

INSIDE



SHAWNEE MISSION SCHOOL DISTRICT

WINTER 2017



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Create Real-World
Learning Opportunities

> All Means All in the
Shawnee Mission School District

Forward MOMENTUM

A Message From the Interim Superintendent

*“If everyone is moving forward together,
then success takes care of itself.” – Henry Ford*

It's been a terrific fall. Great things happen every single day in this district because of the hard work and dedication of our talented staff. It's been a joy to see students fill the Center for Academic Achievement to attend Signature Program classes. Having students interacting with the administrators and combining a school with a professional environment has been everything we wished for and more. It's brought out the best in the students, who have one rule here – do right. As an administrator, we come to work every day for the kids. It's fantastic to now come to work *with* the kids.



Dr. Kenny Southwick

The Center for Academic Achievement is fulfilling the district's needs. It's created a more efficient, collaborative culture for the administrative team. Training rooms are always full for professional development, training sessions or events. Every day, casual collisions lead to collaborative conversations. It's awesome.

This Inside issue includes a story about the district's Family Services Department and how it helps our students. Right here in Johnson County there are challenges with homelessness and poverty. If it gets in the way of a child succeeding in school, we have ways we can help; in the Shawnee Mission School District, “all means all.”

I couldn't be more proud of my colleagues and our students. And, at this time of year, we are grateful to be a part of a community that values and supports public education. May you all enjoy the blessings of the season. ♦

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ON THE COVER: New district headquarters on the night of its grand opening celebration.

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INSIDE

Shawnee Mission School District
8200 W. 71st Street
Shawnee Mission, KS 66204

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Superintendent Search

This fall the district held community forums, conducted meetings and offered online surveys so that staff members, students and community members could explain what they are looking for in the next superintendent.

Community input helped form ideal candidate profile.
Shawnee Mission School District seeks a superintendent who...

- » Is strongly committed to a “student first” philosophy in all decisions.
- » Promotes a positive and professional environment for district employees and board and is able to build consensus and commitment among individuals and groups with an emphasis on parent involvement.
- » Inspires trust, has high levels of self-confidence and optimism, and models high standards of integrity and personal performance.
- » Possesses the leadership skills required to respond to the opportunities and challenges presented by an ethnically and culturally diverse community.
- » Has experience recruiting and maintaining exceptional staff for the district and schools.
- » Is a strong communicator: speaking, listening and writing.
- » Possesses excellent people skills, presents a positive image of the district, listens to input and makes decisions when necessary.
- » Has experience in the selection and implementation of educational priorities consistent with the interests and needs of students, staff, board and community.
- » Has previous experience that will benefit the long-term financial health of the district.
- » Delegates authority appropriately while maintaining accountability.
- » Possesses the ability to enhance student performance and implements strategies to narrow gaps in student achievement.

The search firm is currently accepting applications. They are due December 15. The search firm will vet candidates in December, and will take recommendations to the Board of Education in January. Interviews will be conducted in January and February, and a new superintendent could be chosen as early as March 2018. ♦

Ready from the Start — Leadership Skills Taught Early

It’s never too early to prepare students for a successful future. Educators continue to introduce new and creative ways to infuse career preparation into the school day, even for some of our youngest learners.

At ApacheIS, sixth-graders apply, interview and hold jobs at their school. It helps students build a goal-oriented mentality and practice important skills that they’ll need for their future, Principal Britt Pumphrey said.

“Getting a good job takes a mindset,” Pumphrey said. “We want students to think ahead to something they want and achieve it by taking the right steps toward it. It helps build a sense of purpose and ownership of their futures.”

Sixth-Grade Job Interviews

On ApacheIS interview day, students wore professional clothes, some even wore ties, and they all introduced themselves. For many, like sixth-grader Ayanna Abson, it was their first job interview.

Abson applied for a job that helps reconnect students with items in the school’s lost and found. She was nervous for the interview, but she knew it was a chance to practice. “I took a deep breath, counted to 10, and told myself ‘Just be brave,’” Abson said.

Students practiced eye contact, shaking hands, and answering questions about their abilities. Some district administrators volunteered their time to add to the authenticity of the experience.

Abson was hired for the job she wanted. While she may not have her next job interview for a couple of years, she said she already feels more confident.

“It feels great because now I have a job where I can help people,” she said.

The interview process is designed to get students thinking about what an employer might hope to hear in an interview and instill in students a sense of courage to take with them into the workforce, Pumphrey said.

“Students always rise to high expectations, especially when the training and support is put in place for them to be successful,” Pumphrey said. “Everything students practiced that day helped them gain confidence.”

Authentic Responsibilities

Henser Murcia earned a job tending the school gardens and served as a kindergarten classroom assistant. Recently, he helped young students practice writing lower case letters and



Dr. Doug Sumner, assistant superintendent of human resources conducts an interview with Adam Piper who is applying for a “job” at ApacheIS.

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numbers. “It makes me really happy to be able to help my school because I’m making a difference in the school for my last year here,” he said.

“The jobs give sixth-graders an opportunity to contribute, and younger students notice the positive difference sixth-graders are making, too.” Pumphrey said. “They can see what the older students are doing and aspire to that kind of leadership. That is powerful.”

Plans of Study

The career readiness conversation will continue throughout the students’ careers in Shawnee Mission. Explorations take place across the district through student work with teachers and counselors, career days, connections with professional mentors, and more.

This year, Hocker Grove Middle School is piloting the Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) program. In this program, students will have dedicated time to think about and plan for what is ahead. “Our goal is to have them dream of their futures and to build self-confidence,” Alicia Fisher, JAG specialist said.

“Educators have placed a new focus on Individual Plans of Study, to help students think about their specific interests and skills and how they align with future opportunities,” said Dr. Darren Dennis, director of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

“Whether students pursue higher education or secure a job right out of high school, it’s important for them to think about possible career options long before they graduate,” Dennis added. ♦

NEW DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS

Brings Learning and Community Together



A unique building that intertwines spaces for education, community, and administration celebrated its grand opening this fall.

Built to serve three audiences, the hybrid Center for Academic Achievement (CAA) serves students in the district's Signature Programs, offers the community meeting spaces, and houses the district's administrative team. It also offers large areas that are used for district events and professional development and training.

Signature Programs

More than half of the building is dedicated to the Signature Programs for students from all five high schools. Each learning space is designed specifically for the programs to create authentic learning opportunities. Read more about them on pages 8 and 9.

It's an amazing space, one that encourages students to dream big and hold each other to a high standard, Tony Le, Signature Program student said. It places students in a professional workplace which is helpful as they train for future careers.

"When you come here, everyone treats you like a professional and it gives you that good feeling that you are competent at what you're doing, and what you're saying and how you act," Le added.

Broadmoor Bistro

The student run, full-service restaurant features a coffee shop that's open to the public Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. There, visitors can enjoy a coffee and pastry made by the students. Products like jams and fresh bread are available for purchase. The students also offer a catering service.

Meeting Spaces

Throughout the building, a variety of meeting spaces are available for community members to use. Rooms and open spaces are furnished with adaptable, flexible furniture and display technology. Some are near a two-story living wall, filled with live plants that clean the air while adding beauty to the space. The entire building is constructed with environmentally friendly features, including a sustainable urban farm that will be maintained by students and used



Broadmoor Bistro's Coffee Shop

in the culinary program's restaurant that is open to the public.

"This building belongs to the people of the community, and we welcome the opportunity to share it," said Dr. Kenny Southwick, interim superintendent. "Our goal is to serve the students and be a place where we can all convene, collaborate, and learn together."

Administrative Team

The final third of the building houses the district's administrative team. Administrators used to be housed in four different buildings across the district that amounted to more than 400,000 square feet. Now, the team works in one building, reduced to about 131,000 square feet. "This building has allowed us to operate more efficiently and it's improved our culture of collaboration," Southwick said.

"Hands down, the best part is getting to work with students in the same building," said Pam Lewis, director of elementary services. "Students are at the heart of what we do, so it's gratifying to interact with them every day."

Sustainability

The building is designed to Silver LEED standards and was built predominantly with recycled or recyclable materials. "The 1.3 acre farm that's part of the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Signature Program, was nourished with compost made from our school cafeterias," said Joan Leavens, coordinator of sustainability and community engagement. "There's an emphasis on efficiency to lower energy use as well." ♦

The CAA was built with the following goals in mind:

- » Serve students, community, and administration
- » House and grow Signature Programs
- » Encourage health and wellness of staff and community
- » Build an environmentally friendly building
- » Create an urban farm
- » House the Broadmoor Bistro and Café
- » Consolidate administrative team
- » Improve collaborative culture
- » Reduce operating costs
- » Create a central location in a 72-square mile district
- » Reduce 400,000 square ft. administrative footprint
- » Offer flexible meeting spaces

The Center for Academic Achievement is located at 8200 W. 71st Street, Shawnee Mission, KS 66204.



The Shawnee Mission Education Foundation purchased an Anatomage table that allows students to dissect human and animal cadavers digitally. Only three public K-12 schools in the nation have one.

Signature Programs Create Real-World Learning Opportunities

The Shawnee Mission School District Signature Programs are designed for students who seek a higher level of specialized study. They are now at the Center for Academic Achievement where students from all five high schools work together. The Signature Programs employ project-based learning, a teaching method in which students learn by working on a specific problem, project or complex challenge.

Students have a voice in what projects they pursue, including how they work and what they create. “We know that by generating learning opportunities with high-levels of relevance, students will engage in deeper levels of rigor through complex problem solving and work that links them to their passion,” said Dr. Christy Ziegler, assistant superintendent for innovation and performance.

The new facility bridges the high school experience with professional experience in more ways than one.

Learning spaces are built like a real-life hospital, design studio, restaurant and science lab – putting them in an environment where they can create, innovate, discover and prepare for their future.

Animation and Game Design: Students use industry-standard software and tools to learn the principles of ani-



Students practice EMT skills in the Project Blue Eagle program.

mation and motion graphics. Students use their creativity and problem-solving skills they’ll need to excel in industries where 2D and 3D animators are in demand, such as advertising, movies, video game development, architecture and engineering.

Biotechnology: In their own laboratory, students learn and practice advanced skills in pharmacology, agriculture and bioinformatics. They conduct original research, use software to organize data and apply technical writing skills. Students also have the opportunity to work with professional industry mentors and, in some cases, will work in professional labs in the metro area.

Culinary Arts and Hospitality at Broadmoor Bistro: Students prepare for the multi-faceted culinary and hospitality industry including experiences in baking, culinary arts and restaurant management. The award-winning Broadmoor Bistro is a fully operational kitchen and restaurant directed and executed by students. It’s open to the public on Wednesday evenings.

Engineering: Aligned with the national Project Lead the Way organization, the curriculum teaches students the scope, rigor and discipline of engineering. Students analyze problems, then research patents and regulations, construct working models and test them in real-life situations. As a capstone experience their senior year, they present and defend their project to a panel of industry experts.

Medical Health Science: This program provides exposure to health science careers using real-life scenarios and tools. Critical thinking, problem-solving and self-awareness is emphasized. Students are immersed in the language of health care as they develop basic technical skills in a hospital simulation lab as well as industry-based learning experiences.

Project Blue Eagle: Four career paths are explored in this program, including law enforcement, firefighting, EMT and the legal profession. Courses introduce students to the history of each profession, the requirements and compensation. This program is housed in another building to give students the space they need to work with a firetruck and ambulance.

Collaboration is Key

The state-of-the-art equipment the students work with in the Signature Programs would not be possible without support from the Shawnee Mission Education Foundation and local municipalities. The Foundation has invested in equipment spanning all Signature Programs, including the used firetruck for Project Blue Eagle.

The Signature Programs are not silos. Instructors look for opportunities to combine talents and skills of students in one program to collaborate with another one. “Our goal is to continue to integrate these programs to create realistic learning opportunities that are representative of what they’ll face in the world,” said Dr. Ziegler.

Students now take classes in the same building where administrators work. “The fact that students arrive in a professional setting every day inspires them to raise their learning to a new level,” said Dr. Ziegler. “The administrative team has benefited from the extra energy the students bring with them every day. We are focused on continuing to engage them to focus on workplace competencies that will help them stand out when they interview for college or a career. It’s fantastic to share the day with them.”



Students use state-of-the-art equipment in the lab in the Biotechnology Signature Program.



The Broadmoor Bistro is open every Wednesday for dinner. Reservations can be made at Open Table.



Project Lead the Way Engineering students have access to a 3-D printer and fabrication lab at the Center for Academic Achievement.

All Means All in the Shawnee Mission School District



LEFT: Located at the Broadmoor Technical Center, the Shawnee Mission Area Council (SMAC) Clothing Exchange provides gently used clothing to those who live within district boundaries. Donations for child and adult clothing are welcome.

BELOW: Volunteers pack supplies at the Giving the Basics storage facility. Supplies are delivered to SM East, where students in the SHARE program sort and customize for distribution. Then the district's Operations and Maintenance Department delivers to schools where they're given to families.

Imagine taking a test when you're hungry. Imagine trying to do homework when you don't have electricity, and it's cold and dark. Imagine trying to focus in school when you don't have a home or a bed to sleep in at night.

For some students in the Shawnee Mission School District, they don't have to imagine. It's their story. Last year, 398 students in the district were identified as homeless. Currently, there are 226. Approximately 35 percent of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch this year.

Responding to a Need

The Shawnee Mission School District has a Department of Family Services with a mission to help students get what they need to stay and succeed in school. They do this by connecting families with community partners that can help remove roadblocks to student success.

"Sometimes when children struggle in school, it's because they have a struggle at home. As a public school district, our mission is to provide every child who comes to us with the best education possible," said Dr. Kenny Southwick, interim superintendent. "Here, all means all – and if a child has extenuating circumstances that become a barrier to learning, it's our job to try to help that child succeed."

"These are some of the most resilient families in the world – considering the circumstances they deal with every day," said Rob Bell, director for family services. "Many times, it's people who've had recent misfortune like a house fire, loss of a job or a health issue; or sometimes it's a high school student who may already be a parent without the support of a family. These are good, hard-working people. Sometimes you can do everything right and still need a little help."

The district couldn't do this without committed and generous community partners. "We can identify needs and match

families with community partners that can help. It's a collaborative community effort to benefit the kids and families we serve," said David Aramovich, McKinney-Vento social worker with the Shawnee Mission School District.

The Department for Family Services partners with many district departments such as Health Services and Food Services to support our students. Shawnee Mission social workers, nurses, and counselors are trained to recognize students and their families in need. And every staff member is able to make a referral so families can be connected to the appropriate district resources.

Caring for Kids

Caring for Kids is a non-profit organization that functions as a neutral convener to engage community, civic, business and faith-based organizations. "This volunteer network is an incredibly valuable resource for the district," said Southwick.

Through this network, the district benefits from 96 valuable partnerships. Each district and school has a unique student composition, structure and needs. Caring for Kids works with buildings and administrators to mobilize volunteer mentors, coordinate projects, or to engage a partner that can help meet a specific need.



Health and Human Dignity

Students may have many needs – food, clothing, or even basic hygiene supplies like shampoo or diapers that food stamps from Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) don't cover. Giving the Basics provides personal hygiene products to our schools that nurses and social workers can distribute to families in need.

"We may not be able to help with all of their needs right then, but through our partnership with Giving the Basics, we can do something immediately to help them," said Shelby Rebeck, coordinator for health services.

Medical, dental and/or behavioral care can be a significant challenge for families and students. Health Partnership Clinic works with the district to help families receive appropriate care for their child. "Health Partnership Clinic uses a sliding scale to determine what families can afford to pay. They offer holistic care and help us weekly with an emergent need," Rebeck added. The district also partners with local Lions Club organizations to provide vision screenings, eye exams and glasses to students in need.

Project H.O.M.E.

One of the most devastating challenges families can face is homelessness. In the 1980s, the McKinney-Vento law was passed to help remove barriers that keep kids from being in school, including homelessness and economic hardship. Ar-

amovich, licensed McKinney-Vento social worker, assists these families.

Last year, the district helped 17 families find sustainable, permanent housing. So far this year, we've done the same for 18 families. Last year, the district provided intervention that prevented 10 families from becoming homeless. So far this year, we done the same for another 10 families.

"Some families are only steps away from losing their home. One more event that causes financial strain can push them even closer to the edge. We try to keep that from happening," Aramovich added.

Twice a month, the district hosts Project H.O.M.E. meetings (Housing Opportunities Move Everyone) in space donated by a church, with free child care. It's a 'one-stop-shop' for families who are homeless to converse with multiple community partners that can provide assistance and support.

"Sometimes families who are struggling don't know where to begin to find help. Project H.O.M.E. helps them get started. The meetings prevent families from having to tell their stories over and over again," Aramovich said.

Many of us can't imagine what it's like to go to bed hungry, or to not have a bed to sleep in. "Spend a few minutes imagining what that's really like and I promise you, you'll get up every morning wanting to make a difference for these families," said Aramovich. ♦

Want to help?

Contribute to the Shawnee Mission Education Foundation Cares Fund.

The Cares Fund provides emergency assistance to our families in crisis. We know our kids can't learn with the weight of adult problems on their shoulders and the Foundation can step in quickly to help our Shawnee Mission students.

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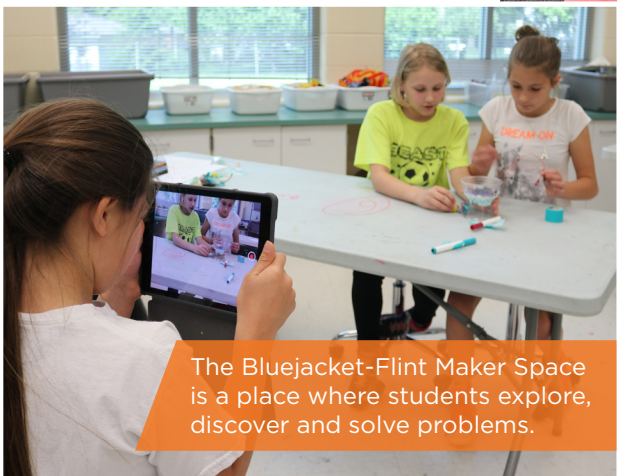


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Elementary Schools Distinguished by Apple



TOP LEFT: Teachers and students problem-solve with robots in the Bluejacket-Flint Maker Space.
RIGHT: Many Rosehill students gather before school on Friday morning to practice technology skills at Coding Club.



The Bluejacket-Flint Maker Space is a place where students explore, discover and solve problems.

Bluejacket-Flint Elementary and Rosehill Elementary have been recognized as Apple Distinguished Schools for 2017-19. Apple Distinguished Schools are centers of educational leadership and excellence that demonstrate the endless possibilities made available to students through technology – considered to be among the most innovative in the world. Briarwood, Broken Arrow, and Trailwood Elementary Schools were also recognized as Apple Distinguished Schools 2016-2018. Apple Distinguished Schools are recognized for a two-year time span. The district’s one-to-one technology initiative provides each student with an iPad or MacBook. “Today’s students are technology natives. These tools encourage creativity, collaboration and critical thinking,” said Dr. Kenny Southwick, interim superintendent. “Whether their next step is higher education or career, Shawnee Mission students will be well prepared.” Since the technology initiative was implemented, students have received multiple local, regional, and national awards for their work.

Apple Distinguished School

Bluejacket-Flint and Rosehill elementary schools have innovative cultures that engage students. Teachers at Rosehill encourage students to set big goals and explore what makes them curious. This student-driven learning allows them to examine a real-world problem they want to try to solve. For example, two third-graders who wanted to help prevent skin cancer created a well researched, award-winning PSA about skin cancer prevention. Teachers at Bluejacket-Flint keep creativity and innovation at the forefront. Whether it’s in the new Maker Space or in the classroom, students are encouraged to work collaboratively. Classrooms are arranged to give students space to work in groups. Hallways and corridors are often used to make videos with green screens. Students and teachers work together to find solutions to challenges they see in the world through challenged-based learning curriculum. Learn more about the Apple Distinguished School recognition at www.smsd.org or by searching for Shawnee Mission School District in the iBooks store. 🍎



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