OUR SCHOOLS

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEE’S SUMMIT R-7 SCHOOL DISTRICT
WE PREPARE EACH STUDENT FOR SUCCESS IN LIFE
MARCH 2022 ISSUE

Reorganized School District No 7
301 N.E. Tudor Road, Lee’s Summit MO 64086

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION
Enhancing Education:
InVESTS IN LSR7

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FEATURED TEACHER & STUDENT
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SUPERINTENDENT’S MESSAGE

HELLO, LSR7!

Throughout LSR7, students, teachers and support staff are fortunate to have access to some of the best expertise and resources in our region. Our community’s investments in our schools allow us to provide a robust educational experience that makes LSR7 a premier district. However, there are always opportunities to do more, and our relationship with the Lee’s Summit Educational Foundation (LSEF) makes a difference for our school community.

Since LSEF was established in 1993, it has served an important role in our mission of preparing each student for success. Each year, many LSR7 educators provide their students with enhanced educational opportunities, courtesy of LSEF grants. Our graduates receive LSEF scholarships to make their next chapter easier. This is all possible thanks to the LSEF’s fundraisers and their donors and volunteers’ generosity. Turn to pages 4-5 to learn more about how LSEF benefits our school community. Turn to page 6 to see several key numbers that demonstrate success across LSR7.

Turn to our recurring interview feature, In My Words, on pages 2-3 to hear from Jeremiah Mangels, a seventh grader with a passion for school and basketball, and Carman Visnich Hernandez, who brings a multi-cultural background to our English Language Development program.

Finally, see our featured photos related to three of our strategic plan’s five peak priorities: Career, Leadership, Instruction, Mental Wellness and Belonging (C.L.I.M.B). Check out pages 7-8 to see Career, Instruction and Belonging reflected in scenes around LSR7.

With much appreciation,

DAVID BUCK, Ed. D
SUPERINTENDENT
When I was arriving from China, I was a little bit excited and a little bit nervous because I was meeting my new family. I saw everybody waiting at the airport. It was a happy moment for me.

I didn’t know English. All I knew was that it was going to be really hard to understand what they were saying. I had to point out most of the stuff that I wanted and needed.

I was introduced to wheelchair basketball at a camp where people with special needs can do activities. They showed us wheelchair basketball, and I was really, really good at it. I had so much fun playing it.

My team, the Kansas City Kings, we’re number one in the nation. We don’t really have positions, but I sometimes take down the ball, and I’m one of their best defenders.

When I got my first LEGO set, it was really easy for me. I just started with a big piece and then out of nowhere a few hours went by and I was doing spaceships and then I built a humongous robot.

I just have that imaginary mind that can build many things, like just putting pieces together. It just seemed really easy.

We were doing “Beauty and the Beast” for the play. I was the narrator. My brother was the Beast. I was really excited because I didn’t have to sing.

I’m in the Art Club. I love creating all sorts of things. I love imagination. It’s mainly drawing with pencil. I’m not a big fan of using brushes and painting because it might mess up, and it doesn’t really go well for me.

Jeremiah Mangels is a seventh grader at Bernard Campbell Middle School. His interests include basketball, reading and building.

Probably my favorite thing to do in school is read. I’ve been reading a lot. I love it. The types of books are like Harry Potter and adventures. They make me feel like I’m alive in the book. I also like math a lot.

I thought I wanted to be a veterinarian but now I think I might want to be either some type of designer for buildings, or wheelchair basketball.
I discovered a kindergarten picture and read at the bottom, “When I grow up, I want to be a teacher.” I used to line up my Siamese cat (not always the most obedient), my cousins, my brother and dolls and teach them on an old slate chalkboard that my grandmother had.

Originally, my love and passion was to give kids a different opportunity to experience the culture around them, not only in our own community but in our country and the world.

I moved to Mexico for about nine years. I taught in a two-room schoolhouse, first grade through fifth grade, for the Mexican indigenous communities.

When I came back to the US, I was so passionate for our underserved communities. I wanted to be able to teach them, love on them, provide what they needed and advocate for them.

My two children went to school in Mexico. I felt what it was like to be different. I was the mom that didn’t always know what was culturally appropriate. That was a huge learning curve. I didn’t always know culturally what I needed to do at the right time.

I don’t want newcomer families to feel isolated and unaware of certain cultural themes like I did when I was in Latin America.

When we moved to the United States seven years ago, my kids had to acclimate to the culture and the language. My son has autism. I have had to learn how to advocate for a child with special needs in addition to being a non-native English speaker.

I know how it feels to sit on the parent’s side of the table. I also know what it feels like to sit on the teacher’s side.

I am certified to give the district’s IQ tests. The IQ tests can be used for testing into the Gifted program or Special Education services. The idea is if we are giving an English-only test to a kid who does not speak English, we are not getting an accurate assessment of their language abilities.

I took the course because I feel it is vital that we provide as many pieces of the equity puzzle as we can. With my son being on the spectrum, my heart is for all of our kids to have the resources they need so they are successful, not only in school but in life.
Empowered to make a difference for generations of students in the Lee’s Summit R-7 School District, the Lee’s Summit Educational Foundation is rooted in the generosity of community donors, sponsors and volunteers.

LSEF supports students and teachers through PEAK (Promote Excellence And Knowledge) Classroom Grants, technology initiatives, scholarships, special projects, science kits, tutoring, and need-based support for local students. The Foundation’s legacy of success reflects the community partnering in LSEF’s mission of promoting excellence in education throughout LSR7.

This shared vision of success has led LSEF to make these investments:

PEAK GRANTS EMPOWER TEACHERS

Even with LSR7’s extensive resources, there are opportunities to do more. Providing PEAK Grants is rewarding for LSEF because the grants offer teachers the opportunity to identify a need or wish-list item to benefit students, apply for funding and see the investment pay dividends.

Aubrey Shortino, a teacher at Trailridge Elementary, created a learning opportunity to engage students and to sharpen their skills. Using an LSEF classroom grant, she purchased equipment and formed the TRE News Broadcasting team in Fall 2021. Students raise awareness, build school community and share positive messages while developing important skills such as script-writing, public speaking, filming, video editing and collaborating.

This success story is among 46 PEAK Classroom Grants awarded in the 2021-2022 school year. These grants help teachers to address needs, create connections and build engagement within their classrooms. Grants have also funded chemistry modules, math manipulatives to help with hands-on learning, American Sign Language libraries, sneakers and more. The range of requests in teachers’ applications reveals innovative thinking, need, diversity and a genuine compassion for student success.

This school year, LSEF is honored to provide approximately $60,000 in classroom grants.

$1.05 Million
LSEF’s PEAK Grants to date

"This LSEF PEAK grant enabled us to highlight student voice through our TRE News Broadcasting team. The studio equipment and video editing software have enabled us to connect with each other and our school community."

- AUBREY SHORTINO
OFFERING HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS

Sometimes you just need to get your hands dirty! Especially when it comes to math and science, it is often difficult for a student to fully comprehend a concept until they can apply it. This is why Frank Vovk, Science Curriculum Specialist, and Shannan Booth, Director of Career Education, approached LSEF and received approximately $100,000 to provide science kits for all K-5 elementary classrooms in LSR7.

“The new elementary science kits, funded by LSEF, are a game-changer, lighting a fire in our students that will last a lifetime. We no longer teach science from our experience, we are able to give the experience of science to our youngest learners.”

- FRANK VOVK

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE GENERATION

$1.02 Million
Awarded in Scholarships Since 1993

Investing in future leaders is invaluable. LSR7 seeks to graduate students who will go on to build successful lives and may return to live, work and invest back into the Lee’s Summit community. LSEF is proud to offer approximately 80 scholarship opportunities to LSR7 seniors.

“My goal is to attend medical school to receive my doctorate of medicine. The scholarship that has been awarded to me will be very beneficial to financially supporting my academic goals.”

- KAMERON HAHN,
2021 LEE’S SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE AND RECIPIENT OF THE KENNEY FAMILY SCIENCE SCHOLARSHIP THROUGH LSEF

LSEF aims to support LSR7 students from pre-kindergarten to college and beyond. They engage the community and LSR7 alumni through work on the Foundation Board, committees, and scholarship and PEAK grant application review teams. The financial assistance and work that LSEF provides would not be possible without the generous support of our community donors, sponsors and volunteers.

SUPPORT LSEF
LEARN MORE OR DONATE

Mark your calendars and plan to attend one of these fundraising events!

- Taste of Lee’s Summit: March 5, 2022
- Race for the Future 5K: October 8, 2022

Visit lsedfoundation.org for additional details

Julian S. and Ms. Tara Diehl from Sunset Valley Elementary practice using Chromebooks. LSEF’s legacy of making a difference in LSR7 classrooms includes giving $920,000 since 2012 to provide Chromebooks to K-12 students.

LSEF strives to help teachers stay on the forefront of technology and to create efficiency and effectiveness in classrooms. In 2012, LSEF launched a campaign to raise funding to pilot Chromebooks in our district and has since given nearly $1 million dollars in funding to this initiative. LSEF has also funded items such as document cameras, stylus pens and audio-enhancement equipment. This year, LSEF provided nearly $100,000 for technology support.

$2 MILLION IN TECH
LSEF has invested $2 million in technology for LSR7 and has committed an additional $350k by 2025.

$1.02 Million Awarded in Scholarships Since 1993

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HIGH ACT SCORES
Our Class of 2021 outperformed the state and national ACT composite scores.

Our 22.8 composite score includes students who chose to take the test. The Missouri composite score is 20.9, and the national composite score is 20.7. As we work to develop well-rounded students and prepare them for success, ACT scores are just one part of the big picture.

$28 MILLION
Reported scholarship offers for the Class of 2021

$28,000 in tuition savings
800 college credit hours

LOWER TAXES
Our operating tax rate is lower than school districts in Hickman Mills, Center, Fort Osage, Raytown, Blue Springs, North Kansas City, Liberty and Kansas City, Mo.

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATORS
86% of our teachers hold an advanced degree.
Summit Technology Academy Assistant Principal/Director Jeff Nevinski engages with a student practicing on a flight simulator. STA's Aerospace Academy offers students the opportunity to prepare for a wide range of careers.

Kassidy M. and Ra’Niyah H. style a display case at Lee’s Summit North High School with merchandise from Inspired Style Boutique. This final project for their Advanced Fashion Design and Construction class is a Client-connected Project, which engages students in meaningful, hands-on career education.
Students from Lee's Summit West High School visited Paradise Park to help us envision opportunities for our new property. Students took reference photos of the mini-golf course and developed design ideas for the course.

High school students contribute to our D-Teams, which seek to promote dignity, belonging and inclusion throughout LSR7.
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