A Message from the Superintendent

New Elementary School Opens in Lenexa

Infusion of Career into the Classroom
The proud tradition of excellence in the Shawnee Mission School District (SMSD) continues with the advent of a new school year. Students and staff are engaged in meaningful learning, supportive parents are helping their children succeed and our community stands strong for its public schools. There is much to be thankful for in Shawnee Mission.

Core to any great public-school system is an unwavering focus on academic preparation and personal responsibility. Later this fall, SMSD will engage the community in updating its current strategic plan. That plan will focus on identifying key academic outcomes that ensure every student is ready for success after graduation. Our commitment to every learner we serve becoming a success-ready graduate is at the heart of our mission. Watch for ways you can contribute to updating SMSD’s strategic plan in future communications from the district.

SMSD’s strategic plan update will provide a lasting vision for the future of our district and the communities we serve. As we live in the moment I encourage you to remember and help neighbors in need. The partnerships SMSD has formed with municipalities, places of worship, businesses, community groups and many, many caring individuals helps us better meet the needs of all our students. Some students come to school hungry, some are homeless and constantly on the move, others are experiencing trauma that impacts their ability to function in daily life. The kindness and generosity of our SMSD family to give of themselves to help those in need is deeply appreciated.

Thank you for caring so deeply about the children of Shawnee Mission. The SMSD Board of Education and staff are committed to doing our very best to build on the past and create an even better future. Stay connected with events at SMSD by visiting our website (smsd.org) and following us on Twitter (@thesmsd) and Facebook (@thesmsd). Together, we make Shawnee Mission a great place to live, learn and work.

Dr. Mike Fulton

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ON THE COVER: First-grade students arrive in their brand new classroom at Lenexa Hills Elementary School – ready to learn.

Created a Better Future Together
A Message from the Superintendent

Creating a Better Future Together

Dr. Mike Fulton
New Elementary School Opens in Lenexa

In response to a growing population in Lenexa, the Shawnee Mission School District opened a brand new elementary school in August, Lenexa Hills Elementary School. The new school was paid for with money contained in the bond package local voters overwhelmingly passed in 2015. It brings the number of Shawnee Mission elementary schools to 34. Teachers from different schools across the district will come together to staff the new school. Students will come from Sunflower and Broken Arrow elementary schools.

Excitement for the first day of school built among both students and staff. During the summer, staff members collaborated in a planning meeting that took place in one of the finished classrooms. “The teachers were excited to open a brand-new school, where everyone is open-minded about what education should look like,” said Principal Mike Brewer. “We have a group of ‘doers,’ and we are excited to build not only new classrooms, but a new culture.”

The school will host an open house event in September, after students get settled, which will offer members of the community a chance to see the new building. Brewer kept staff members and families informed with emails and social posts over the summer, providing them updates on construction and additional information about the new school.

As is the case in all Shawnee Mission schools, the students will have input into how the school’s culture develops. “We’ll work to build relationships with students so they’ll feel safe and included,” Brewer said. “All decisions and ideas will be based on what’s best for students. In addition, being in a new school provides a great opportunity for our older students to be role models and mentors for our youngest students. Our ongoing goal is to help students find their voice, and to let them know why they are special, so they can feel and be smart and confident.”

With funds from the bond issue, the district has been able to build five new elementary schools, four of which involved tearing down and rebuilding existing elementary schools. Other bond proceeds were used to modernize some of the district’s aging schools, and to expand early childhood programs. In addition, the district is building an aquatic center in Lenexa, which is scheduled to open in 2019.

You’re Invited to
MEET DR. MIKE FULTON
Shawnee Mission School District Superintendent

There will be several Open House events to welcome Dr. Fulton. Community members are invited to attend any of the events.

First-grade student, Stiara, shows Superintendent Mike Fulton her new desk.

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ALL WILL BE HELD FROM 5 TO 7 P.M. AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

- SEPTEMBER 5
  SM South High School – Library
  5800 W. 107th Street

- SEPTEMBER 6
  SM East – Cafeteria
  7500 Mission Road

- SEPTEMBER 11
  SM West – Cafeteria
  8800 W. 85th Street

- SEPTEMBER 17
  SM Northwest – Cafeteria
  12701 W. 67th Street

- SEPTEMBER 25
  SM North – Cafeteria
  7401 Johnson Drive

Please join us and meet Dr. Mike Fulton, the district’s new superintendent, who began his tenure in the district on July 2. Feel free to stop by at any point.

#WelcomeDrFulton
Infusion of Career into the Classroom

New opportunities provide roadmap to students

She may have only been in third grade, but last spring, Sunflower Elementary school student Maya Lance spent an entire school day working in an architecture firm, learning how designs move from plan to development. Lance and a group of fellow Sunflower Elementary students were invited to Hollis + Miller Architects to work side by side with professionals, beginning the process of creating designs for an outdoor classroom at their school. Lance was thrilled to get a chance to participate in the project.

“I was so excited, I could barely sleep last night,” Lance said. “I am so happy I get to be a part of this.”

Over the last few years, educators in the Shawnee Mission School District have worked to generate new, innovative opportunities for students to connect with business and industry. While career days still exist in schools, many creative twists on that concept help students strengthen job skills throughout the school year. Increasingly, both students and teachers are participating in internships, externships, job shadows, mentoring relationships, and career-related field and virtual trips.

Ultimately, educators offer these opportunities to students to help deepen understanding and help them to be successful in their futures, according to Dr. Christy Ziegler, assistant superintendent of personalized learning/interim director of special education.

“Helping every learner find a meaningful connection between what is taught and what is learned is strengthened when students can see and experience concepts in a real-world context,” Ziegler said. “Watching learners connect with their future path is like watching a child’s life change before your eyes.”

The Value of Experience

As a result of one of these career-related connections, senior Priscilla Aguilar will soon help introduce a training program for school nurses that she helped create.

The Shawnee Mission North high school and Center for Academic Achievement Medical Health Science student was one of 12 students selected to take part in the pilot “Leadership Shawnee Mission: The Jewell Summer Leadership Academy” program this past summer.

The program, offered through the Shawnee Mission Education Foundation through a partnership with William Jewell College, gave students the opportunity to work with the college’s Tucker Leadership Lab, and take part in an 16-hour internship at a local nonprofit or business.

Aguilar interned at the Shawnee Mission School District and the REACH Healthcare Foundation. They were opportunities she enjoyed so much, she found herself working on her internship projects in her free time.

“It’s actually a really cool project,” she said. “I’ve never really done anything like this before. I’ve met a lot of different people and I’ve learned a lot about how communication is key in anything you do.”

The Foundation also worked in partnership with Shawnee Mission over the summer to provide The Denny Family Externship in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Through this opportunity, Shawnee Mission educators participated in paid internships to strengthen their knowledge of the ongoing evolution of STEM careers.

“We thank the business community for opening arms to our teachers and students,” said Kimberly Hinke, Shawnee Mission Education Foundation executive director. “We know these opportunities are giving them incredible lessons and skills to bring back to the classroom.”

Beyond the Walls of the Classroom

When students and teachers aren’t able to take a field trip, they often turn to technology to make a business-related connection. Visitors in Shawnee Mission classrooms will frequently find students conducting interviews with professionals, or consulting mentors via video chat. One group of Shawnee Mission high school students used technology to participate in a research project for the European Organization for Nuclear Research [known by its French name, Conseil européen pour la recherche nucléaire (CERN)].

Miles Martin, a Shawnee Mission East physics instructor and Justin Stigge, a Shawnee Mission Northwest physics instructor, joined a grant that allowed students to participate in a Masterclass at Kansas State University. There, students analyzed data sets and video-conferenced with CERN scientists about the results.

Several students told Martin they learned about particles they didn’t even know existed, and it gave them a better idea about what a job might be like in their future.
“This was very unique,” Martin said. “The most exciting aspect was connecting students to an authentic scientific inquiry and scientific opportunities beyond high school.”

Helping Students Chart Their Course
Knowing high school students are making decisions about college and careers for the near future, many secondary-level instructors use a variety of methods to help students explore possibilities. The district has always provided focused courses in a range of career and technical fields. In addition to professional symposiums at schools, the district continues to strengthen professional advisory councils that support the district in curriculum and resource development.

“Business and industry professionals who have worked with high school learners in experiential learning opportunities understand the great reward that comes with witnessing students grow into their future,” Ziegler said. “I encourage my students to get as much information as they can.”

Animation and Game Design instructor Bryan Johnson says he works to bring guest animators into the classroom. He also talks to students about positions he has held and his career path prior to teaching. Helping students understand the professional experience is one of the most valuable things he does as a teacher, he said.

“If you want to get where you are going, you have to see where you are going,” Johnson said. “We want to provide students insight and a road map to get there.”

Brieanne Miller, emergency medical services instructor in the Project Blue Eagle Signature Program, also works as a paramedic, and often brings her colleagues to the classroom. They help students in carrying out emergency response simulations.

“I’ve seen how bad things can be and how good things can be, and it is important we are as authentic as we can be teaching in these programs,” she said. “If you want to get where you are going, you have to see where you are going.”

Shelby Rebeck, coordinator for Health Services in the Shawnee Mission School District, works on a training project for nurses with Priscilla Aguilar, a Leadership Shawnee Mission intern.

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Food Service Expands Offerings to Meet Growing Demand

The Food Service department in the Shawnee Mission School District is the unsung hero of the district. Last year it served nearly 2.4 million lunches to students and more than 475,000 breakfasts. The department does it with a phenomenal and dedicated team of 265 staff members, led by Nancy Coughenour, director of Food Service.

For years, the district has served breakfast at all schools for students who arrive early. Knowing how important breakfast is for student nutrition, the department is piloting new programs that include creative ways to provide breakfast options.

Grab and Go Breakfast

During the 2017-18 school year, Food Service partnered with Nieman Elementary to launch a new program called Grab and Go Breakfast. A portable breakfast station is set up at the front door, where students can select from two breakfast choices. The program started as a pilot last spring through a grant from Am-azon and “No Kid Hungry,” a national campaign run by Share Our Strength, a nonprofit working to solve problems of hunger and poverty in the United States and around the world.

While all Shawnee Mission schools serve breakfast before school, this program makes sure students have easy access to food by making it available as they enter the building at the beginning of the day. Since starting the program, the number of breakfasts served has increased at Nieman.

“Being set up in the entryway helps students remember to have breakfast,” said Mary Harrington, food service manager at Nieman. “Even if they’re late, they can grab a breakfast bag and take it to class.”

Each breakfast includes grain, fruit, milk, juice, and either a warm breakfast grain item or yogurt. The grant purchased the mobile equipment, giving food service employees access to a solar warming station, a portable serving station and a tablet that links to the food service software.

“The biggest benefit is that more of our students are eating breakfast and are ready to learn,” said Roni Schwartz, area food supervisor.

The Food Service team plans to continue the Grab and Go Breakfast program at Nieman and could expand the program to include additional elementary schools.

Second-Chance Breakfast

At Shawnee Mission Northwest High School, when Mike Shepherd, food service manager, noticed his breakfast counts were down, he was concerned students were missing breakfast.

“As the saying goes, ‘breakfast is the most important meal of the day,’ and many of our students were going without,” Shepherd said. After hearing of success at other high schools, he approached the administrators to discuss the idea of offering an additional breakfast later in the morning. His idea was supported, and the passing period after first hour was extended by five minutes, so that students could go to the cafeteria and get breakfast to take to their second-hour class.

Two to three hundred students take advantage of the “Second-Chance Breakfast.” Second-Chance Breakfast is offered at all high schools.

After School Snacks and Meals

Students who participate in after-school tutoring and homework sessions are provided a snack from the food service team. This program is available at specific schools that provide afterschool educational services. There is no charge to the families for the snacks.

Summer Lunch Bunch

Summer Lunch Bunch provides a free lunch for any child from age one to 18 during the summer break. Children do not have to be students in the district to come to Summer Lunch Bunch; all children are welcome. This summer, more than 20,000 lunches were served from June 4 through July 27 at 10 elementary schools.

This is the seventh year for this summer lunch program, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Catering

The talented Food Service staff also offers full-service catering for school events such as PTA dinners, carnivals, faculty meetings or special ceremonies such as the retirement celebration which takes place every spring. “Our goal is to provide our customers with the finest service, a wide variety of menu selections and gorgeous displays. We can serve large or small groups and any special needs are accommodated,” said Nancy Coughenour, director of Food Service.

Nutrition is the Top Goal

Food Service has open positions and is currently seeking Nutrition is the Top Goal food supervisors. Mike Shepherd has been a part of the Food Service team for more than 10 years in a variety of positions and schools. He said, “We have the best team; we get the job done and have fun at the same time.”

Food Service has open positions and is currently seeking qualified applicants. “We have an amazing team,” said Coughenour. “We truly enjoy nurturing the students not only by preparing delicious food, but also by giving them a friendly smile as they go through the lines. Our staff wants them to feel cared for – because they are!”
In early August, the Shawnee Mission Education Foundation launched its Distinguished Leaders Speaker Series. The inaugural event featured an impressive keynote speaker, Milton Chen, Ph.D., who presented philosophical ideas about the future of education. Dr. Chen is senior fellow and executive director, emeritus at the George Lucas Educational Foundation, a nonprofit foundation that presents a new vision for 21st-century schools. He is the author of the book, Education Nation.

“People are craving intelligent conversations,” explained Kim Hinkle, executive director of the Foundation. “The Speaker Series is designed bring smart people together to talk about big ideas.”

This kind of conversation is crucial to this community’s future. It also connects the community with the Foundation, which secures funding for transformative, world-class curriculum, state-of-the-art technology and life-changing programs for Shawnee Mission students.

Community Engagement

“By engaging the community in the education of our children, we can achieve so much more in the Shawnee Mission School District,” explained Hinkle. “We can fund the district’s most important and innovative educational priorities. That is the model that will reduce the district’s reliance on state funding, and allow us to focus on truly transformational learning.”

As the speaker series continues, the Foundation will bring experts, including successful alumni in a variety of fields, to speak with the community. During the school day, they’ll interact with students. Evening events will be planned for patrons and the community.

Leadership Opportunities for Students.

While here, Dr. Chen made a presentation to teachers at the district’s annual Instructional Fair. He also received a student-led tour of the Center for Academic Achievement (CAA), the district’s headquarters. Along with housing administrative offices, the CAA is home for the district’s Signature Programs, which provide advanced courses of study to students from all five high schools. The students who provided the tour had recently participated in a new pilot program of the Foundation, Leadership Shawnee Mission.

In this summer program, a partnership with William Jewell College, students spent two weeks in intensive leadership training at the CAA and William Jewell, and one week interning at a local company. Signature Program instructors nominated students to apply for the program. “Many had never had professional work experience before,” said Hinkle. “We look for a group of students with diverse backgrounds to provide innovative leadership training and high-level internships that align with their future plans.”

Foundation Annual Breakfast.

October 11 is the Foundation’s annual Fall Breakfast, held at the Overland Park Convention Center.

“We’re really looking forward to showcasing the wonderful things that Shawnee Mission students are doing,” said Hinkle. “And, of course, it’s a chance for us to introduce our new Superintendent, Dr. Mike Fulton, when he presents his State of the District address.”

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Trust the Mental Health Experts

As the region’s leader in child and adolescent psychiatric and behavioral health, Saint Luke’s Hospital’s Crittenton Children’s Center experts care for more than 6,000 young lives every year. Drugs. Anger. Depression. Our dedicated team helps children address serious adversity and achieve positive mental health, developing lifelong strategies for resilience and strength.

We are in this together. Let us help your family.

Call us
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Crittenton Children’s Center
Saint Luke’s Hospital of Kansas City
crittentonkc.org

Get creative at the Nerman Museum!

Art classes for youth ages 5-11 combine engaging interactive tours with unique studio projects. Discover JCCC’s diverse and nationally acclaimed permanent collection and special exhibitions in the Nerman Museum.

View schedules and register online, pre-registration is required.

- Saturdays, September 29-December 8, 2018
- Saturdays, January-April 2019
- Weekdays, June-July 2019

FREE general admission nermanmuseum.org

Also available:
- Free NMOCA Kids family guide
- Free activity booklets for K-8th grade
- Free guided tours for groups K and older, schedule online or email tours@nermanmuseum.org

Have an extraordinary “All Arts Day!” JCCC offers programs for families, camps and school groups interested in combining a campus visit with a world class performance and an interactive visual art experience.

The Shawnee Mission School District is hiring:

- Teaching
- Non-teaching positions

Look for openings at smsd.org, under Human Resources.

YOUR ADVENTURE BEGINS

Dinosaurs Revealed

Exhibition Now Open
at Union Station

Tickets as low as $12.50*
UnionStation.org

Plan Your Visit Today! ScienceCity.com

Your Adventure Begins

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There’s never a good time to be sick or injured. That’s why when it comes to the health of your family, it’s important to have quick access to health care you can trust.

Not only does Centra Care Shawnee Mission Urgent Care provide immediate, high-quality care seven days a week, but we also offer over 30 years of experience from Shawnee Mission Health, backed by our Board-certified doctors and staff. Our commitment to getting you well continues to be at the heart of everything we do.

Make an online reservation today, or learn more at CentraCareKC.com.

Convenient Locations

Shawnee (Shawnee Mission Pkwy & Nieman)
Lenexa (91st & Quivira)
Olathe (119th & Blackbob)
Overland Park (135th & Grandview)

• Walk-in or make an online reservation
• On-site X-rays and prescriptions
• Most insurance plans accepted