. Progress is OPTIONAL.”

Progress is not optional for Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools or our students.

Progress is what our parents, community, and board intended when we established our vision to become one of the top 10 school districts in the nation. Our community was pleased with our progress as a school system, but not satisfied. We understood there is more we can and must do to prepare our students for the future. We will realize our vision to be among the best as we achieve our essential goal, that each student will graduate prepared for college and careers in a global society. Preparation for college and careers in 2017 means our students graduate with their high school diploma plus one or more endorsements (www.kckps.org/diplomaplus), validating our students have the skills they need for future success. We have embraced change in KCKPS, and our actions are intentionally designed to achieve positive results that matter for all of our students.

A key part of our students’ future success revolves around their ability to compete in a global economy.

We are all aware, technology has dramatically changed our world. How we prepare our students for their futures has changed as well. Collaboration, teamwork, technical reading and writing, leadership, flexibility, innovation, solution oriented, problem solving, are the skills, mindsets, and knowledge that students need in order to compete in the workforce. As an innovative school district, our educators embrace these skills, and are actively teaching our students these critical competencies.

Knowing academics are only part of the formula for success, our students are actively learning the skills and mindsets as they learn content. Students are seated in groups, expected to collaborate, and work as a team. Talking between and among peers is encouraged.

Questioning and exploring is commonplace. Students work together to produce research, engage in projects that demonstrate shared learning of the concepts. “Flexible” seating permeates our learning environments. Sofas, wooden patio chairs, stand up desks, desks with no legs, bouncy balls, and “wiggle” chairs (that look like mushrooms) are emerging at all levels. Tables are arranged for collaboration, students work in teams, share their work through technology and platforms such as “Google Docs.” Productive conversations about the learning are facilitated and nurtured by our teachers. Projects are designed by teachers (and informed by business) to give our students real-world and relevant experiences. Students are not asked to find the “right” answer, but to generate multiple solutions to a problem, test their hypothesis, write and speak about the learning. The focus of field trips is to provide students exposure to all types of careers and professions.

School today is not about preparing students

for more school. Graduating from high school today means our students are prepared for high-skilled, high-demand careers. Blending academic standards with critical competencies better prepares our students for their future.

Preparing our students is what graduating Diploma⁺ is all about.



Check out Dr. Cynthia Lane’s
blog, “It’s Up to Us” at
blog.kckps.org

WE ALL PLAY A PART IN KCKPS SUCCESS!



Brenda C. Jones

I would like to welcome everyone back to the 2017-18 school year. I am excited for what I know will be another successful year of academic excellence for Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools (KCKPS).

As a product of KCKPS and this beautiful community, I know first-hand the tremendous educational opportunities gained by attending our public schools. I was a student at Douglass Elementary, Northeast Junior High and Sumner High schools.

Today, as a member of the Kansas City, Kansas Board of Education, I am fortunate to have the opportunity to visit our schools and talk with students, teachers and parents. I am moved by their personal stories describing the innovative work happening in the classrooms, the dedication of teachers and staff, and the involvement of parents.

Their experiences are similar to what I remember about my KCKPS school days. I am convinced this learning environment can only happen in a school district like ours – one that has caring and dedicated administrators, educators, parents, students and community partners.

We all work together for the good of our students and the continued success of the school district. We are steadfast in upholding our mission: **Inspiring Excellence: Every Grownup, Every Child, Every Day.**

We accomplish this by doing our part to carry out the school district's mission.

- Our school board makes sure the school district operates in the best interests of students and the community.
- Our administrators and staff, under the direction of Superintendent Dr. Cynthia Lane, oversee the day-to-day operation of the school district through their work, while carrying out the Strategic Priorities of the Board of Education.
- Our teachers and educators within the District equip our students with

essential tools and knowledge to compete in a global society. This starts as early as Pre-K, and carries over into elementary and middle school years, in preparation for the academic challenges of high school, and ultimately graduating Diploma⁺.

- The parents and families of our students are the most valuable sources of love and support for our children. Their encouragement and school engagement make a huge difference in the success of our students.
- Our students realize the importance of a quality education, and know how it contributes to staying on track and on time for success. They value their diversity and realize they too can and will make a difference in the world.
- Our community partners and leaders continue to find ways to support students and the District by providing scholarships, internships, job shadowing, as well as face-to-face time in classrooms – all give our students positive role models to emulate.

Thank you all for the powerful work you are doing and will continue to do for the future of KCKPS.

I wholeheartedly agree with Dr. Lane: It is truly up to all of us!

Brenda C. Jones
President
KCK Board of Education

STAY IN THE KNOW!

KCKPS Spotlight is a new bi-monthly show featuring what's happening in the school district. Check it out on social media and KCKPS-TV.



KCKPS PARTNERS WITH THE SPORTS MEDICINE CENTER AT CHILDREN'S MERCY



Kansas City, Kansas Public School District is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Sports Medicine Center at Children's Mercy to provide the school district's student athletes comprehensive

sports medicine services.

The multi-year contract was approved by the KCK Board of Education in May.

"This will be another great partnership for KCKPS. The services provided by Children's Mercy include full athletic training and sports medicine services for all District home athletic events and practices," said KCKPS Athletic Director Walter Thompson.

Children's Mercy's Sports Medicine Program Manager Nicole Fillingame said, "We are excited for this opportunity and happy the District chose us to be their athletic training and sports medicine partner."

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, high school athletes account for an estimated two million

injuries and 500,000 doctor visits each year. "We believe that athletic trainers are a vital part of a school's sports safety and health program," said Section Chief of Sports Medicine at Children's Mercy, Kevin Latz, MD. "With the increasing number of student athletes," Latz said, "the importance of proper on-site care has never been more important."

In order to help reduce the number of youth-related sports injuries by KCKPS athletes, the Sports Medicine Center is providing athletic trainers to be at the high schools for daily coverage of practices and athletic events.

The athletic trainers provide immediate attention to sports-related health needs including first aid procedures, initial assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of sports injuries, return-to-play guidance, injury prevention strategies, sports-related concussion evaluation and emergency actions plans.

THE KCKPS CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM RECEIVES BEST PRACTICE AWARD



Congratulations to the Nutritional Services Department's Child Nutrition Program for receiving the Kansas CAN 2016-17 Best Practice Award for outstanding and innovative practices.

The department's honor is attributed to the following:

- A partnership with Healthy Communities Wyandotte and a grant from the Cities Combating Hunger Through After School and Summer Meal Programs (CHAMPS) which made it possible for the department to convert a bookmobile into a mobile food truck to serve summer meals throughout the community.
- A partnership with Humana, Inc., and the Community Health Council of Wyandotte County which made it possible to receive funds to provide meals to adults accompanying children to the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sites.

BACK-TO-SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Students rode buses and walked to school as a new school year began at KCKPS. Enjoy the



scenes below as KCKPS students hit the ground running for the 2017-2018 school year.



PRESCHOOLERS LEARN TO PLAY THE VIOLIN



We are proud to announce Kansas City, Kansas Early Childhood Center is among the first metro schools to participate in String Sprouts, a groundbreaking early childhood violin program that supports kindergarten readiness.

The program is free and was established about four years ago by the Omaha Conservatory of Music Executive Director Ruth Meints to teach violin to three to eight-year-olds in underserved areas of Omaha, Nebraska. The program has grown to serve more than 1,300 youth at 13 different locations in the Omaha area in four years.

"This program was so well-developed and impactful in Omaha; I had to bring it to our community; it just tugged at my heart strings," said Vicki Olson, founding artistic director for Heartland Chamber Music, an award-winning chamber music academy in the heart of Kansas City. By bringing the program to our community and the metro, many believe, it can be just as impactful with students and will continue to sprout new locations and budding violinists.

On August 29, the program launched in an early childhood program of Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools. This was the first day of the 32-week curriculum at KCKECC, where preschoolers got a chance to see, touch and hold their shiny, new violins for the first time.

Their eyes were as big as apples as they carefully opened

the cases containing their instruments, with the help of their parents. That's one of the guidelines of participating in the program, a parent has to accompany their student to the class and participate in the class by assisting their child with the lessons.

Some of the students could not wait to touch their new musical instrument while others just gazed at it awaiting further instructions from their teacher.

When those instructions were articulated from String Sprouts Instructor En-Ting Hsu, the students listened intently. Doing so enabled each student to learn how to properly stand and hold the violin and how to apply rosin to the bow (made from the sticky resins of conifer trees, the amount of resin applied to the bow will influence its sound and playability).

They even learned how to play a single note on the first day. Their mastery of playing that single note prepared them to accompany their teacher in a rendition of the popular children's song, "Pop Goes the Weasel" and to take a celebratory bow at the end of the performance to which they received thunderous applause from parents, staff and community partners.

This is only the beginning of their performances and rounds of applause. At the end of the year, the students will perform with the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory Orchestra.



“This is such a great opportunity for our kids to learn how to play a musical instrument, enhance listening skills, practice following instructions, and work together as a team,” said KCKPS Superintendent of Schools Dr. Cynthia Lane. “These are great lessons they will be able to use for a lifetime,” said Dr. Lane.

The hope is to eventually expand this program, which would not have been possible without the generous support of donors, which include the following:

- Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation,
- Francis Family Foundation
- Loretto Foundation

A great deal of thanks also goes to the following companies that donated the violins for use by the students:

- KC Strings
- Beckmann Violin Shop Inc.
- Meyer Music
- Wyatt Violin Shop

For more information about String Sprouts program visit Heartlandchambermusic.org.



GLORIA WILLIS MIDDLE SCHOOL



The future new middle school will be named in honor of Gloria Willis, a long-time school district educator, administrator and Board of Education member who passed away in 2016. The school’s mascot will be the panther and the colors will be “harvest” orange and black.

honor Ms. Willis who worked in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools for 41 years and served on the Board of Education for 21 years,” said Superintendent Dr. Cynthia Lane.

The new middle school will be housed on land of the existing campus of the current Coronado Middle School located at 1735 N.

The members of the Board of Education voted on the future new school’s name, mascot and colors based on the results of a community-wide survey posted on the district’s social media sites.

“This is an incredible way to

64th Terrace. Coronado will be razed after the new middle school is completed.

The new facility will be built to accommodate the population of students from both Coronado and West middle schools. The structure will be approximately 127,000 square feet and will house about 750 students.

Among the standout features of the new two-story facility are 30 classrooms, including a science room and prep area; flex and open collaboration space in each wing; art room; vocal and instrumental, computer science and special education classrooms well as a media center, auditorium, gymnasium, and cafeteria.

Construction will begin in the spring of 2018 with completion scheduled for the 2019-2020 school year.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS!



Attending class daily and on time helps students stay on track with their learning goals. According to KCKPS data, there is strong evidence in support of this statement. The graduation rate for 9th grade students with an attendance rate of 95 percent or better is significantly higher at 86 percent, compared to students with an attendance rate that is less. Those students with less than a 95 percent attendance rate only graduate 48.6 percent of the time.

This strong correlation between attendance and graduation is one of the reasons that 9th grade attendance is a far better predictor of graduation than test scores. That's why showing up to school every day, on time, being prepared and ready to learn are stressed by teachers, administrators and staff at the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools.

Besides the benefits of graduating on time and on track, there are social and emotional advantages to attending school. Students are able to meet new people, form lasting relationships with peers, build communication skills, boost confidence, become exposed to new and innovative practices and participate in afterschool activities and enrichment programs.

Showing up to school is about each student learning the educational basics and developing a solid foundation that will place them on the proper pathway to reaching their academic and career goals or graduating Diploma⁺. This is the ultimate goal the District is working toward with all students from as early as Pre-K to the day they step across the stage and graduate from high school.

To learn more, download the *Attendance Matters* brochure at kckps.org.



2017-2018 DISTRICT CALENDAR

October

- 19 Family Advocacy Day/No School
- 20 Teacher Non-Duty Day/No School
- 24 Board of Education Meeting

November

- 14 Board of Education Meeting at Argentine Middle School
- 15 Reasons to Believe Celebration
- 22 – 24 Holiday/ Administrative Offices Closed
- 28 Board of Education Meeting

December

- 12 Board of Education Meeting
- 19 Last day of 2nd Quarter
- 20 .5 records prep/ .5 inservice
- 21-31 Winter Break
- 25-29 Administrative Offices Closed

January

- 1-2 Winter Break continues
- 1 Administrative Offices Closed
- 3 Teachers report/ .5 inservice only
- 4 Classes resume for students
- 9 Board of Education Meeting
- 15 Holiday/ Administrative Offices Closed
- 23 Board of Education Meeting

The full District calendar is accessible from the homepage of the website by clicking “calendars” at kckps.org.

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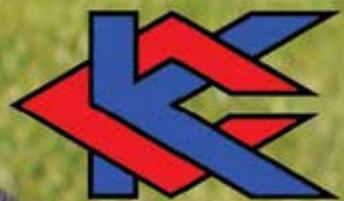
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**Second Saturdays of each Month
beginning October 14th, 2017**

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- 2 Afternoon Session 1-3:30p for \$35
- 3 Both Sessions for \$60 (Save \$10)

*Lunch will be available in the deli for those choosing to do both sessions for \$6

Each Second Saturday Session will have different activities available. You'll choose from the available options at the time of registration.

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