

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Riding the Reading Railroad to Success

*Family Literacy Nights to focus on showing parents how to help their kids become better readers and writers*

**Kansas City, September 9, 2016:** Kansas City Public Schools is taking steps this coming school year to help more families get the skills and resources they need to bring reading and writing into their homes.

Starting this fall and continuing one evening every quarter of the 2016-2017 academic year, KCPS will be hosting a series of Family Literacy Nights designed to encourage and equip families to extend and amplify the English language arts lessons provided in classrooms. The team, overseen by Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Dr. Trinity Davis, is organizing this initiative.

Staff members want to make sure the Family Literacy Nights are educational, hands-on and fun, Dr. Davis said.

“Our focus is literacy this year and we’ll make these Nights really interactive,” she said. “We’re going to provide practical advice for teaching a child how to read and write.”

The first Family Literacy Night will be 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 15 at Benjamin Baneker Elementary School, 7050 Askew Ave. in Kansas City, Mo. Families who wish to attend are asked to RSVP to [CIPD@kcpublicschools.org](mailto:CIPD@kcpublicschools.org) in order to ensure that there is enough food and literacy materials on-hand.

Although the exact line-up for each Family Literacy Night hasn’t been finalized, the evenings will likely include features like the Church of the Resurrection free bookmobile, take-home literacy activities, interactive story time, book club sign-ups and Kansas City Public Library information and book checkout.

Dr. Davis encouraged more than just parents to attend the Family Literacy Nights. Community members, mentors, volunteers and anyone else with an interest in helping children learn how to read and write are also invited.

Any effort to complement classroom instruction with additional reading and writing lessons and guidance outside schools will have a significant payoff, according to Dr. Davis. The job of getting students up to grade-level expectations is simply too big for one person.

“Providing children with opportunities to read and write in their homes reinforces what they’re learning in school,” Dr. Davis said. “We want to show family members how they can support their children at home when it comes to literacy.”

One of Dr. Davis’ personal goals for the Family Literacy Nights is to help families stop focusing on grades and instead learn to see literacy as something positive part of everyday life.



“I want to encourage parents to not get twisted up around grades,” she said. “Reading and writing can and should be a regular and fun part of your home. I want to teach people how they can make that happen.”

KCPS may increase the number of Family Literacy Nights to once a month in 2017-2018 if they prove popular this academic year, Dr. Davis added.

“I really think this has the potential to become a very big thing for our families,” she said.

*KCPS Family Literacy Nights*

**Date:** Sept. 15

**Location:** Benjamin Banneker Elementary School (7050 Askew Ave.)

**Topic:** Encouraging Reading and Writing At Home

**Date:** Nov. 3

**Location:** Paseo Academy of Fine and Performing Arts (4747 Flora Ave.)

**Topic:** Successfully Reading eText

**Date:** Feb. 2

**Location:** Hartman Elementary School (8111 Oak St.)

**Topic:** Getting Excited About Reading Non-Fiction

**Date:** March 30

**Location:** Primitivo Garcia Elementary School (1000 W. 17th St.)

**Topic:** Reading Success for Test

All times are 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. Refreshments and door prizes will be provided. Please check the KCPS calendar at [www.kcpublicschools.org/Calendar](http://www.kcpublicschools.org/Calendar) for updates.