

Like us on



IMPORTANT DATES

Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, Dec. 20, 2018
7 p.m.

Administration Building
1220 Howard St.

For more information, call
(269) 337-1572

Dec. 24–Jan. 4

Winter Break —
Schools Closed

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Loy Norrix and Kalamazoo Central are seeking graduates from the past five years to speak about college and work experiences after high school on **Alumni Day** on **Dec. 21**. The LN event will run 12:30–2:20 p.m. The KC event is 8–11:30 a.m. Interested alums should RSVP by Dec. 14. LN grads can RSVP to Cheryl Knight at (269) 337-0200, ext. 2205. KC alums can RSVP to Mara Garza at (269) 337-0300, ext. 548.

Lift Up Through Literacy: Lifting Up Parents and Children

It's a Wednesday night at Skyridge Church on Kalamazoo's west side.

In the Family Literacy room, a group leader is reading sentences to parents and children, asking, "Does this sentence persuade, inform or entertain?" In another room, parents with younger children are talking about whether stories are pretend or real.

It is another night of literacy exercises, food, friendship, and family bonding for those who participate in Kalamazoo Public Schools' Lift Up Through Literacy program. The program is free and open to families with children of all ages from birth to 18.

The program is held at nine sites around the community. The



Brittany Coggins de Pablo says both she and her daughter Elena Pablo Coggins learn new things at Lift Up Through Literacy.

evening starts with free dinner. Children receive free books at each session, and families can earn incentives for attendance.

Most sites offer three levels of activities: one for families with children up to the age of 2, one for families of preschoolers,

and one for school-age children. There are activities related to reading and math literacy, with an emphasis on parental involvement in the learning process.

Parent coaches offer suggestions on how to implement learning strategies, and parents put them into practice later in the sessions.

"I think it's a good learning experience," said Brittany Coggins de Pablo, who attends with her 3-year-old Elena Pablo Coggins. "I learn things. She learns things. Education is important to us."

Parents Kawther Mohammed, who was at Skyridge with her son Ghazi Awad, 2, and Aaliya (continued on page 9)

Looking for a Gift Idea? May We Suggest a Good Book?

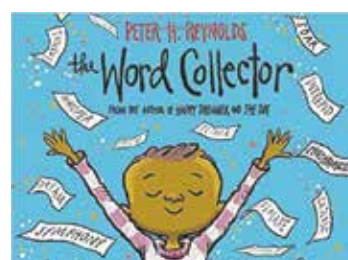
Whether you're looking for a book to give as a present this holiday season, or you just want to make sure your young readers have something to keep them occupied during the winter break, you'll find the shelves of bookstores and libraries filled with new fun and thought-provoking options.

We asked teachers, librarians, and administrators to list some of their new favorites in children's and young adult literature. Below, you'll find picture books, graphic novels, award-

winning books, novels in verse, and other options for the young readers in your house.

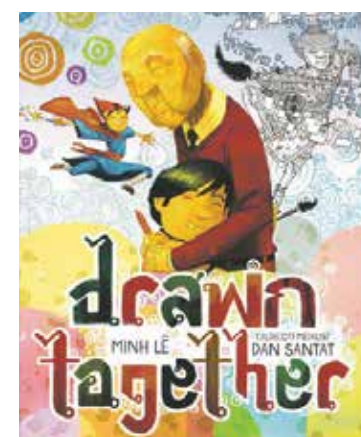
Some of them sound so interesting, you may even want to pick up a copy for yourself.

Debora Gant, second-grade teacher at Arcadia Elementary School and long-time Kalamazoo Public Schools proponent of and leader in diverse literature: "The Word Collector," written and illustrated by Peter Hamilton Reynolds. Some people



collect bugs or stamps. Jerome collects words. One day, an accident teaches him how to make them even more special.

"Drawn Together," written by Minh Le and illustrated by



(continued on page 4)

Kalamazoo Public Schools is Hiring.

Find information at <http://www.kalamazoopublicschools.com/Departments/HumanResources/EmploymentOpportunities>

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If You Can Read This Column, Thank a Teacher

I have been very fortunate in my life. I had many great teachers when I was in school and have had many strong role models, mentors, and teachers who have coached, taught, and shaped me since I graduated from high school.

Felton, Hazlett, Dodridge, Tope, Miller, Dedrick, Robinson, Randolph, Kent, Giovanazzo, and Butz. I remember every teacher that taught me language arts, math, social studies, or science K-8.....and yes, that was a few years ago. I remember Mrs. Hazlett's reading contest for her first graders, Mrs. Dodridge's kindness in letting me explore books above grade level in second grade, Mrs. Tope's patience in her third/fourth-grade split, Mrs. Miller's impatience at my fourth-grade silliness and our surprise party for her at the end of the year, and Ms. Dedrick's ability to calm her fifth-grade class with a glance.

I remember Mrs. Robinson's kindness and grace under fire, Mr. Randolph's flair, Ms. Kent's matter of factness, Mr. Giovanazzo's teaching us to outline our social studies materials, and Ms. Butz's very old school, fairly brutal way of teaching us to diagram sentences.

In high school, I remember Mrs. Cummings teaching me to write in her social studies class; Ms. Robin teaching me to read, write, speak, and understand French; Mrs. Young teaching me to type; Mrs. Krahling teaching me Latin and public speaking; Mr. Wilson teaching me to debate; and Ms. Ferraro teaching me that teaching (and learning) math and quirkiness weren't mutually exclusive. When I taught high



Michael F. Rice, Ph.D.
Superintendent

school French several years later in the Washington, D.C., Public Schools, it was with Robin as a role model. When I teach or coach or role model or mentor today, it is with my teachers and coaches and role models and mentors in mind. Every day.

I feel very strongly about teaching and learning, about teachers in our district and across the state and country, about mentors and mentoring and helping our young people coming up. That's why I started multi-student mentoring three years ago. Last year, more than 400 staff and community mentors joined me, Deputy Superintendent for Business, Communications, and Operations Gary Start; Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Services Cindy Green; Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Sheila Dorsey-Smith; Director of Special Education Reuquiyah Saunders; and Director of Student Services

Nkenge Bergan to mentor 1,168 students in 9,572 weekly mentoring sessions.

I also feel very strongly about this great profession of teaching and learning, this great institution of public schools, this great tradition of raising up the next generation. And so it has been both saddening and alarming to watch the decline in numbers of teacher candidates in our teacher training programs in Michigan's universities over the last decade.

According to an Aug. 9, 2018, Education Week article, there was "a 23 percent decline [nationally] in the number of people completing teacher-preparation programs" between 2007-08 and 2015-16. A May 21, 2018, MLive article noted that in 2015-16, "there were 3,696 [teaching] certificates issued to new teachers in Michigan, a 33 percent decline from four years earlier, according to the Michigan Department of Education." The article further

indicated that in 2015-16, "there were 7,868 students enrolled in Michigan's teacher preparation programs, down 30 percent from two years earlier."

In the last several years, the critical teacher shortage area list, maintained by the Michigan Department of Education, has expanded.

What is causing this decline in teacher candidates in our universities? In certain areas, like math and science, a strong economy has adversely affected our pool of candidates, as prospective secondary school math and science teachers instead consider more lucrative careers in the private sector.

But a strong economy is not the only factor hurting the teacher candidate pipeline. Over the last several years, the denigration of the profession, school district layoffs, and a decline in inflation-adjusted

(continued on page 3)

Explore

Discover

Engage

WINTERFEST FAMILY

Saturday, December 1
10 am - 1:30 pm | OSH

Come spend the day at Oshtemo Branch! Celebrate winter with music, crafts, face painting and delicious hot chocolate!

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KALAMAZOO YOUTH JAZZ ORCHESTRA

JAZZ+ CREATIVE INSTITUTE

Kalamazoo Public Library
kpl.gov

Queenish

Self-care with Rootead Queens

Grades 6-12

Saturday, December 29
2 - 4 pm | POW

Calling all Teen Queens! Rootead Queens invites you to pamper yourself with pedicures, yoga, snacks and more!

CEN • EAS • OSH • POW • WSQ

CEN • EAS • OSH • POW • WSQ

Thank a Teacher *continued from page 2*

salaries and benefits for many teachers have all had an adverse impact on teacher candidate pools in Michigan.

So what are we doing in the district and in the state to address this alarming trend?

Clearly, there is a limit to what any given district can do to affect a market for teachers, even if that district is fairly large, as is KPS. We send our postings to teacher education programs across the Midwest. We participate in career fairs across Michigan and in some cases across state lines. We have relationships with universities and their teacher preparation programs and often present about our district as a way of increasing teacher candidate interest in KPS.

Several times in the last 12 years, we have had an aspiring administrator academy to help address the lack of quality administrative candidates in the marketplace. We have been pleased with our progress in nurturing and developing some of our "home-grown" talent in administration.

This year, we are working to extend this "home-grown" effort by rethinking our teacher cadet program at Loy Norrix High School in the second half of the school year. We are fortunate to have a number of our graduates, often Promise recipients, return to teach our children. We also have a partnership with Western Michigan University that provides scholarships for KPS graduates who want to go into teaching. In addition, we are working to develop Young Educators Society (YES) clubs at our high schools and middle schools, effective next year.

Moreover, we have won a state grant to partner with the National Teacher Center (NTC) to provide significant professional development to help some of our strong veteran teachers provide additional support for our new teachers. Across the country, the turnover rate of new teachers is significant. While this rate is lower in KPS than in many ur-

ban districts nationally, we can still improve our teacher retention with stronger professional development, and our work with NTC will help in this regard.

At the state level, the state board of education and state department of education have permitted more retired teachers to rejoin the teaching ranks in subject areas where there are critical shortages. This year, they have done vital committee work on teacher education requirements in the state

The state legislature has reduced the number of college credit hours required for substitute teaching in K-12 schools from 90 to 60. Finally, the Michigan Association of Superintendents and Administrators (MASA) has done critical committee work on the teacher shortage issue.

That said, we need to do so much more as a state. We need to compensate teachers better to attract both the ongoing quality and quantity that we require to teach the state's 1.5 million public school children. We need to stop denigrating the profession and to start raising it up. It is, after all, the profession that we charge with the responsibility of teaching the next generation.

I stand on my teachers' shoulders, as we all stand on the shoulders of those who helped and taught us along the way. My teaching and mentoring are a tribute to my teachers' contributions to the lives of so many young people over so many years.

Most of my school teachers are dead now. This summer, I sent a letter to one of my teachers, long retired, to thank her for what she had taught me and what she meant to me. I will keep her return letter forever.

If you care to share an act of kindness, write a teacher or teachers — former or current — and thank them for helping make you who you are today. We all stand on others' shoulders. Let your teachers know that you know the impact they have had on your life ... and that you appreciate them.

Science, Tech and Art Star in First Prairie Ridge Family STEAM Night

Prairie Ridge Elementary School students examined bones, watched chemical reactions, practiced flying with aviation software, and learned how science can be turned into art at the school's first Family STEAM Night.

Volunteers from around the community filled the school gym and cafeteria with hands-on activities that explored concepts of science, technology, engineering, art and math. Hundreds of Prairie Ridge students and family members participated in the event, which was organized by the PTO.

Participants were: Crescendo Academy of Music, Kalamazoo College, Pfizer, Stryker, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo Nature Center, Air Zoo, Kalamazoo Valley Museum, Stryke Force Robotics, Charles River Laboratories, Michigan State University Science Theater, and the United States Geological Survey. The evening included a free dinner and raffle drawings.



Rivaan Bhattarai, in blue, examines a bone at the Stryker display at Prairie Ridge Elementary School's STEAM Night.



Liam Ailes, in black, and Clare Miedema, in turquoise, look at animal skins at the Kalamazoo Nature Center table at the Prairie Ridge STEAM Night.

DECEMBER AT THE KIA



HOLIDAY ART SALE

Friday, November 30, 5-8p / Saturday, December 1, 9a-5p

GALLERY SHOP Open 7 days a week in December

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS Start at \$35

GIVE A CLASS OR WORKSHOP

Classes start in January

GIFT CERTIFICATES

In any amount, good throughout the KIA

ART HOP Friday, Dec. 7, 5-8p **FREE** **TEEN NIGHT** Friday, Dec. 14, 6-8p / \$2
ART DETECTIVES Saturday, Dec. 15, 10:30a-12p **FREE** for kids 4-8 w/adult
FILM AT THE KIA Thursday, Dec. 9, 6:30-8p / \$5 / Students \$2 / children free

SEASONAL WORKSHOPS

Thur 12/6 Bird-Lover's Wreath Design, 6-8p
Tues 12/11 Holiday Arrangement Design, 6-8p

CLASSES START IN JANUARY

Apply for scholarships by December 5

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KALAMAZOO INSTITUTE OF ARTS

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Looking for a Gift Idea? May We Suggest a Good Book? (continued from page 1)

Peter Santat. When a boy visits his grandfather, they have trouble communicating until they discover a mutual love of drawing.

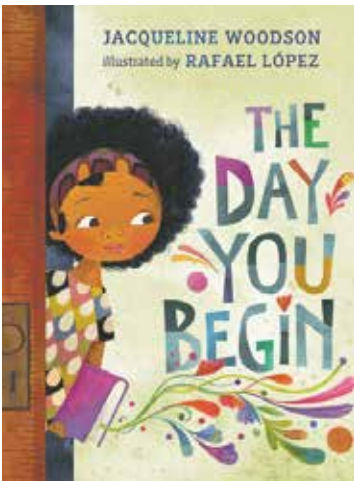
“I Am Human,” written by Susan Verde, illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds. A meditation on what it means to be human. A picture book that celebrates empathy and compassion as essential parts of humanity.

Patricia Richardson, acquisitions and cataloging librarian for Kalamazoo Public Schools, and **Laura Warren-Gross**, librarian at Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts:

Picture books



“Be Kind,” written by Pat Zietlow Miller, illustrated by Jen Hill. When a young girl spills juice on her new dress, her friend tries to make her feel better. The story explores concepts of kindness and how kindness can make a difference.

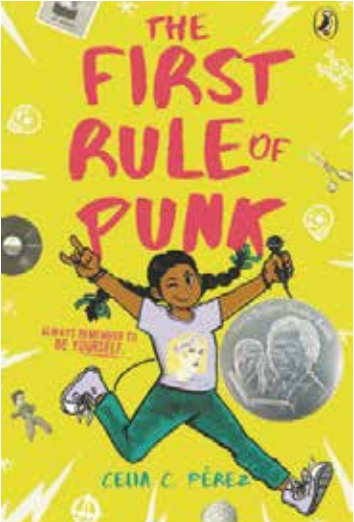


“The Day You Begin,” written by Jacqueline Woodson, illustrated by Rafael Lopez. Woodson imagines what it’s like being “an only” — the only one

with an accent, the only one who wears your kind of clothes — in a classroom.

“After the Fall” written and illustrated by Dan Santat. Humpty Dumpty must conquer his fear of climbing after that famous fall.

Chapter books



“First Rule of Punk,” written by Celia Perez. Maria Luisa O’Neill-Morales moves to Chicago at the start of seventh grade and creates her own path by forming a punk band.

“Jason Reynold’s Track Series: Ghost, Patina, Sunny, Lu,” written by Jason Reynolds. A group of friends from wildly different backgrounds compete on an elite track team. They all have a lot to lose — and a lot to prove.

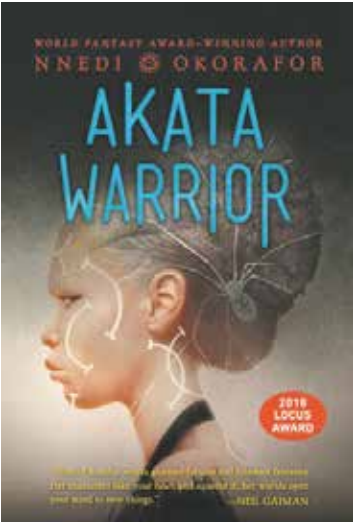
“Harbor Me,” written by Jacqueline Woodson. Six students are selected for a weekly talk, with no adults allowed. They discover how to share their hopes and fears.

Angela Justice, KPS coordinator for English language arts, social studies, and library services:

“We Need New Names,” written by NoViolet Bulawayo. Bulawayo’s debut novel follows a 10-year-old girl’s journey from Zimbabwe to America. She encounters limited options as she navigates her new country. The novel even has a Kalamazoo connection.

“The Poet X,” written by Elizabeth Acevedo. This novel-in-verse is about an Afro-Latino

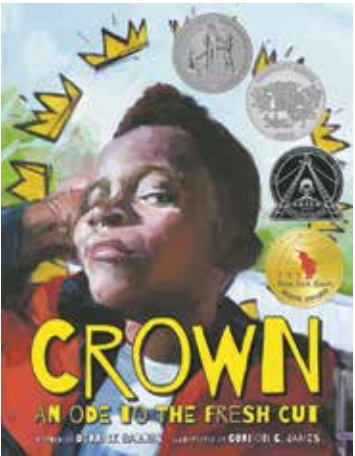
poet, who uses slam poetry to find her voice in her traditional Harlem neighborhood.



“Akata Warrior,” written by Nnedi Okorafor. This fantasy blends mythology, history, and magic in a story about an American girl, whose Nigerian parents bring her back to their homeland, and she is inducted into a secret society and must avert an apocalypse.

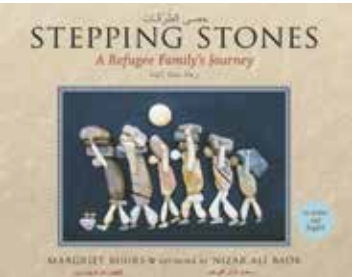
Greg Socha, principal at Arcadia Elementary School:

Picture books



“Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut,” written by Derrick Barnes, illustrated by Gordon C. James. This story about a boy with an affection for trips to the barbershop has won multiple awards.

“A Map of Good Memories,” written by Fran Nuno, illustrated by Zuzanna Celej. A refugee girl remembers her favorite places from her homeland and recreates them on a map to help her remember the good times.



“Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family’s Journey,” written by Margriet Ruurs, illustrated by Nizar Ali Badr. This story about a refugee’s journey hits home with students. It is written in English and Arabic.

Chapter books

“Out of My Mind,” written by Sharon Draper. This novel for upper elementary students made a big impact with students and staff. It’s a little older — It was a summer reading assignment for last year’s fourth graders — but it’s still worthwhile to mention.

“The Stories Julian Tells,” written by Ann Cameron. This older book is a great read-aloud book. It’s about a boy with a great imagination, who can make his younger brother believe anything.

Susan Warner, director of youth services at Kalamazoo Public Library:

Picture books

“A Big Mooncake for Little Star,” written and illustrated by Grace Lin. Award-winning author Grace Lin explains the phases of the moon in a story about a little girl who can’t resist nibbling at mooncakes.

“Jabari Jumps,” written and illustrated by Gaia Cornwall. Jabari has finished his swim lessons and he’s ready to jump off the diving board — almost.

“Night Job,” written by Karen Hesse, illustrated by G. Brian Karas. A little boy accompanies his father to his job cleaning a middle school. It celebrates the joy of working together and of a job well done.

Chapter books

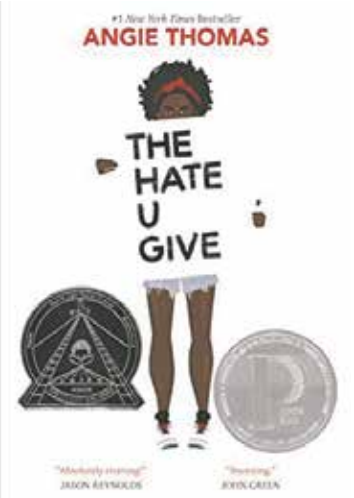
“Merci Suarez Changes Gears,” written by Meg Medina. Merci has to tackle big changes at the private school where she attends as a scholarship student

as well as at home where her beloved grandfather is struggling with memory loss.

“Ghost Boys,” written by Jewell Parker Rhodes. Rhodes tells the story of a black boy killed by a police officers, while making connections to historical events.

Tonya Colvin, librarian at Kalamazoo Central High School:

“Swing,” written by Kwame Alexander and Mary Rand Hess. For best friends Walt and Noah, “swing” refers to jazz and to baseball in this story about bettering yourself and navigating relationships.



“The Hate U Give,” written by Angie Thomas. Starr Carter must balance between her poor neighborhood and the fancy suburban prep school that she attends. The balance is shattered when her best friend is killed by the police. This book is the Kalamazoo Public Library’s 2019 Reading Together selection, and was recently released as a major motion picture.

John Kreider, librarian at Loy Norrix High School:

“Proud,” written by Ibtihaj Muhammad. The Olympic fencer shares her story of faith, family, and perseverance. At the 2016 Olympics, she became the first American to compete wearing a hijab.

“Odd One Out,” written by Nic Stone. A complicated high school threesome of friends results in a thoughtful exploration of sexuality, gender, and race.

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
1220 Howard Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0161

All other inquiries should be directed to:

Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0177

District Directory at :

www.kalamazoopublicschools.com

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Voter Education Efforts Help Teens Learn Ins and Outs of Voting

During the mock election at Loy Norrix High School, one student raised his hand while he was filling out his ballot.

League of Women Voters - Kalamazoo Area volunteer Jennie Hill walked over to him.

"He said he was only voting for governor and voting 'no' on Proposal 1," she said. "I said that was OK, and he went on to say that it was stupid that there was no more straight ticket voting. I did have to tell him to read Proposal 3, because that was going to have straight ticket voting written back into the state constitution if it passed."

He looked sheepish and said, "Maybe this (mock election) wasn't such a bad idea."

And this is exactly why the League works with the Kalamazoo city and county clerks to run the Voter Education Project, said Hill, who is also secretary for the Kalamazoo Public Schools Board of Education.

"The purpose of the Voter Education Project is to educate young people about the voting process, which include: reasons to vote, how to register to vote, how



Caitlin Scott voted in the Loy Norrix mock elections organized by the League of Women Voters Kalamazoo Area.

to become an informed voter, and how and when to cast a ballot," Hill said.

The Voter Education Project began in 2008 when League members noticed trends of lower voter turnout in certain precincts. Those precincts coincided with some of the lower socioeconomic neighborhoods in the Kalamazoo Public Schools district.

"We believe that if you can show people that voting really can make a difference by choosing a candidate that you agree with, take away the superstitions and rumors around it, and make something relevant to students, they will pay attention and vote

when they turn 18," she said.

For KPS high schools, the League goes into the schools to hold voter registration drives.

"You want to make a difference in the world. It starts with us," said senior Lillia Bistrek, who registered during drive held during her lunch at Loy Norrix. And, fellow senior Marcos Mujica said, "It's my duty to have a voice."

The League, which is educational and nonpartisan, also holds informational meetings about the upcoming elections. The educational presentation that the League has developed has been used by other Michigan LWV and in school districts such as

Ann Arbor, Schoolcraft, and Muskegon, and at Heritage Christian Academy in Kalamazoo.

Volunteers organize mock elections complete with modified ballots and actual voting machines. Eleventh-grade AP government students act as poll workers, while seniors vote. The county clerk's office provides the ballot programming, while the city clerk's office provides the election equipment. The Michigan Election Resources office provides the ballots.

"Oftentimes when someone feels they might make a mistake when doing something they have never done before, the individual simply will not do it," said Shelby Moss, deputy city clerk for the City of Kalamazoo. "Providing an opportunity for the students to vote in a mock election while still in high school provides a learning opportunity. When the student turns 18, they can vote in a real election, and they will know what to do without being fearful of the process."

"Our message to voters about Election Day is be informed voters."

FAMILY FUN DAYS

December 26 - January 4

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New Administration Team Takes the Lead at Loy Norrix

Loy Norrix High School has a new team of administrators this year. Chris Aguinaga, former dean of students, was named principal this summer. Loy Norrix also saw assistant principal Erin Middleton become the new dean and the naming of two new assistant principals, Brandon Lukes and Kim Kirshman.

Also hired to join to the the Kalamazoo Public Schools administrative team this summer was Geoff Howe, who was named the director of School Improvement, Title I and Assessments.

Chris Aguinaga Principal

Loy Norrix High School

Aguinaga has worked for Kalamazoo Public Schools for 12 years. He has been at Loy Norrix for four years — one year as an assistant principal and three years as assistant principal and dean of students. Before coming to Norrix he worked at Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts as a social studies teacher for six years and a leadership coach for two years. He was a member of the 2010-2011 KPS Aspiring Administrators Academy, is a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and has served as vice president of the Kalamazoo Education Association. He holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education and a master's degree



Chris Aguinaga

in educational leadership from Western Michigan University.

Excelsior: Did you always plan to be a high school principal?

Aguinaga: My initial goal was middle school, but then once I arrived at the high school, obviously that changed. High school is a bigger animal, but it's so much more rewarding in my opinion. The build-up of the four years, the journey toward graduation. Ninth graders are still practically kids, then they mature to adults in four years. Graduation night, being able to shake all of their hands, I'm really looking forward to it, particularly since this graduating class will be the last class I ever taught.

Excelsior: Do you see major differences between middle school and high school?

Aguinaga: In high school you see all of the social interactions and the choices they make as teenagers change the dynamics. Kids you would never think would struggle educationally, but given the new pressures adolescence you watch how that can change the trajectory you've always seen for them in middle school.

You especially see the importance of the ninth grade year and success in algebra. If they're not successful in algebra, they most likely won't be successful in geometry and most definitely won't pass algebra II, and if you don't get all three of those you won't graduate. Then a sense of hopelessness occurs.

It's so important. You have to make choices as an administrator. I'm sending all of my freshman math academy and geometry teachers to a conference in Grand Rapids. I feel the resources have to be poured into those subject areas where you can see student trajectories change significantly.

Excelsior: What are your goals as principal?

Aguinaga: I want to change the culture climate. I hit the ground running with really wanting students to take

ownership and to have pride in the school That's starting with cleanliness in the cafeteria. This is our second home and we need to take care of it.

I've also been pushing the idea of "Knights Rising" on social media. I want every student to have instilled in them some type of goal. They don't have to publicize it, but it should be something they are going to achieve.

Excelsior: Can you talk about the importance of extracurricular activities?

Aguinaga: I was not an athletic person. I was not a performing arts person. My thrill growing up was going home and playing video games. I don't even fully understand the rules of football.

Coming into the high school, I would think, 'Why do we waste money on athletics?' Now, the connection is so evident. I can't tell you how many kids on the football team would have dropped out if they did not have that connection. So now when (athletic director) Mr. Laboe comes to me and says, "Hey I might want to spend a little extra money here." I don't balk at it, because it has ripple effects throughout the school.

Our forensics team has

great potential. And so does the performing arts department. I put additional resources into both of those.

Excelsior: Do you have any plans for parents?

Aguinaga: Parent communication is big goal of mine. I've created a Loy Norrix Facebook page. And we have started Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram accounts. All of our announcements are going on Facebook. We still have our Parent Advisory Council that meets monthly in the evening, and I've started a monthly morning coffee.

Excelsior: Loy Norrix has gone through quite a leadership change this year.

Aguinaga: I think it's a great opportunity to hit the reset button on some things that have been set in place for years in the school. For example, the principal was typically never seen. I've made it my mission to be in as many lunches as possible. Kim Kirshman and Brandon Lukes are in every single lunch period. Erin Middleton, the dean of students, has second lunch, and I've asked Mr. Laboe to take the third lunch. I think we have a good team with a wide range of viewpoints and experiences.

(continued on page 7)

Kalamazoo Public Schools Needs Substitute Teachers

Interested or want more information?
Call Sarah at (269) 337-0100

Go to www.edustaff.org

An assistant will direct former and new substitute teachers through the application process.

EDUStaff training dates can be found online at their website.

December Mobile Health and Dental Clinic Schedules

The Family Health Center Mobile Health Clinic and Mobile Dental Clinic serve Kalamazoo Public Schools students and their families. The medical clinic provides physicals, immunizations, well-child visits, among other services, while the dental clinic can clean teeth and provide sealants. The clinics take insurance and offer a sliding scale fee. At right are the December schedules for the clinics. Schedules are subject to change. For more information, visit www.fhckzoo.com/mobile-units,

call (269) 349-2641, or contact the Community in Schools of Kalamazoo office at your school.

Health Clinic

Dec. 17-18 - Maple Street
Dec. 19-20 Milwood Elementary

Dental Clinic

Dec. 4-5 - Northglade
Dec. 6-7 - Prairie Ridge
Dec. 10 - Phoenix
Dec. 11 - Loy Norrix
Dec. 12-14 - Maple Street
Dec. 17-18 - Kalamazoo Central
Dec. 19-20 - Hillside

New Administration Team Takes the Lead at Loy Norrix (continued from page 6)

Erin Middleton
Dean of Students
Loy Norrix High School

Middleton has been assistant principal at Loy Norrix for two years and before that she was a guidance counselor at Kalamazoo Central High School for four years. Before her work in Kalamazoo, Middleton was in the counseling field with the State of Indiana Department of Child Services and Youth Villages in Memphis. She has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Ball State University and a master's degree in school counseling and guidance from the University of St. Francis. She recently earned her administrator's certification from the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals.



Erin Middleton

assistant high school principal in Mount Clemens and Grand Ledge. She began her educational career as a vocational family and



Kimberly Kirshman

consumer science/health teacher for eight years in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. She has a bachelor's degree in secondary education



Brandon Lukes

from Central Michigan University, a master's degree in K-12 educational administration from Michigan State University, and an

educational specialist degree from Grand Valley State University.

Brandon Lukes
Assistant Principal
Loy Norrix High School

Lukes has been an English teacher at the Middle School Alternative Learning Program for the past two years. Prior to that, he was an English teacher at Carbondale High School in Carbondale, Ill., for four years. He was a member of the KPS 2017-2018 Aspiring Administrators' Academy. He has a bachelor's degree in business management and a master's degree in secondary curriculum and instruction from Southern Illinois University.

Kimberly Kirshman
Assistant Principal
Loy Norrix High School

Kirshman was principal of Climax-Scotts Junior/Senior High School for the past seven years. Before that she was an assistant principal at Portage Northern High School and Portage North Middle School, and served as an

Geoff Howe —
Director of School
Improvement,
Title I and
Assessments



Howe was the state and federal grants administrator for Lakeview Public Schools in Battle Creek for three years. Before that position, he was curriculum director for Home Community Schools for three years. He began his educational career in Decatur Public Schools, where he worked for 11

years as a general education teacher, a special education teacher, and, finally, as a middle school principal. He has a bachelor's degree in secondary education and a master's degree in educational leadership from Western Michigan University.

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Se servirá una cena pequeña en las sesiones de las noches.
Por mas información, por favor llame al (269) 337-0833



Invierno 2019 29 de Enero – 21 de Marzo del 2019

	Boys & Girls Club on Lake Street	Stones/Christian Life Center	First United Baptist Church	Fresh Fire AME Church	Interfaith Homes	Mount Zion Baptist Church	New Life Fellowship	Skyridge Church	The Church of God Pentecostal
Educación Familiar Edades K – Adulto	Martes 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Martes 6:00–7:30 P.M.	Jueves 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Jueves 5:00–6:30 P.M.	Miércoles 5:00–6:30 P.M.	Jueves 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Martes 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Miércoles 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Jueves 5:30–7:00 P.M.

Los Padres De Los Recién Nacidos Hasta los 36 Meses	Martes 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Martes 6:00–7:30 P.M.	Por favor seleccione otro sitio	Por favor seleccione otro sitio	Jueves 2:00–3:30 P.M.	Jueves 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Martes 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Miércoles 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Jueves 5:30–7:00 P.M.
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Los Padres Con Niños En Edad Preescolar Edades 3–5	Martes 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Martes 6:00–7:30 P.M.	Por favor seleccione otro sitio	Por favor seleccione otro sitio	Jueves 2:00–3:30 P.M.	Jueves 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Martes 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Miércoles 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Jueves 5:30–7:00 P.M.
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Sitio	Dirección	Teléfono
Boys & Girls Club	915 Lake St. Kalamazoo, MI 49001	(269) 349-4485
Stones/Christian Life Center	1225 W. Paterson Kalamazoo, MI 49007	(269) 343-7023
First United Baptist Church	821 S. Burdick St. Kalamazoo, MI 49001	(269) 381-3996
Fresh Fire AME Church	2508 Gull Road Kalamazoo, MI 49048	(269) 381-8050
Interfaith Homes	1037 Interfaith Blvd. Kalamazoo, MI 49007	(269) 382-5771
Mount Zion Baptist Church	120 Roberson St. Kalamazoo, MI 49007	(269) 388-3111
New Life Fellowship C.O.G.I.C.	1912 Birch Ave. Kalamazoo, MI 49004	(269) 381-1913
Skyridge Church	394 S. Drake Rd. Kalamazoo, MI 49009	(269) 375-3939
The Church of God Pentecostal	2929 East Main Kalamazoo, MI 49048	(269) 349-8181

Lift Up Through Literacy

PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & CAREGIVERS!

Join us for 1 1/2 hours, once a week for eight (8) sessions.
Work side-by-side with your child on fun literacy activities that can be done at home.
Must register to receive incentives.

- Receive free books weekly for your child's home library
- Childcare is available for all ages and a light meal
- Weekly door prize (\$25 Gift Card)
- All parents participating will receive a \$50 Gift Card at the end of the program (**You must attend all 8 sessions and it is necessary to be present during the lesson portion in order to receive a punch on your card.**) (Opportunities are available to make up two missed sessions.)



Call (269) 337-0833 if you have questions or want to pre-register.



Winter 2019 January 29– March 21, 2019

	Boys & Girls Club on Lake Street	Stones/Christian Life Center	First United Baptist Church	Fresh Fire AME Church	Interfaith Homes	Mount Zion Baptist Church	New Life Fellowship C.O.G.I.C.	Skyridge Church	The Church of God Pentecostal
FAMILY LITERACY Ages K – Adult	Tuesday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Tuesday 6:00–7:30 P.M.	Thursday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Thursday 5:00–6:30 P.M.	Wednesday 5:00–6:30 P.M.	Thursday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Tuesday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Wednesday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Thursday 5:30–7:00 P.M.

PARENTS OF NEWBORNS Up to 36 Months	Tuesday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Tuesday 6:00–7:30 P.M.	Please join another NB site	Please join another NB site	Thursday 2:00–3:30 P.M.	Thursday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Tuesday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Wednesday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Thursday 5:30–7:00 P.M.
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PARENTS OF PRE-SCHOOLERS Ages 3 – 5	Tuesday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Tuesday 6:00–7:30 P.M.	Please join another PS site	Please join another PS site	Thursday 2:00–3:30 P.M.	Thursday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Tuesday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Wednesday 5:30–7:00 P.M.	Thursday 5:30–7:00 P.M.
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Community Site	Address	Phone Number
Boys & Girls Club	915 Lake St. Kalamazoo, MI 49001	(269) 349-4485
Stones/Christian Life Center	1225 W. Paterson Kalamazoo, MI 49007	(269) 343-7023
First United Baptist Church	821 S. Burdick St. Kalamazoo, MI 49001	(269) 381-3996
Fresh Fire AME Church	2508 Gull Road Kalamazoo, MI 49048	(269) 381-8050
Interfaith Homes	1037 Interfaith Blvd. Kalamazoo, MI 49007	(269) 382-5771
Mount Zion Baptist Church	120 Roberson St. Kalamazoo, MI 49007	(269) 388-3111
New Life Fellowship C.O.G.I.C.	1912 Birch Ave. Kalamazoo, MI 49004	(269) 381-1913
Skyridge Church	394 S. Drake Rd. Kalamazoo, MI 49009	(269) 375-3939
The Church of God Pentecostal	2929 East Main Kalamazoo, MI 49048	(269) 349-8181



Maggie Levi brings her son, Jeremiah Levi, a second grader at Prairie Ridge Elementary, and her daughter Vashti Levi to Lift Up Through Literacy because she likes how it surrounds them with other children who are focused on reading.

Buchanan, who was attending with her son Nasir Buchanan-Brewer, 3, both said the resources of the program are a tremendous draw. Their children enjoy the free books and the activities, which are easy to translate to home life.

Barbara Witzak, director of Lift Up Through Literacy, said the lessons taught in Lift Up are crafted to align with the broader KPS curriculum. Curriculum coordinators offer suggestions about strategies and themes that children will see in their classrooms in school.

“It’s all linked together,” Witzak said.

The program is flexible to meet the needs of families. There is childcare available for families that might have children of different ages. Older children can also help with younger siblings. If families need to split into different age groups, other parents will often offer to help work with children when their parents move to a different part of the program.

Maggie Levi was attending with her 2-year-old Vashti and her son Jeremiah, who is a second-grader at Prairie Ridge Elementary School. She praised the program for making it

convenient for families.

“I like learning new concepts and theories about education,” she said. “My daughter has increased her vocabulary, and my son has the opportunity to read and socialize with other kids learning to read. So, it’s been a good experience for both of my children.”

See the Lift Up schedule on page 8.

Caprese Chicken Skewers with Balsamic Glaze

Happy Holidays, Kalamazoo! Time for some holiday cheer using herbs and spices to provide holiday excitement. The red and green Caprese Chicken Skewers are a colorful, protein-rich addition to any party platter. Please try these with friends and family at your next gathering. Simple, low-calorie, gluten-free, and — of course — tasty! Best regards, Chef Shaun



Shaun Robinson is the district chef for Chartwells at KPS Food Service.

28 leaves of fresh basil or to taste

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 14 oz. boneless skinless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 teaspoon granulated garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon grapeseed oil
- 28 cherry tomatoes or to taste
- 28 mini mozzarella balls or to taste

Instructions

1. Make balsamic glaze: Add balsamic vinegar to a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, then reduce to simmer and cook until it starts to thicken. Stir the entire time or it will burn, about 5-7 minutes. The vinegar

should turn syrupy and coat the back of a spoon. Once it is thick, remove from heat and pour into a small serving container. Set aside.

2. Place chicken in a small bowl and toss with granulated garlic, basil, pepper and salt, until chicken is coated with spices.

3. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat, add grapeseed oil and then chicken. Cook chicken for 3-4 minutes per side until lightly browned and no longer pink on the inside. Remove the chicken from the pan and let rest.

4. On a wooden appetizer skewer, add one cherry tomato, one basil leaf, one mini mozzarella ball, and a cube of chicken. Repeat until all skewers are completed.

5. Serve with balsamic glaze.

Servings: 28 skewers



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Ronicka Hamilton Helps Foster Kids Find Their Path at WMU

There are no perfect paths to success.

Ronicka Hamilton knows that from her own experience — and the experiences of the students she works with as the director of Western Michigan University's Seita Scholars Program, which helps students transition from foster care to life as college students.

Hamilton grew up in Kalamazoo and was raised by her mother Ruby Hamilton. Although her father, the late Lewis Colbert, was active in her childhood, it was her mom who was her main support.

"My mom was the custodial parent," she said. "My dad was totally there, but my dad was always sick probably since I was 5 or 6. My dad had lupus and he died about 10 years ago. My mom was a 16-year-old mother. She turned 16 the day after she had me. In a lot of ways, we grew up together. That in and of itself was often a struggle.

"Everyday when I look back at who I am, I am very surprised and extremely thankful."

Hamilton was born and raised in Kalamazoo and attended elementary school at Northglade, Arcadia, and Westwood (now King-Westwood); middle school at Hillside and South (now Maple Street), and graduated from Loy Norrix in 1990.

Going to college was always in the back of her mind, because she knew that she didn't want to do manual labor like her mother and father.

Still, she didn't really start thinking about college until her junior year in high school, when her school counselor started talking about applying.

"As a first-generation college student, I wondered how would that work, how do you pay, how do you get in," Hamilton said.

She enrolled in Kalamazoo Valley Community College with plans to major in elementary education, but by then she was working in an elementary school and had gotten to know the school social worker.

"I was intrigued by her. She was able to work with the entire family and deal with the whole system," Hamilton said.

Right around that time, her father was forced to retire because of his lupus and her mother went on disability. Money became tight, so she dropped out of college.

Hamilton was working full-time for several years when a girlfriend told her she had to earn her bachelor's degree.

"She said, 'You need to go back, even if it's just night classes,'" Hamilton said. "I was like,



From left, Seita Scholars campus coach Ed Lara, scholar Tiana Randolph, Seita Scholars Director Ronicka Hamilton, scholar Kaleigha Martin, scholar Ali Tinai, scholar Shakeela Gipson, scholar Halana Turner, scholar Maggie Grimm, graduate assistant Elyse Hogan, and campus coach Keyla Whitaker pose for a photo in Lansing during Foster Care Advocacy Day.

'Night classes? Are you kidding me? When I get home from work, I'm exhausted.' She said, 'Well, you better find the energy. You need to adjust because you need to be back in school.'"

Hamilton took one night class. Then two. Then three and started working part-time. Then she finished her associate's degree in social work in 2000.

Then, a friend told her about a job at Western Michigan University. The added benefit of a university job was reduced tuition. With night classes and weekend classes, Hamilton completed her bachelor's degree in social work in 2002.

By 2006 she had a master's degree in counseling psychology. She earned a second master's degree in higher education student affairs in 2012.

In 2008, WMU launched the Seita Scholars Program to help change the college-going success rate of youth from the foster care system. The program provides scholarships for students and helps them transition to life on campus and build a sense of com-

munity among students.

Hamilton who had been working in the Division of Multicultural Affairs, joined Seita Scholars in 2009 as a campus coach and became the program's first senior campus coach in 2013 before being named the director of the program in 2017.

"We have a really solid foundation rooted in theory with a coach model," Hamilton said. "Coaching is different than parenting or mentoring. We don't have a role of authority in a student's life. We pride ourselves in partnering with our students to help them achieve their goals.

"They need help adjusting to a lot of things, and we want to help them understand how they can integrate their experiences and build opportunities for their future. There's good and bad in everything, and you need to take both and build that into your transition here and the opportunities to help you transition to a career."

More than 400 students are enrolled in the program, which has graduated 142 students. The

Seita program was the first of its kind in the state and has served as a model for work at 18 other colleges and universities in the state. The program also runs the Center for Fostering Success, which provides national leadership on issues related to foster care and higher education.

For students who grew up in foster care, she said she wants them to know, "You are at a point in your life where you get to choose what happens next, so take charge of it."

Hamilton was recently at a meeting for Kalamazoo County Health and Human Services, for which she serves on the board. She suddenly had a flashback, remembering being there with her mother to receive help. She thought, "Now, here I am. When I'm talking with kids in foster care, I want to tell them they can still make it.

"I couldn't have dreamed this life. I am a Christian. The Bible says that God does more than we can think or imagine. This is certainly more than I could have thought or imagined."

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Artists' Corner

Washington Writers' Academy art teacher Amber Beeman's kindergarten students have been working with collage. Students had to first rip their brown paper into pieces and then glue them down inside of bear outlines. Students then used crayons to add details or features to their bears.



From left, Jaella Oaks, Jevon Gamble, and Jaxton Jones show off their finished bears.

Northeastern Classroom Becomes Bronco Country Thanks to Donation

Northeastern Elementary School kindergarten teacher Christopher Harris and his students received a donation of drawstring backpacks from Western Michigan University's First Year Experience Program

on Oct. 8. Each backpack contained a WMU pencil and highlighter for these possible future Broncos. The gift helped support the college-going culture being built in the classroom and the school.



Northeastern Elementary School's Christopher Harris' kindergarten classroom received a donation of Western Michigan University drawstring backpacks from the WMU First Year Experience Program on Oct. 8.

WINTER BREAK 2018-19

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