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IMPORTANT DATES

Board of Education Meetings

Thursday, Nov. 12, 2020

7 p.m.

For more information on KPS board meeting locations and format, please visit our website at kalamazoopublicschools.net/boardmeetings.

Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 25-27

INSIDE

ATYP Accepting Applications

Page 6

November is National Career Development Month

Page 6

Community Food Pantries

Page 8

Celebrating Student Success

Page 9

Stories about Families

Page 10

KPS Grads in Action: Maliek Hargrave

Page 11

Hillside Middle School students continue to produce art

Page 12

New Facility Keeps Transportation Department Moving

The new Kalamazoo Public Schools transportation center is not much bigger than the old one, but the new facility far surpasses the old one in terms of flexibility, convenience and usability.

And, staff are putting the new building to good use — even during the pandemic.

“People think we’re not driving a lot but we actually have a lot of buses on the road,” said Terri Aman, executive supervisor for transportation.

Drivers are transporting students to Education For Employment and other Kalamazoo Regional Education Service Agency programs such as Woods Edge and the Young Adult Program, and delivering meals to the district’s 23 food distribution sites. Drivers who are not on the road are helping



The new transportation center has enough space to park all of the district’s buses. Before, they had to be spread out at parking lots across the district.



The public entrance for the new transportation center is on the west side of the building.

the department manage the increased need for bus cleaning and sanitization.

Aman thanked the com-

munity for its support of the project, which has provided the department with a facility that provides the staff with more

flexibility. Staff began moving into the new facility, 1800 Ravine Road, in late August.

Among the highlights of the new facility is onsite parking for drivers, who used to park throughout the neighborhood surrounding the old transportation center; a training room that can handle a large group or be configured for multiple small group trainings; a lounge for workers; a quiet room for drivers, who sometimes begin

(continued on page 3)

KPS Announces Highest Number of Grads Since Start of The Promise

Kalamazoo Public Schools has reported its highest number of graduates since The Kalamazoo Promise was announced 15 years ago.

At the Sept. 22 Board of Education meeting, KPS Superintendent Dr. Rita Raichoudhuri announced that the district’s total number of 2020 graduates was 734.

“That number represents nearly a 62 percent increase and

the highest number of graduates to date in the post-Promise era and is the seventh year in a row with an increase,” Raichoudhuri said. “The pandemic didn’t stop our students from performing at their best and our district from providing the supports it has committed to providing to ensure that our students are successful.”

In 2005, the district had

(continued on page 5)



Kaden Birchmeier accepts his diploma from principal Valerie Boggan at the 2020 Kalamazoo Central graduation.

Kalamazoo Public Schools is Hiring.

Find information at <https://kalamazoopublicschools.com/humanresources>

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Much Thanks for All that the Community Has Given

Recently, I had the opportunity to record remarks for the Communities In Schools of Kalamazoo Champs celebration. The event honors the volunteers who work with CIS in its mission to support children and their families, so students can succeed in school. It was an honor to be able to recognize CIS and its volunteers for the incredible work they do helping more than 12,000 students each year.

CIS Champs — and all of the CIS volunteers — are an invaluable resource for Kalamazoo Public Schools. Through their efforts, students receive tutoring and enrichment and are able to access services such as food and medical care from dozens of community partners.

That is an impressive record. It speaks not just to CIS but also to the child-centered nature of the Kalamazoo community, which supports that mission. Just as KPS relies on CIS, CIS relies on the good will of the community

to succeed in its mission. That support of human capital is what makes CIS a success — and what helps our students find success.

One of the things that drew me to Kalamazoo and made me want to serve as superintendent of the KPS, was the tremendous community support I saw for the mission of the district. It is truly one of the great strengths of the community — that determination to help its young people succeed. It's evident in large measures such as The Kalamazoo Promise and in smaller measures, such as the large number of community members who volunteered to help with food distribution during the summer.

The past eight months have been challenging not only for our



Dr. Rita Raichoudhuri,
Superintendent,
Kalamazoo Public Schools

children, but for their families and the KPS staff members who have worked so diligently to continue to serve students and their needs. Through all that time, the community has risen to the challenge to try to provide as many resources and as much support as possible for the children of KPS.

Just look at the CIS summer programming. CIS volunteers were at schools helping serve thousands of meals. CIS continued its enrichment programming to ensure children could still be challenged and engaged — albeit virtually. Students had the chance to participate in activities such as beading and music recording. They had the chance to meet everyone from veterinarians, bankers, game designers, and chefs.

We've seen other efforts as well. A group of Interfaith Homes parents, led by Sharon Hutchins and Iesha Williams, created AIMS Kidz to provide summer activities for children.

With the start of the school year, they shifted focus to help children receive meals and organized tutoring and academic support. Dozens of parents, led by Angee McCormick, have organized to create the KPS Supply Closet, collecting school supplies and donations from community members and then distributing them to teachers and students.

We've seen other parents and grandparents forming neighborhood learning pods to help children in online learning, as well as learning hubs created through the work of KydNet and their volunteers. Additionally, more than 36 community partners came together to help organize our equity cohort program to provide in-person learning opportunities for our most at-risk students.

This year has certainly challenged all of us. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been pushed to our limits, tested in terms of our abilities, our creativity, and our ener-

gies. But, to quote Phoenix High School's motto, "Still we rise." We have risen to the challenges. There have been stumbles. It has been difficult. But with the welfare and safety and education of our youngest and most vulnerable citizens at risk, we have come together to still build those relationships and provide services and supports.

So, in this Thanksgiving season I'd like to say, "Thank you."

Have we not said that enough? Have you not heard it enough? Have you not felt it enough in the mad crush to find ways to still see that children are cared for and supported and celebrated?

Thank you to everyone for your ingenuity and care and compassion during this most challenging time. Our community has needed you more than ever this past year. Our children need you more than ever. And you have given more than ever. Thank you.

The Time is Now

43rd Annual Youth Literature Seminar



This year's Youth Literature Seminar will focus not only on how our present echoes our past, but also how historical trauma affects how we respond to current tragedies. Join us as we examine our past, its impact on our present and our future, and how books can help guide us through a process of healing, growth, and unity.

Featuring Award-Winning Authors:
Candace Fleming, Varian Johnson & Paula Yoo

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New Facility Keeps Transportation Department Moving *(continued from page 1)*

shifts at 5 a.m. and are driving until 8 p.m.

The garage increased in size from six to eight bus bays, including a wash bay. KPS was not allowed to wash vehicles at its old site. The additional space will be especially useful this year, because buses are being disinfected between runs. There is also enough parking space for the facility to house all of the KPS buses, which previously had to be spread among parking lots across the district.

The garage and office are connected, whereas previously the buildings were on opposite sides of a city block. Another plus, Aman said, is that the gate into the facility now has a card reader. Before, drivers returning late at night had to exit their buses and physically unlock the gates and then relock them.

“This is much safer for the drivers,” Aman said.

The \$7 million project, which includes the cost of the land, is the last major construction from the 2013 bond. At 18,300 square feet, it is about 2,000 square feet larger than the old facility, which is located near Edison Environmental Science Academy, said Karen Jackson, executive supervisor of facilities.

The old facility is currently being used to house the Student Services Department, while the Administration Building undergoes mechanical renovations. After that, the building will be demolished to make way for the new Edison, which will be re-orientated to face Lake Street.

Jackson said discussions about the need for a new transportation center began almost a decade ago.

“It’s exciting to finally see them get in there,” she said.

OTHER 2020 CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Arcadia Elementary

Add concrete sidewalk at bus drop off



Terri Aman, executive supervisor for transportation, said the new building will let the district better serve riders.

- Install accessible route to play areas
- Remodel remaining student toilet rooms
- Replace public address system
- Provide secure vestibule at main entry
- Replace asphalt basketball court
- Replace marquee sign

Greenwood Elementary

- Replace basketball court and add fence
- Replace modular hot water boilers
- Provide secure vestibule at main entry

Kalamazoo Central High School

- Replace piping in athletic wing
- Replace pool filter equipment

King-Westwood Elementary

- Construct new classroom
- Remodel remaining student toilet rooms
- Install lockers
- Replace and upgrade electrical panels throughout building
- Relocate office to existing classroom

Loy Norrix High School

- Replace tennis courts
- Relocate softball field
- Replace pool boiler
- Provide ventilation / cooling to pool spectator seating area
- Install drywells and re-grade site for improved drainage
- Replace concrete stairs at unit K
- Replace concrete walks, curb, gutter
- New parking lots
- Remove and replace receiving area asphalt
- Replace resilient track surfaces

Maple Street Magnet School

- Replace roof and masonry work

Northeastern Elementary

- Replace hard surface play areas
- Replace lighting
- Replace selected electrical panels
- Replace public address system
- Install generator and emergency lighting
- Provide secure vestibule at main entry

Phoenix High School

- Replace concrete at loading dock
- Install digital marquee sign
- Replace casework
- Replace HVAC system and add cooling
- Upgrade electrical service
- Install generator and emergency lighting
- Construct gymnasium with bleachers and locker rooms (includes office, meeting and clinical counseling space)
- Construct four classroom addition
- Purchase outdoor seating for cafeteria

Winchell Elementary School

- Enlarge principal’s office into main office and create secure vestibule
- Install digital marquee sign
- Install lockers
- Remodel existing main office
- Add cooling to cafeteria air handling unit

The Woodward School for Technology & Research

- Replace lockers



The district construction this summer included five new secure vestibules at Northeastern, Winchell, Greenwood, Arcadia, and this one at King-Westwood elementary.



Construction at Loy Norrix included the installation of a new track, new tennis courts, and a new softball diamond.



Construction at Phoenix High School includes a new gym, a courtyard off of the cafeteria, additional classrooms, and a support services center.

AIMS Kidz Aims to Make Learning Fun for Interfaith Children

Godsisters Sharon Hutchins and Iesha Willams held their first movie night just to give their kids something to do during the summer — but other children in the neighborhood joined in.

After that Hutchins and Willias heard a steady chorus of “What are you doing tomorrow?”

In response, the women decided to provide the children with as many enrichment activities as possible. They held a carnival, a back-to-school bash, and art projects — and eventually they began offering activities with an academic bent such as reading and journaling, tackling topics such as

“If I could be anybody I could be, who would I want to be?”

And now, children from throughout Interfaith Homes come every day for enrichment activities and academic support through a program that they call AIMS Kidz. AIMS is derived from the first letters of their first names and their husbands’ names: Anthony Hutchins and Mykol Tarver.

Williams said she wants the children to know, “You should never give up. You can do it. You will do it. It may take longer but you will complete every goal you have in place.”

The couples start the day with breakfast and online learning for the children each morning. In the afternoon, with the support and aid of several Kalamazoo Public Schools staff members and retired teachers, they offer one on-one tutoring or group lessons. Prevention Works also sends staff to work with the students in their group

While AIMS Kidz started as a way to keep the kids from getting into trouble over the summer, it quickly evolved into an effort to make sure kids were prepared to start school in the fall — while having fun.



Students prepare to start online learning after having breakfast with AIMS Kidz.



In addition to educational activities, AIMS Kidz provide children in Interfaith Homes with food and social activities.



Iesha Williams with Rashawn Terrell, who attends Kalamazoo Central and is on the JV football team. Rashawn is a mentor to the younger kids in Aims Kidz



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- Facilitate students to become positive, productive and contributing members of society
- Work to eliminate gaps created by the digital divide
- Promote post-secondary education options while in KPS for all youth

TRUSTEE
Jason E. Morris



- Ensure quality education for all students with an emphasis on career & technical training
- Foster safe & secure schools where students needs are seen, heard and met
- Create pathways to success for black and brown young men through strong social-emotional supports

TRUSTEE
Patti Sholler-Barber



- Increase social-emotional support for ALL students using our community partners and experts to help
- Continue to push for fully funded public education. KPS families, students and staff deserve nothing less.
- Promote inclusion with a focus on every child's truth, encouraging teamwork throughout the district to eradicate unwarranted biases

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NOTICE

Kalamazoo Public Schools welcomes all students and staff of any religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability.

The District will not tolerate or condone any act of bias or discrimination toward any person on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability in any of its activities, hiring practices, programs or services.

Inquiries by students and/or their parents/guardians should be directed to:

Director of Student Services

Kalamazoo Public Schools
3410 Laird Ave.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0161

All other inquiries should be directed to:

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

Kalamazoo Public Schools
3410 Laird Ave.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0177

District Directory at :
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KPS Announces Highest Number of Grads Since Start of The Promise *(continued from page 1)*

454 graduates. The number of graduates rose to 692 by 2018 and 715 in 2019.

These are the number of 2020 graduates for each high school and high school program:

- Kalamazoo Central High School — 319
- Loy Norrix High School — 284
- Phoenix High School — 113
- Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program — 18

The increase in graduation numbers represents more than a simple increase in overall enrollment numbers. Enrollment in the district has grown by 25 percent over the past 15 years,

but administrators have said that the remainder of the increase in graduates can be attributed to concerted efforts by the district to raise the number of graduates.

Administrators cite efforts such as curriculum improvements, best practices in instruction, enhanced parent and guardian involvement, and more extensive collaborations with community partners as being key to improving outcomes for students.

The 2019-2020 graduation rate will be released by the Michigan Department of Education in early 2021.

Important AHERA Notice

All Kalamazoo Public Schools Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) management plans are available for review by parents/guardians and employees of Kalamazoo Public Schools. They may be reviewed by:

- Contacting individual buildings, where each plan is located in the administrative office and may be reviewed there during school hours, or
- Contacting Karen Jackson, at the Office of Facilities Management, 600 W. Vine St., (269) 337-0400.

The district has completed six-month periodic surveillance, as required under the AHERA guidelines, which reassessed all areas of known or assumed asbestos materials to determine if a change has taken place. The results of the inspections have been added to the current AHERA management plans.

ADVISORY TO ALL PARENTS

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Kalamazoo Public Schools has adopted an Integrated Pest Management program. Inherent with this are the District's efforts to reduce the use of chemical pesticide(s) as much as possible. While it may occasionally be necessary to apply a pesticide, they will only be used as a last resort.

You have the right to be informed prior to any pesticide application made to the school buildings and grounds. In certain emergencies, pesticides may be applied without prior notice, but you can be provided notice following any such application. To receive notification, please complete the following information and submit to your child's school.

Should you have any questions or concerns about pest management within your child's school, please feel free to contact Karen Jackson, Executive Supervisor/Facilities Management, at (269) 337-0400. Thank you for helping us with this matter.

To receive notification, please fill out the following form and return it to your child's school.

PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION REQUEST - 2020-2021 School Year

Name of School: _____

Student's (Child's) Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: Zip Code: _____

Daytime Phone: Evening Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Please Check One:

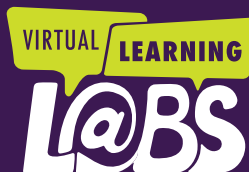
☐ I wish to be notified prior to scheduled pesticide treatment inside of the building.

☐ I wish to be notified prior to a scheduled pesticide treatment on the outside grounds of the school.

☐ Both of the above.

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Please report change of schools or address to Karen Jackson at (269) 337-0400.



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Academically Talented Youth Program Seeks Students for 2021–22 School Year

The Academically Talented Youth Program, which offers accelerated classes in math and English for students beginning in seventh and eighth grade, is seeking students for the 2021–2022 school year.

Students who have been invited to test for the program or who want to be more challenged and work at an accelerated pace can learn more about the program and application process at wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/information. The link includes a video with details about the program.

To watch the informational video, students will be required to register with a name and email address.

ATYP is administered through the Western Michigan University's Office of Pre-College Programming.

ATYP offers advanced and accelerated classes in math and English for students beginning in seventh or eighth grade. Stu-



dents normally come to class on the WMU campus one or two afternoons a week, however ATYP's classes are currently virtual due to the pandemic. Tuition is paid for by the public schools, with families paying a per-semester registration fee that is waived if the student qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch.

Students can enroll in ATYP after receiving qualifying scores on either the SAT or ACT, either of which can be taken through Northwestern University's Midwest Academic Talent Search (NUMATS). Stu-

dents learn about ATYP from informational meetings offered in the fall of each year. Testing occurs during the winter months, and students are notified of eligibility in the spring.

ATYP also offers an AP Computer Science class that is available to any student who has completed Algebra I. No minimum test score is required for this class. AP CS teaches students programming skills and analytical thinking by using multimedia labs in the Java programming language. Any student who wants to learn to program is welcome to participate in this year-long course which meets two afternoons per week on campus.

For more information, visit wmich.edu/precollege/atyp or contact the ATYP office by email at atyp-info@wmich.edu or by phone at (269) 387-3553.

Loy Norrix, Kalamazoo Central Athletic Directors Earn National Certification

The National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) is pleased to announce that Dylan Patterson, assistant principal and athletic director at Kalamazoo Central High School, and Andrew LaBoe, assistant principal and athletic director at Loy Norrix High School, have been recognized as Certified Athletic Administrators.

To earn this distinction, Patterson and LaBoe demonstrated the highest level of knowledge and expertise in the field of interscholastic athletic administration. The voluntary certification process included a thorough evaluation of the candidates' educational backgrounds, experience and pro-

fessional contributions, as well as a rigorous, comprehensive written examination.

They are two of an elite group of interscholastic athletic administrators nationwide to attain this level of professionalism.

The NIAAA is a national professional organization consisting of all 50 state athletic administrator associations and more than 12,000 individual members. It is dedicated to promoting the professional growth of high school athletic administrators and preserving the educational nature of interscholastic athletics and the place of these programs in the secondary school curriculum.

Explore Work Opportunities During National Career Development Month

November is National Career Development Month. Kalamazoo Public Schools and the Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency's Career & Technical Education program have collaborated to provide students with several unique career exploration opportunities. Students can:

- Reflect on their strengths and interests through the "Promote Positive You" video challenge.
- Connect with area professionals via a new virtual series on "Real Careers, Real Talk."
- Create a poster or poem on the theme "My Future Career:

Imagining the Possibilities." Find out more at bit.ly/kresacareerexploration.

Formerly known as Education for Employment, KRESA Career & Technical Education provides students with the academic and technical skills, knowledge and training necessary to succeed in high-wage, high-demand careers. Through hands-on job training, an intensive curriculum, and access to state-of-the-art technology, career coaches and instructional support staff, students are prepared to thrive in the workforce of tomorrow.

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Office Depot Donation Will Support Teachers Working Online

Hillside Middle School Principal Atiba McKissack was hoping for a “large” donation from the Office Depot Start Proud program — maybe \$2,000 — but instead the office supply giant gifted the school a jaw-dropping check for \$8,214 from cash register donations.

Hillside was one of a handful of Title I schools in a region covering Grand Rapids, Lansing, and Kalamazoo to receive the donation. Office Depot stores in the region collected donations for three months, before presenting the gift in September. The fund drive runs

through October, and Hillside and the other schools will receive an additional distribution of funds in November.

McKissack said donations will be used to provide tech support for teachers working online and to help community groups working with students.



From left, Sally DeVisser, assistant principal; Atiba McKissack, Hillside Middle School principal; Regina Fuson, community captain for Michigan; Basem Shammas, general manager, West Main/Kalamazoo store; and Chad Parker, district manager; Justin Stansell, general manager, Westnedge/Portage store.

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Community Food Pantries Help Fight Hunger Around Kalamazoo

Kalamazoo Public Schools, in conjunction with Communities in Schools of Kalamazoo and Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes, operate almost a dozen food pantries at school sites. Because of COVID-19, all KPS schools – and thus their food pantries – are closed to the public. Below is a list of non-school food pantries in Kalamazoo. If you are in need of food assistance, please contact Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes at (269) 343-3663 or the Michigan Food Assistance Program at (855) 275-6424.

Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes (KLF)	901 Portage St.	(269) 343-3663	http://kzoolf.org/get-help/
Douglass Community Association (KLF)	1000 W. Patterson St.	(269) 343-6185	www.dcakalamazoo.com
Haven Church (KLF)	5350 N Sprinkle Road	(269) 344-5871	www.haven-church.org
Centerpoint Church (KLF)	2345 N. 10th St.	(269) 375-4815	www.centerpointkzoo.org
Dream Center	1122 Portage St.	(269) 382-4760	www.kzoodreamcenter.org
Kalamazoo Gospel Mission	448 N. Burdick St.	(269) 345-2974	www.kzoogospel.org/meals-food-pantry
Eastside Neighborhood Association	131 E. Main St. Kalamazoo, 49048	(269) 381-0700	www.kalamazooeastsideneighborhood.org
Kalamazoo Deacons Conference – Galilee Baptist Church	1010 N. Westnedge Ave.	(269) 344-7333	www.kzoodc.org
Westwood Neighborhood Food Pantry	538 Nichols Road	(269) 626-5241	http://westwood-umc.org/
Fresh Fire AME Church	2508 Gull Road	(269) 381-8050	www.freshfireamec.com
Ministry with Community	500 N. Edwards St.	(269) 343-6073	www.ministrywithcommunity.com/services
Sunnyside United Methodist Church (KLF)	2800 Gull Road	(269) 343-3663	www.sunnysideumc.com/serve
Church of God Pentecostal	2929 E. Main St.	(269) 349-8181	
Milwood Community Pantry	3919 Portage St.	(269) 381-6720	www.milwoodunitedmethodistchurch.org/
St. Augustine Cathedral Food Pantry (KLF)	542 W. Michigan Ave.	(269) 343-3663	stakalamazoo.org/food-pantry-loaves-and-fishes
Salvation Army	1700 St. Burdick St.		www.centralusa.salvationarmy.gov
WIC – Alcott Clinic	311 E. Alcott St.	(269) 373-5002	



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Modern Woodmen of America
Martin D. Dodge, FICF, LUTCF
2700 Sprinkle Road
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
B 269-385-2700, C 269-993-7442
martin.d.dodge@mwarep.org
reps.modernwoodmen.org/mdodge

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Checking in with Students, Celebrating Success

Learning may be online only for the first trimester, but teachers and administrators have been working to ensure students know that they are thinking about them through fun home visits and rewards.

Milwood Elementary Principal on Mission to Visit Every Student

Milwood Elementary Principal Craig LeSuer misses seeing students. So, in mid-September he launched an effort to visit each of the 419 students enrolled at Milwood.

So every day, armed with packages of candy, a friendly smile, and an arm ready for a bunch of elbow bumps, he heads out to see at least six students a day — but with siblings and neighbors added in that number can sometimes balloon to 17 children.

LeSuer said he knows that virtual learning has been socially and emotionally challenging for students. He was especially worried about his kindergartners, new families, and Greenwood Elementary School third graders who were transitioning to fourth and fifth grade at Milwood.

“We had professional development on culture and climate and I thought what better way to connect than to get out there,” said LeSuer, who sees his efforts as a way to support the hard work of his teachers who hold office hours every day.

The students are sometimes shy but usually happy to see him. You have to remember that for most students it has been more than six months since they’ve been in school, he said.

“You can see the look on



Charlotte Edison, Nevaeh Hussin, and Omar Edison were rewarded for their hard work with a pizza dinner from their teachers at Spring Valley



Khalil Adams, left, and his family enjoy a pizza dinner courtesy of Spring Valley.

their faces, it’s a moment then, ‘I remember you,’” he said.

Spring Valley Pizza Dinners

Spring Valley Center for Exploration 2A teachers celebrated student achievement with family pizza parties.

The student in each 2A class, who attended the most small group and SEL (Social Emotional Learning) classes, as well as finished the most work in Calvert with 80 percent or better for September, were the winners of the first at home pizza parties — a Hungry Howies’ dinner delivered

on Oct. 1 to the winning students.

The pizza dinners were designed to feed the entire family — in recognition of all of the hard work the entire family is putting in to help children navigate their new curriculum and technology.

Lisa Boulding chose Roderick Ellis (Grade 5): “He is the nicest, most patient kid. His internet etiquette is great and he is on top of all of his assignments.”

Katherine Cape chose Erica Burney (Grade 3): “Erica is always on time and pure sunshine when she meets with the class online. She always has a smile

on her face and consistently does her work in Calvert.”

Lisa Dabrowski chose to recognize the Edison family with students Charlotte (K), Neveah (K), and Omar (Grade 1): “All three students have submitted and averaged an 80 percent or higher on all their Calvert lessons. Mom, Elizabeth, has helped me with technology issues and fixes. These students are active, positive, and always ready to learn. A special shout out goes to their uncle who has been there to help with their lessons too.”

Kaylee DeAnda honored Khalil Adams (Grade 2): “He always participates and has high engagement with all the virtual meetings. He is kind-hearted, responsible, hard-working, and has never missed a day.”

Loy Norrix Administrators Reward Students for Good Attendance

Attendance matters — even for online learning. Loy Norrix High School entered students who attended their online live sessions in a drawing for LN gear as a way to promote positive attendance rates.

The T-shirts were delivered by Principal Chris Aguinaga and his secretary Cheryl Knight; Dean of Students Erin Anderson and her secretary Christina DeHaan, and Athletic Director Andrew LaBoe and his secretary Zachary Rickli.

The drawing was open to all students.



Milwood Elementary Principal Craig LeSuer delivers treats to Sonny and Imani Gibson.



Craig LeSuer, Milwood Elementary principal, checked in with students Xzavien Henry, and Jayvious and Tevin Hegler, handing out candy and reminding them to attend school every day.



Some of the Loy Norrix students recently recognized for good attendance are, clockwise from top left, Anna Buck, Hollis Masterson, Percy Gordon, Dady Lo, and Josephine Velo.

KPS Librarians Recommend Books for: Fall and Families

We're heading into a time of year with many celebrations and family time. Here are some of our favorite books about families of all shapes and sizes.

Grades PreK-3

Friday Night Wrestlefest

by J.F. Fox

Ladies and gentlemen, it's Friday night, and these kids are ready to wrestle! Join Dangerous Daddoo as he dishes out some serious moves to get the kids ready for bed. But what happens when Flying Mom Bomb gets home from work? Are the kids toast?



Going Down Home With Daddy

by Kelly Starling Lyons

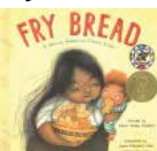
Alan looks forward to the annual family reunion at the farm where Daddy grew up, but everyone is supposed to share something special and



Alan worries about arriving with empty hands.

Fry Bread : a Native American Family Story

by Kevin Noble Maillard



Fry bread is food.

It is warm and delicious, piled high on a plate.

Fry bread is time.

It brings families together for meals and new memories.

Fry bread is us.

It is a celebration of old and new, traditional and modern, similarity and difference.

Grades 4-7

The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street (Vanderbeekers series)



by Karina Yan Glaser

When the Vanderbeekers discover they have just 11 days to find somewhere new to live because their landlord has

decided not to renew their lease, the five children embark on "Operation Beiderman" in order to get him to change his mind. As the children work to stay in the only home they have known, they, their friends and neighbors, draw readers in and keep them rooting for this amazing family. — Since this is a four-book series, you can follow them through even more adventures.

The List of Things That Will Not Change

by Rebecca Stead

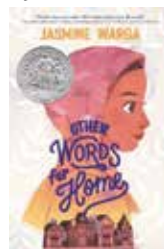


After her parents' divorce and her father plans to marry his boyfriend, Bea's life becomes different in many ways.

But she can always look back at the list she keeps in her green notebook to remember the things that will stay the same. The first and most important: Mom and Dad will always love Bea and each other.

Other Words for Home

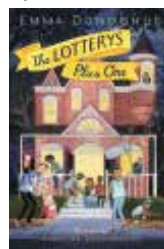
by Jasmine Warga



When fighting erupts in her seaside home in Syria, young Jude and her mother flee to stay with family in America. Jude doesn't feel prepared for the loud, fast lifestyle that Americans lead, nor is she prepared for starting a new school with the label of Middle Easterner. Jude soon meets new friends, enjoys her family, and just might try out for the school musical.

The Lottery Plus One

by Emma Donoghue



The Lotterys are a unique family — two sets of parents and seven children living in a big house purchased with their lottery winnings. It can be chaotic, but also loving and accepting. That is, until Grumps, one of the family grandfathers comes to stay. Grumps has dementia and would prefer to be in his own home. This endearing book provides an opportunity to see a multicultural and multigenerational family create

a beautiful home where each individual is celebrated.

Grades 8-12

Inexplicable Logic of My Life

by Benjamin Alire Saenz

Sal used to know his place with his adoptive gay father, their loving Mexican American family, and his best friend, Samantha. But it's senior year, and suddenly Sal is throwing punches, questioning everything, and realizing he no longer knows himself. If Sal's not who he thought he was, who is he?



Something Real

by Heather Demetrios

Seventeen-year-old Bonnie™ Baker has grown up on TV. She and her 12 siblings are the stars of one-time hit reality show, Baker's Dozen. Since the show's cancellation, Bonnie™ has tried to live a normal life, under the radar and out of the spotlight. But it's about to fall apart... because Baker's Dozen is going back on the air.



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KPS Grads in Action: Maliek Hargrave Pursing Dreams in Social Work, Tech

The Kalamazoo Technology Training Partnership, a Kalamazoo Promise program designed to train entry-level technology workers, graduated its first class this summer.

One of those graduates was Maliek Hargrave, a 2016 Phoenix High School alum, who is now interning with Newmind Group, a firm that provides technology support to businesses. His decision to enroll in KTCP, springs from one relationship that has helped him stay focused and successful over the past decade: his friendship with Phoenix Principal Mark Hill.

Hargrave is positive, energetic and focused — but he readily admits that his life has not been easy — and there are numerous times his life could have taken a different turn.

His childhood was marked by instability. His family moved constantly and experienced frequent homelessness. Ask him where he went to elementary school, and he laughs: charter school, Washington Writers' Academy, Lincoln International Studies School, he thinks a week at Edison Environmental Science Academy; three middle school programs; and two high schools.

"I went to all of them," he said. "Sometimes I'd say, 'Where am I right now, miss? I'm not supposed to be here.'"

"I am a real product of my environment. I know about going to bed hungry and sleeping in the snow and not knowing if you're going to eat dinner. A lot of people don't know that about me. I came from a place of real poverty, a place of embarrassment. All it would have taken for things to go bad is for me to have had a really bad day and for people to push my buttons. I have one brother who has been in prison for eight years. I could have done the same exact things."

Instead, when he was 14, he opted to enter foster care. His foster family helped open his eyes to some of the opportunities that were available to him. In addition

to the stability of that situation, he found the right educational environment when he transferred from Loy Norrix to Phoenix.

"I met the man who I call my Pops, Mr. Hill," Hargrave said. "He put me in a situation where I was exposed to things such as HBCUs, museums, being a student ambassador, and other things that young Black men are timid about going to. That opened the doorway for me, for how I wanted to define myself as a young Black man, as an intelligent person, caring, well dressed."

"I saw that I could better myself or hurt myself. I picked helping myself."

Hill said Hargrave impressed him from their very first meeting.

"During the summer after his freshman year, Maliek emailed me. He heard of some fairly good things about Phoenix High School and me, and wrote in his email, 'I had a rough freshman year Mr. Hill, If you give me a chance to get into your school, I promise I will be a good student and make you proud of me.' I will never forget it," Hill said.

He scheduled a meeting with Hargrave, who showed up early for their appointment, a little tired and sweaty. He hadn't been able to find a ride, so he had walked 75 minutes to get to the school. Hill said he knew that Hargrave deserved whatever support he could give him.

"Every day he is confronted with many challenges that young Black men experience, and we text and talk often about those challenges. Every time — he makes a conscious decision to rise above any adverse situation that may enter his sphere. I am so very proud of him," Hill said.

In addition to Hill, there were others in KPS who helped him stay focused: Dr. Jeff Boggan, principal of Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts; Valerie Boggan, principal of Kalamazoo Central High School, Craig LeSuer, principal at Milwood Elementary School; and Sheila Dorsey-



Maliek Hargrave, a 2016 Phoenix High School graduate, is studying social work, and he recently completed the Kalamazoo Technology Training Partnership and has started an IT job for Newmind Group.



Maliek Hargrave with his mentor, Phoenix High School Principal Mark Hill.

Smith, assistant superintendent for human resources.

After graduating from Phoenix and briefly attending Philander Smith College, an HBCU in Arkansas, he returned to Kalamazoo and enrolled in Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

He speaks highly of KVCC. When he returned from Arkansas, the death of several friends sank him into a depression, and he struggled with school. But KVCC offered counseling and support services that helped him tackle his depression and get back on track. With support from the school, he raised his grade point — even making it onto the dean's list.

Last year, Hill told him about KTCP, and while he is

firmly committed to finishing at KVCC — he's on track to graduate next summer — and going on to earn a bachelor's degree in social work, he was intrigued by KTCP and its mission to diversify the tech industry.

Through KTCP, The Promise works with six business partners to introduce Promise Scholars to high tech. The yearlong program provides basic skills and introduces students to potential employers: Consumers Credit Union, CTS Telecom, Greenleaf Hospitality Group, Kalamazoo Public Library, and Newmind Group, who all have a need for IT workers.

Hargrave was surprised by how much he enjoyed the program, which not only gave him

valuable skills but broadened his understanding of "nerd culture." His paid internship with Newmind has been a great fit. He handles hardware and software installs for clients. The work environment has been supportive, and he's worked with other Newmind employees to learn skills such as customer service and budgeting.

He works part-time at Newmind, while also working as a program facilitator for Prevention Works, a prevention programs for youth and families addressing issues of violence and substance abuse. His work with students through Prevention Works ties closely to his plans to earn a degree in social work — a goal he's had since the fifth grade when he encountered his first social worker.

"I don't even know the name of the program, but a lady came and talked to us. She was so caring," he said. "It was the first time I really saw someone interested in how I was feeling and how my day was going."

That one person helping him has inspired him to want to help others.

He wants people to know that he is a product of his environment, and he understands the struggles that many people are going through. He said he can tell them that he's been through everything that they've been through — and he can help them understand how making the right choices can affect the rest of their lives.

"I can go into the neighborhood, what people might consider the ghetto, and you'll see me laughing and joking. People respect what I'm doing. There are drug dealers and people that other people might consider 'hoodlums,' but these are the people that I've grown up with. We had the same circumstances, the same background. I don't think I'm any better than anyone."

"I just chose to do different. I am just highly blessed and highly favored."

Artists' Corner

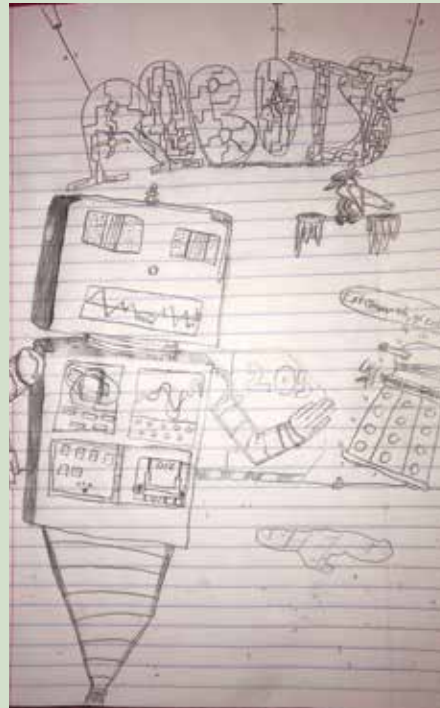
Hillside Middle School art teacher Amber Beeman has been working with students remotely this fall. In her basic design class, Beeman asked students to select a word and then illustrate what that word meant to them. Their illustrations had to include the elements of art: line, shape, color, form, space, texture, and value, and at least three principles of design: pattern, emphasis, variety, unity, balance, rhythm/movement, and proportion. These are works by some of her eighth graders.



Una Kappenman



Winter Owens



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