



Insider



NORTH KANSAS CITY SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2022

Building A Better Future: Vote on April 5



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Zero Tax Increase Levy Transfer & Bond

Learn more about plans to address rapid growth and improve facilities for students across the district . . . Pages 4-6



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THE SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

North Kansas City Schools is thriving and growing! In the midst of a pandemic, we are one of few districts across the nation that has experienced increased enrollment. We believe that can be attributed to the extraordinary educational learning experiences one can find in North Kansas City Schools. It is certainly our goal to embody the tagline, "Champions for All Students", in manner and deed. Thanks to our strong partnerships with families, communities and businesses, North Kansas City Schools can fulfill that charge.

Your support is integral to our continued success. Our demographer tells us there are currently 600 lots available to build on with an additional 2000 lots in the planning stages throughout our district. As a result, North Kansas City Schools is projected to have 1500 new students over the next five years! That is nearly the size of an entire high school. We've got to enact careful planning to ensure all students have a top-notch facility in which they can take pride during their short time under our watch.

To that end, the Board of Education has made it a priority to manage growth in the northern portion of the district while replacing outdated facilities in the southern half. Incredible progress is being made with the new Davidson and Maplewood Elementary sites. Briarcliff Elementary is also seeing significant renovations and remodeling thanks to successful passage of our last bond issue in 2020. On April 5, 2022, we will be asking voters to consider a **ZERO TAX INCREASE bond** to address other aging facilities such as Crestview, Winnwood, Lakewood, Clardy, Meadowbrook, Linden West and Oakwood Manor; along with sites needing expansion to manage growth such as Rising Hill, Nashua, Chapel Hill, Prospect Plaza, Hodge Park and a secondary transportation hub.

In addition to the bond measure, there will be another question on the ballot pertaining to a **ZERO TAX INCREASE levy transfer**. Since 2017, North Kansas City Schools has decreased our property tax levy by \$0.76. While we currently have \$1.29 dedicated to paying off debt as part of our debt service levy, nearly \$4.38 is allocated for district operations such as resources, supplies, salaries and benefits. By law, we must ask for a vote of the people to transfer \$0.20 from our debt service levy into the operating levy. If approved, we would have greater flexibility in adding more personnel during this period of growth and accounting for benefits and inflation. Approval of this transfer would strengthen our ability for organizational improvement in the face of impending challenges. There would be **no increase to the property tax** of patrons; North Kansas City Schools is only asking for authorization to transfer existing funds to best manage a growing organization that can serve its community to the fullest degree.

We appreciate your continued support of schools that equate to vibrant communities. Your vote matters on April 5, 2022. We are thankful for your partnership and acknowledge what impact you can have on a district of more than 21,000 learners.



Dan Clemens, Ed.D.

Superintendent – North Kansas City Schools • superintendent@nkcschools.org



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Eight Candidates Seeking Election to Two Board of Education Seats

District residents will have eight Board candidates to choose from when they cast their ballots on **Tuesday, April 5, 2022**. The two who receive the most votes will become directors for the North Kansas City Schools Board of Education. Each seat is for a term of three years.

The eight candidates include (in the order they will appear on the ballot):

Dr. Terry Ward
Mr. Josiah Bechthold
Mrs. Laura Wagner
Mr. Duane Bartsch
Mr. Andrew Corrao
Dr. Daniel Wartick
Mrs. Susan Hines
Dr. Frances Yang

The NKC PTA Council is hosting a **Board of Education Candidate Forum on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.** in the Doolin Board Room. Make plans to attend and hear from candidates interested in governing as the district's top elected officials. The forum will also be livestreamed on the district's YouTube channel and website at nkcschools.org.

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peyton.galloway@nkcschools.org
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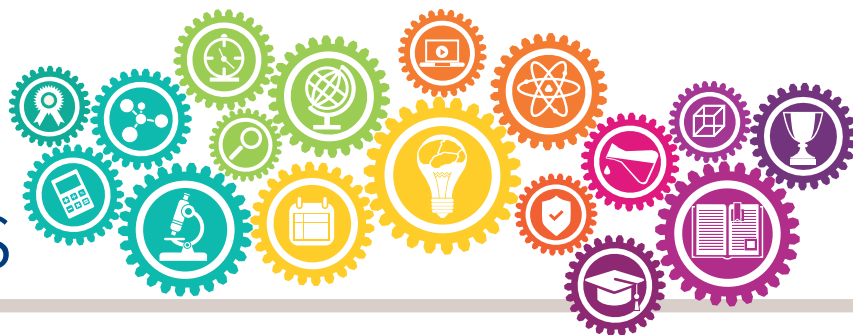


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Extraordinary Achievements



Nine Named to All-State Band and Orchestra

Nine outstanding NKC Schools musicians have earned a spot in the Missouri All-State Band and Orchestra. Each earned statewide honors after a rigorous audition process this winter.

All-State Band

- Sadii Barela** – 4th Chair Bass Clarinet (Oak Park)
- Elizabeth Dean** – 5th Chair Horn (Staley)
- Tucker Settles** – 6th Chair Horn (Staley)
- Victoria Cobbinah** – Alternate Piccolo (Staley)
- Evan O'Day** – Honorable Mention Timpani (Staley)
- Sydney Peck** – Honorable Mention Euphonium (Staley)

All-State Orchestra

- Laura Hoelsy** – Cello (NKCHS)
- Ella Coon** – Viola (Staley)
- Stephen Kwon** – Viola (NKCHS)

Four Seniors Named QuestBridge Finalists

Congratulations to Class of 2022 seniors **Lamis Habila**, **Kylie McLane**, **Esther Ko** and **Scott Nguyen** on their selection as QuestBridge Finalists. This college admissions program supports exceptional students and removes barriers as they apply to the nation's top colleges. We are incredibly proud of these four individuals and wish them all the best in the future!



Lamis Habila
(Oak Park)



Kylie McLane
(Oak Park)



Esther Ko
(NKCHS)



Scott Nguyen
(NKCHS)

Auto Technology Program Wins National School of the Year

For the second year in a row, **NKC Schools' Auto Technology program** has been named the national school of the year! This continued recognition honors the hard work of the students and instructors in creating a world-class, student-driven program that prepares future industry leaders.



Dr. Raquel Coy Named Clay-Platte Distinguished Principal

Congratulations to **Dr. Raquel Coy**, this year's Distinguished Principal honoree for Clay-Platte! Serving as the principal of **Clardy Elementary**, Dr. Coy is known for her focus on students, ensuring each learner can achieve to their full potential. Recognized this winter by the Clay-Platte chapter of the Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals, Dr. Coy will move on to represent Clardy and the Northland region in the Missouri Principal of the Year program.



Northgate Principal Earns Regional Honors

Each year, the Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders recognizes one individual in the region for outstanding effort on behalf of students with behavioral challenges. This year's recipient is **PJ McGinnis**, principal at **Northgate Middle School**. Nominations from colleagues and students mentioned his willingness to listen and problem-solve as a coach and mentor. Mr. McGinnis exemplifies what it means to serve as a champion for all students!



Director Transition

In June, Education Foundation Director **Jan Lewis** will retire after 14 years of service to the students and staff of North Kansas City Schools, as well as the Northland community. During her tenure, the Education Foundation has distributed approximately \$2.5 million in grants, scholarships and funding to schools, while reaching a \$2 million endowment.

Jan's legacy will continue through annual grants awarded by the Lewis Learning Impact Fund, which she established in 2018.



Midori Carpenter and Jan Lewis

Midori Carpenter has been hired as incoming Director. A product of NKC Schools, she started kindergarten at Meadowbrook Elementary and graduated with an International Baccalaureate Diploma from North Kansas City High School in 2006. Midori earned a B.A. in English from the University of Southern California before returning to the Northland to start her career in non-profit management. She spent 10 years at the Liberty Hospital Foundation, serving as the Executive Director since 2018. In January, Midori and Jan began working together to ensure a smooth transition for the Education Foundation.

Scholarships for Students



105 scholarships worth more than \$91,000. Since 2004, the Education Foundation has provided 870 scholarships totaling almost \$780,000.

Graduating seniors can apply for more than 50 different college and vocational scholarships – many with multiple recipients – that are offered through the Education Foundation. Some are open to students from all four district high schools, while others are school specific. In 2021, students received

For more information and applications, visit www.nkcschoolsfoundation.org.



Great Deals = Support for Schools!

Elementary students will sell Major Saver discount cards in March to raise funds for their schools and the Education Foundation. The \$15 cards feature 17 buy-one-get-one-free offers at local restaurants and attractions, as well as Price Chopper and Dick's Sporting Goods! Purchase them from a student or at www.majorsaver.com.

Online sales can be credited back to a specific school and student. Over 25 years, our partnership with Major Saver has brought in more than \$1.6 million, with \$1 million benefitting our elementary schools.



April 5, 2022

Zero Tax Increase

North Kansas City Schools is home to 21,000 students and counting!
As we grow, new facilities and upgrades are needed throughout the district.
Additional support for staff will ensure we continue serving as Champions for All Students.

To make these proposed improvements a reality, NKC Schools asks voters to consider a zero tax increase levy transfer and \$140 million bond issue on the April 5, 2022 ballot.

Question 1

Zero Tax Increase Bond

Bonds are for building.

The zero tax increase bond package of \$140 million would upgrade, renovate and replace facilities in need across the district. Proposed projects will span all four feeder patterns as well as improve districtwide transportation service.



Now the second-largest school district in Missouri, NKC Schools is projected to grow by more than 1,500 students in the next five years. New and expanded schools are needed to accommodate rapid growth and welcome new students.



Replacing and renovating older schools across the district will ensure all students have the best opportunities to learn in world-class environments. Comprehensive updates will bring new, modern learning spaces and critical safety and systems improvements.

Question 2

Zero Tax Increase Levy Transfer

Levies are for learning.

The zero tax increase levy transfer would reallocate \$0.20 that the district currently reserves for debt service to our operating budget at no additional expense to taxpayers. This transfer would allow us to hire more staff to address growth and account for increased operating costs. The ballot language must, by law, state a \$0.20 increase to the operating levy with a corresponding \$0.20 decrease in the debt service levy, equaling a zero increase overall.



As more students and families join NKC Schools, additional staff and services are required to meet greater needs. Inflation has also driven the district's operating costs up. NKC Schools is committed to creating learning environments in which students can reach their maximum potential.



Mark your calendar for April 5!

Election:

Levy Transfer & Bond

Question 1: Zero Tax Increase Bond

Ballot question one will ask voters to consider a \$140 million bond issue resulting in zero tax increase.

► The zero tax increase bond issue will fund critical facilities projects across the district, affecting every feeder pattern and improving schools and support for students across the district.



NEW CRESTVIEW ELEMENTARY

A brand-new Crestview would replace an aging facility in need of repairs. The new school would also be able to better accommodate and provide for Crestview's growing student population.



CHAPEL HILL ADDITION UPGRADES TO LINDEN WEST, MEADOWBROOK, CLARDY & OAKWOOD MANOR

New and renovated spaces throughout the Oak Park feeder pattern will upgrade outdated learning environments to better serve more new students each year.



NEW NASHUA ELEMENTARY RISING HILL ADDITION

A new Nashua Elementary would provide room to grow, replacing the current, older school. Planned expansion of Rising Hill would account for tremendous growth in the area and provide space for all students to learn.



SOLUTIONS FOR LAKEWOOD & WINNWOOD

Lakewood and Winnwood are two of our oldest elementary facilities. Bond funding would support each school community in planning and creating upgraded learning spaces to best meet their needs.



NORTHERN TRANSPORTATION HUB

The 84 square miles of NKC Schools are currently supported by a singular transportation center located in the south. Expansion is needed to better serve neighborhoods district-wide. An additional hub would increase efficiency, conserve energy and save money with every trip.

COSMETIC UPGRADES, SAFETY & SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS, PLAYGROUNDS & DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

This plan would provide for cosmetic upgrades to numerous sites across the district along with critical safety and security improvements. Deferred maintenance on building systems and components like roofs, parking lots, HVAC systems, playgrounds and more will also benefit additional schools.



April 5, 2022 Election: Zero Tax Increase Levy Transfer & Bond continued

Question 2:

Zero Tax Increase Levy Transfer

Ballot question two will ask voters to consider a zero tax increase transfer of an existing \$0.20 between two sections of district's overall property tax levy.

While bond funds must be dedicated to building, **levies are for learning.** As we welcome more new students each year, additional staff are needed to serve our growing community. The proposed levy transfer would free existing funds to hire more staff and account for increased operating costs.

The proposed zero tax increase levy transfer would move 20 cents currently allocated for paying off debt to the operating budget. Wise fiscal management ensures our debt can still be paid. The ballot language must, by law, state a \$0.20 increase to the operating levy with a corresponding \$0.20 decrease in the debt service levy, equaling a zero increase and no change to the overall levy.



1,500

new students
predicted to join
NKC Schools as we grow
over the next five years



600

lots available
to build on
throughout
our district



2,000

additional lots
in the
planning stages
for development



\$0.76

decrease in the
district's overall
property tax levy
since 2017

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does "zero tax increase" really mean? How can you raise \$140 million and transfer levy funds without raising taxes?

Thanks to the fiscal responsibility of North Kansas City Schools' Board of Education, the district has paid off a large portion of debt incurred from past construction projects. Effective management of funds has allowed us to seek approval of an additional \$140 million to meet current needs. A 20-cent portion of our existing debt service levy of \$1.29 would be transferred to the operating budget, resulting in no overall change.

What will happen if the zero tax increase levy transfer or bond issue are not passed?

District demographers predict that rapid growth will significantly impact schools throughout our district. Unless action is taken, classrooms will face overcrowding and the potential of

boundary changes and/or the addition of modular units would need to be considered. If the levy transfer is not passed, we would be unable to adequately staff our buildings to address growth, class sizes would increase and support services would be limited. The district might also have to pass on the cost of increased health insurance on to our employees.

Where can I find more information?

To learn more, visit our website at nkcschools.org/2022.



Mark your calendar for April 5!

Long-Range Facility Plan

The two ballot issues that North Kansas City Schools asks voters to consider on April 5, 2022 represent the second phase of the district’s Long-Range Facility Plan. Developed in partnership with students, families, staff, business partners, civic leaders and community members, the plan provides a blueprint for NKC Schools as we grow into the future.

In October 2019, the Board of Education adopted the initial long-range facility plan to serve students and families across North Kansas City Schools. The district took a deep look into existing facilities and growth projections to determine where buildings should be updated and/or built to create the best learning environments for students – both now and in the future. As the district continues to grow, it is critical that we build for the future while updating aging buildings,

providing top-notch facilities for all of our students, parents and staff.

The team came together again this fall to analyze data from our demographer, bond counsel and Human Resources department to prioritize immediate and future needs. Initial discussion around the next phase of the facility plan included roof replacements, water line replacements, expansion of learning spaces and completely new buildings in some cases.

2016	2020	2022
<p>In August 2016, district residents approved a zero tax increase \$114 million bond package to improve facilities across the district. Projects included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ North Kansas City High School transformation▶ Opening Rising Hill Elementary School▶ New Northview Elementary School▶ Opening Gateway 6th Grade Center in renovated Northview facility▶ Establishing straight feeder patterns to build community	<p>In June 2020, NKC schools voters approved a \$155 million no tax increase bond program as part of the district’s long-range Facility plan. Bond projects included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Opening the district’s Early Education Center▶ New Davidson Elementary School▶ New Maplewood Elementary School▶ Complete renovation of Briarcliff Elementary School▶ Stadium complex and new student entrance at Oak Park High School▶ Stadium complex and library renovations at Winnetonka High School▶ Academic and athletic additions to Staley High School▶ New playgrounds at seven sites	<p>As we grow, new facilities and upgrades are a continued need throughout the district. In this phase of the Long-Range Facility Plan, proposed improvements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ New Crestview Elementary▶ New Nashua Elementary▶ Addition to Rising Hill Elementary▶ Addition to Chapel Hill Elementary▶ Renovations at Linden West Elementary, Meadowbrook Elementary, Clardy Elementary, and Oakwood Manor Elementary▶ Solutions for Lakewood Elementary and Winnwood Elementary▶ Additional support for staff and students

Learn more about the 2022 zero tax increase levy transfer and bond, visit nkcschools.org/2022.



Important Note: Continued progress on the facility plan is contingent on voter approval of the April 2022 levy transfer and bond election. Changes to the plan are also possible due to forces beyond the control of NKC Schools such as economic shifts, weather delays, etc. The district will periodically provide updates on the status of projects so stakeholders are well informed of progress.

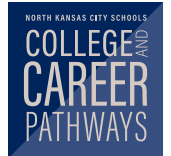
Job Shadowing Provides Hands-On Learning

For Damien Vargas, learning about careers isn't just something you do in the classroom – it happens out in the field. The Staley junior spent a day job shadowing at local business Garney Construction in December, gaining hands-on experience across an array of departments. Damien toured the facility in North Kansas City and met with current Garney employees to learn about roles as diverse as accounting, human resources, and project management.

"It gave me more perspective," Damien said, "and it showed me what to expect in a work environment." The junior was surprised to learn that even in an industry as focused as construction, it takes a wide variety of skills and collaboration to build a business. As an employee-owned company, Garney exemplifies a team environment, something Damien enjoyed seeing first-hand.



"It's a great opportunity to get your company out there," Garney project coordinator Sonya Paskas said, "and to let kids come and see how a business runs."



Paskas encourages other companies to consider offering hands-on experiences, noting "this kind of opportunity would help any student."

And Damien's advice to students? Give it a try. The junior would "definitely encourage" fellow students to attend a job shadow and explore new career opportunities, saying "there is just so much you can learn."

Interested in hosting NKC Schools students or speaking to classes to share more about your field?
Visit nkcschools.org/partner.

Innovative Partnership Brings High-Speed Upgrades

High speed internet is readily available throughout North Kansas City Schools' 84 square miles. Thanks to the generosity of KC Fiber, the North Kansas City business operated by NKC natives Brooks Brown and Aaron Wendel, such service is provided free to the entire school district. This enables direct connection and Wi-Fi access for more than 21,000 students and 3,200 staff members each and every day.

KC Fiber manages the city-owned liNKCity fiber optic network which was innovatively installed by the City of North Kansas City as a public utility. It is from the liNKCity portal in the North Kansas City library (across the street from North Kansas City High School) that this internet service is provided to the entire district.

The story of this valued partnership began about ten years ago when Google Fiber was making a push to offer free gigabit internet connections to schools and churches. Brooks and his company NOCIX (formerly DataShack) graciously approached the district about doing the same. At the time, North Kansas City Schools was on a 250-megabyte internet connection, insufficient for our digital learning needs. In January 2013, NOCIX donated a one gigabit internet connection to the district, quadrupling our internet bandwidth at the time. Over the course of the next several years, North Kansas City Schools' need for internet capacity continued to grow as more teachers became acclimated to using technology as part of instruction and as more online resources became available.



Time and time again, Brooks and KC Fiber stepped up to be an incredible partner to the nearly 21,000 students of North Kansas City Schools. Increases in our device and network capabilities over the years stretched capacity. Recognizing the need for further connectivity, Brooks graciously upgraded the district to 100 gigabits in July 2021, making North Kansas City Schools the **fastest pre-K-12 school district** that we know of. In conversations with districts across the nation, others are astounded at the capability NKC Schools has thanks to the partnership that made our network possible.

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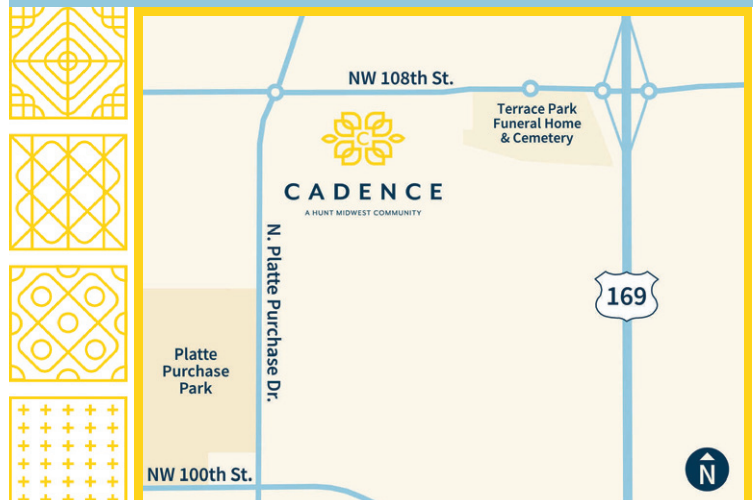
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