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IMPORTANT DATES

Board of Education Meeting

Thursday, Dec. 8 and 22, 2016
7 p.m.
Administration Building
1220 Howard St.

**Winter Recess
No School**

Monday, Dec. 26, 2016
through
Friday, Jan. 6, 2017

For more information,
call (269) 337-1572

OPPORTUNITIES

Project Find seeks students
with special needs
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for schools
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PEEP enrollment
still open
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Culturally Reponsive Training Provides a New Way to Look at Students, Education

When people hear the term “culturally responsive education training,” they may think it’s a matter of making sure the classroom is decorated with posters of diverse historical figures or using textbooks that reference events from more than a European perspective. Those things may be part of being a culturally responsive school district, but the philosophy goes much deeper and speaks to how everyone involved in educating children can remain open and receptive to the voices and experiences children bring to the school setting.

(continued on page 5)



KPS Assistant Superintendent Cindy Green (L to R), and Western Michigan University professors Dr. Mary Z. Anderson and Dr. Joseph Morris have been working on the district’s culturally responsive training.



Rikki Saunders, interim director of special education for KPS, and Nkenge Bergan, interim director for student services (L to R), have been key to organizing and structuring the district’s culturally responsive training.

Kalamazoo Public Schools Expands Mentoring Program, Adds Community Mentors

More than 2,000 students are expected to be mentored through Kalamazoo Public Schools’ districtwide mentoring program this year. The program has expanded to include female staff members this year. Beginning this fall, 141 male staff members and 269 female staff members will be mentoring students in sessions that mostly consist of five students to one mentor. In addition, male community members will be added to the program this year to mentor male students. To date, Pastor Jesse Herron of New Life Fellowship Church of God in Christ, Pastor C.G. Charles of Tabernacle Church of God in Christ, Pastor James Harris of Trenches Community Church, and Pastors Joel Brooks and Ervin Armstrong of Stones Church have agreed to partner with KPS to expand mentoring of KPS students with parishioners from their churches. The district-wide mentoring program began last year, with Rice encouraging male staff members to meet with groups of five male students once a week. Over the school year, 141 male staff members, including Rice, Deputy Superintendent Gary Start, all other male administrators, and many male teachers and support staff met weekly with 629 students during 2,822 weekly sessions. Community organizations interested in joining the male mentoring program, please contact KPS Secondary Education at (269) 337-0168.

FIRST SATURDAY @ KPL December 3

The next First Saturday @ KPL event will be held at the Kalamazoo Public Library, downtown, on Dec. 3, 2016, from 2-3:30 p.m.

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KPS Improvement Continues with Annual School, District, and Community Efforts

In spite of significant challenges (declining birthrates and increasing competition from charter schools and cross-district choice), Kalamazoo Public Schools continues to grow, with pre-K-12 enrollment totalling more than 13,000 students for the first time since 1980. With the growth of 2,455 students in the 11 years since the advent of the Kalamazoo Promise, KPS is now the 12th largest district in the state.

In spite of other challenges (inadequate state aid, budget cuts associated therewith, more challenging state elementary and secondary content expectations, and higher Michigan Merit Curriculum graduation requirements), KPS student achievement continues to rise.

Every year about the time of the anniversary of the Kalamazoo Promise, we share with the board of education and the community our progress in the schools. Over the last half decade, we have im-

proved every major indicator in the district: reading, math, and writing achievement; Advanced Placement participation and success; high school graduation rates; and college going, continuation, and graduation rates.

This is a tribute to the work and dedication of our staff and students, and the support of our outstanding community partners: Communities in Schools of Kalamazoo, the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, Loaves and Fishes, and 200 more.

Annual improvement efforts take place in school improvement teams, with the focus on improving individual schools, and at the district level, with the focus on improving more globally. Ide-



Michael F. Rice, Ph.D.
Superintendent

ally, the two processes are closely connected to one another.

Major efforts this school year include the following:

- Improvement of student achievement in our highest poverty schools, with the inclusion of literacy and math coaches and our participation in the regional Reading Now Network.
- Expansion of mentoring from male staff members mentoring our male students, particularly young men of color, to female staff members mentoring our female students and male community members mentoring our male students.
- Expansion of culturally responsive education professional development to include elementary staff members.
- New PEEP early childhood instructional materials.
- Efforts to improve Advanced Placement success.
- Exploration and recommendation of new elementary

writing materials.

- Exploration and recommendation of new elementary math materials.
- Work on variable student growth/catch-up growth.
- Continued work on the improvement of teacher monitoring of student understanding.
- Improvement of student and staff attendance.
- First year of the Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program (KILP), another alternative high school program.
- Work on our African American male graduation rate.

Selected efforts by year in past years include:

2008

- Strategic plan expectations for students and supporting adults.
- Curriculum management audit.
- Creation of El Sol Elementary, the only dual language pro-

gram in the county.

- Creation of the Middle School Alternative Learning Program, the only middle school alternative in the county.
- Quintupling of full-day kindergarten students and the development of a full-day kindergarten curriculum.
- Construction and opening of Prairie Ridge Elementary, the first newly constructed school in KPS in 36 years.
- Expansion of Advanced Placement courses and recruitment.
- Enhancement millage renewal.

2009

- New K-5 math materials, the first since 1992.
- New PEEP early childhood materials.
- Pre-K-5 parent checklists developed and distributed for the first time.
- Middle and high school

(continued on page 3)

First Saturday @ KPL Saturday, December 3 2-3:30 pm, CEN

Take your family to the library the first Saturday of each month! Get your library card or pick out some books to check out. Enjoy stories, activities, special guests, and door prizes. *First Saturday* is a partnership program for KPL and Kalamazoo Public Schools. Each monthly event is co-hosted with an organization serving children and families in Kalamazoo. In December, we will collaborate with our host, The Learning Network of Greater Kalamazoo!



Kalamazoo Public Schools

PARTNERS

Boys and Girls Club of Kalamazoo
Communities In Schools of Kalamazoo
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Girl Scouts Heart of Michigan
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Great Start Collaborative Parent Coalition
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Kalamazoo Civic Theatre
Kalamazoo County Ready 4s
Kalamazoo Institute of Arts
Kalamazoo Literacy Council
Kalamazoo Public Schools
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Kalamazoo Valley Museum
KRESA
The Learning Network of Greater Kalamazoo
NAACP
Northside Ministerial Alliance
Parents for Public Schools of Greater Kalamazoo
SW Michigan AEYC
WMU Haenicke Institute for Global Education
Western Michigan University Reading Clinic



Kalamazoo
Public Library

KPS Improvement Continues
(cont. from page 2)

boundary changes based on socioeconomic status.

- New advanced middle school English and math courses.
- Construction of Linden Grove Middle School.

2010

- Beginning of three visits to the library for all 1,000 1st graders, a partnership with KPL.
- Beginning of Bronco Buds, a partnership with WMU to have 1,000 6th graders experience life on a college campus.
- New five-period, three-trimester high school schedule adopted.
- New six-period, middle school schedule adopted.
- New middle school strategic reading and math courses.
- New math materials for grades 6-8.
- First year of all 6th graders receiving books in the summer.
- Passage of a \$62 million bond.
- President Obama's visit to Kalamazoo Central's graduation as the prize for the Race to the Top Commencement Challenge.

2011

- \$6 million budget cut.
- Extensive new teacher evaluation process adopted.
- Lift Up Through Literacy (LUTL) parent education and family literacy program pilot at four sites in the community.
- Enhancement millage renewal.

2012

- Completion of elementary universal breakfast program.
- LUTL parent education and family literacy program expansion throughout the community.
- Expansion of the summer book program to include grades 5 and 6.

2013

- Restructuring planning for Phoenix High School.
- New K-5 English language arts series adopted.
- Expansion of the summer book program to include grades 4, 5, and 6.
- Revamping of K-9 assessments.

- Passage of a \$62 million bond.

2014

- Restructuring of the Teaching and Learning Services Department.
- Beginning of the restructured Phoenix High School.
- Expansion of pre-kindergarten.
- Enhancement millage renewal.

2015

- Development of culturally responsive education materials and professional development for secondary staff members.
- Expansion of full-day pre-kindergarten.
- Passage of the county-wide special education millage increase, the only such millage in the state to pass on the same ballot as the state's transportation millage.
- Opening of the new Washington Writers' Academy.

2016

- Restructuring of the Student Services Department.
- Expansion of culturally responsive education and professional development for elementary school teachers.
- Addition of coaches in literacy and math.
- Creation of the Kalamazoo Innovative Learning Program.
- High school Chinese at Central and Norrix and Advanced Placement French pilot at Norrix.
- Milwood Elementary, partially renovated, partially newly constructed, reopened for business.

Every year, we expect children to improve in their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and every year we work to improve what we in the schools do for children and how we do it. As educators, we welcome your input and partnership.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season and new year!

Core Fun Fridays: Weekly Workouts Help Maple Students Make Beautiful Music

On Fridays, Julie Davis' School for the Arts classroom, choir class gets down to work. Literally.

On those days, the students pull out yoga mats, and claim a space on the floor for Core Fun Fridays.

Teacher Julie Davis devotes 10 minutes every

Friday morning to core muscle exercises. The workout can include bicycles, sit-ups, and flutter kicks. The list of exercises and the number of repetitions changes every week.

Except for the planks. There are always planks.

Davis said she starts the students with 45 seconds to a minute, with the goal of having them do 3 to 4 minutes of continuous planking by the end of the school year. She's had students perform core exercises every year since she started teaching at Kalamazoo Public Schools eight years ago, and she gave ab workouts the official name "Core Fun Fridays" about six years ago.

"Core work helps students develop muscles we need to have good posture for singing and for sitting in their other classes throughout the day," Davis said. "And core strength is necessary for breath support for singing."

People mistakenly think that singing comes from the throat or diaphragm, when it's actually generated by the musculature around the rib cage, she said.

"The more support you have there, the stronger your muscles are, the longer you can hold notes and the less breathy you will sound, the more you can focus on beautiful open tones," Davis said. "Singing is just moving air past the vocal cords. We work on the muscles that support and move air past the vocal cords, and it becomes second nature to the students because we've put all of the work in during Core Fun."



Jermaine McClellan, eighth grader, works on his bicycles during Core Fun Friday at Maple Street.



Danica Harper and Kristen Hoogerheide, seventh grade, do swimmers side by side in choir.



Seventh grader Harrison Wood works on his bicycles during Julie Davis' choir class.

Project Find Is Looking for Special Needs Individuals

If you suspect your child:

- Has a disability;
- Is in need of special attention; or
- Is a student who has received special-education services and has dropped out of school and would like to return, call Kalamazoo

Public Schools' Project Find Coordinator Rikki Saunders at (269) 337-0161.

Project Find helps locate individuals from birth to 26 years old with special needs, and works with families to provide appropriate education services. Multiple services are available.

Where Are They Now?

Loy Norrix Graduate Anna Wilinski Turns Face Painting in Big Business

Anna Wilinski started clowning around in fourth grade, but within a few years she switched her focus to face painting.

Now, her chosen profession is no laughing matter, because she's gone from face painter to face paint entrepreneur whose company, Jest Paint, is on target to hit their best year in sales, which have been increasing at consistently since 2009.

Wilinski was a private school student when a new family moved into town and introduced her to clowning. While she liked it, her interests were really ignited when she got into face painting a year later at age 10.

"I just like interacting with people while creating art," Wilinski said. "You talk to them and mess around with them

and joke with the kids. Then, once they're done, they get so much attention. It's a special transformation."

When she was 16, she transferred to Loy Norrix High School. She said she took a number of art classes, but the thing she most enjoyed about Norrix was the mix of students.

"I hung out with the international students, and I hung out with a lot of the handicapped populations because one of our neighbors was handicapped. And, a lot of the advanced English kids," she said. "I wished I could bring some friends from my old school. They were struggling with having few people like them. I told them, 'Come over here and you'll have 80 people who like the same music or who look like you.'"

She graduated from Norrix in 1998.

At the height of her popularity as a face painter, she was doing 100 gigs a year, usually two to five events a weekend.

By 2004, she'd begun teaching at conventions and by 2006 she was making YouTube videos about face painting — and collecting quite a few followers. She also started creating her own rainbow-colored cakes of makeup. At one convention, someone approached her about demonstrating a line of face paints that was new to the United States. She liked them so much, she decided to open an online store to sell them to her YouTube fans.

Wilinski started with that one line of paints, and now Jest Paint has more than 2,500 products from 15 brands of face paint. She runs the online store at jestpaint.com with her husband Santiago Massano, and they have thousands of customers who turn to them for face paints, bling, brushes and sponges, templates for airbrush painting, and practice mats. They have even developed their own lines of face paint accessories. They have two full-time and two part-time employees, who operate out of a facility in the Trestlewood complex — just across from Loy Norrix, her alma mater.

She's been surprised by the growth of the business. The first year saw several thousand dollars in sales.

"When we started, we'd be shipping out two to three orders a week. I used to say, 'Wouldn't it be crazy if we had 10 orders in one day?' Now we can sell the same amount in one day that we sold that entire first year," Wilinski said. "I can't believe this; this total fantasy seemed unattainable."

Much of the growth is attributed to the business' embrace of social media. They maintain an active website, with



Santiago Massano and Anna Wilinski operate the online face painting store Jest Paint. They also maintain a distribution center in Kalamazoo near Loy Norrix High School, Wilinski's alma mater.



Anna Wilinski models some of her face painting designs. She started face painting when she was in elementary school.

links to their YouTube channel and a blog that keeps face painters up to date with posts on topics such as painting techniques and federal regulations. They also are active on Facebook with more than 5,000 friends and they reach out to their customers via email marketing to promote sales and important announcements. They are also setting up stores in several different marketplaces to increase sales.

"A lot of customers see us as a source of honest information,"

Massano said. "We put truth before sales."

"We're not afraid to say, 'You might like this, but you might notice ...,'" Wilinski said.

The couple plans to keep growing the business. They're working on a new mobile website, and they continue expanding their use of social media, creating more videos on face painting and attending conventions to teach classes and sell their products. They also continue to work on finding balance, between work and family life with their children Oceana, 12, a student at Maple Street Magnet School for the Arts, and Angelo, 4, who is in preschool.

"Sometimes the orders just keep coming in a few minutes apart when there is a sale going on, there comes one at 5:05, 5:08, 5:10 p.m.," Wilinski said. "There are so many people shopping on our site. People all over the world are on the site, talking about our products, talking about us. It's so bizarre that it's taken off that fast."

Mobile Health Clinic Schedule for December

The Family Health Center has a mobile health clinic to serve Kalamazoo Public Schools students and their families. It provides physicals, immunizations, well-child visits, and other services. The clinic takes insurance and offers a sliding fee scale. Below is the clinic's schedule for December. For more information, go to fhckzoo.com. Appointments are available by calling (269) 349-2641 or by contacting the CIS coordinator at your school.

Dec. 1 - Prairie Ridge
Dec. 2 - Washington
Dec. 5 - Edison
Dec. 6 - Milwood Elementary
Dec. 7 - Greenwood
Dec. 8 - El Sol
Dec. 9 - King-Westwood
Dec. 12 - Northglade
Dec. 13 - Parkwood-Upjohn
Dec. 14 - Woods Lake
Dec. 15 - Kalamazoo Central
Dec. 16 - Loy Norrix
Dec. 19 - Hillside
Dec. 20 - Linden Grove
Dec. 21 - Maple Street
Dec. 22 - Milwood Magnet
Dec. 23 - Arcadia



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:

Assistant Superintendent 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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Culturally Responsive Training Provides a New Way to Look at Students, Education

(continued from page 1)

Dr. Joseph Morris and Dr. Mary Z. Anderson with Western Michigan University's Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology are entering into their second year of working with Kalamazoo Public Schools to help the district develop its culturally responsive education training.

"It's about how we respond to children," Morris said. "We want people to be as respectful as possible to different ways of seeing the world."

KPS Superintendent Dr. Michael F. Rice said, "Culturally responsive education professional development helps our staff members — our administrators, teachers, and support staff — better understand and appreciate the diversity of our students. With the most diverse student body in this part of the state, this work is vital to effectively engaging our students and educating them successfully."

Morris and Anderson began their work with the district in the summer of 2015, developing a multifaceted, yearlong plan that began with training district personnel to be facilitators working with secondary staff on developing and implementing culturally responsive educational practices throughout the district.

This year, the WMU profes-

sors incorporated elementary school staff into the training. More than 1,000 staff members were trained.

On a basic level, one might think being culturally aware means acknowledging the races and cultures that cross a school doorway on any given day, Morris said. Those cultures may manifest themselves in situations such as a child not making eye contact if that's what they've been taught at home, or speaking more loudly in the classroom if that is what they hear in the neighborhood, or feeling uncomfortable being touched on the shoulder if their culture shuns physical contact.

But, he said, there is no way to prepare for, or to have knowledge of, all of the cultural mores present in a classroom setting. What school personnel can do, however, is to realize that they may need to adjust their strategies for working with children depending on their cultural influences.

"Many people haven't been taught that you should make adjustments in your strategies or methods," Morris said. "They are taught a template for how to work with children."

"Generally, they aren't taught much about the importance of culture and how you sometimes have to adjust what you're doing to fit the

student population that you're working with. I think that's the No. 1 thing."

At the root of the culturally relevant philosophy is not a simple recognition of historical figures and facts about various cultures, but a deeper appreciation of who students are and what they bring to the educational experience. And, from that appreciation, Morris said, students and teachers can build stronger relationships.

Strong relationships are the foundation of any positive educational experience, Morris said.

"We can all use the same strategies to teach reading, but we have different relationships with students and that makes the difference," he said. "I can't tell you about all of the differences between all of the Native American tribes or all of the Latin American cultures."

"But I can talk to you about attitudes that facilitate building relationships, which will increase the potential for the child to learn. You must be willing to listen and to let them

teach you."

What makes Kalamazoo Public Schools' approach to culturally responsive education training unique is the district's long-term commitment to the process, Morris said. Other districts initiate this kind of work through a one-day workshop and leave it at that, but KPS has trained facilitators to lead discussions and is committed to having those facilitators and experts work with the staff to set goals, implement changes and evaluate the results of their work.

The district has acknowledged that the work must be ongoing and long-term, he said.

As cultural diversity continues to grow in this country and racial minorities become a larger part of society, it will become imperative that society's educators and other school personnel have an understanding of what it means to be culturally responsive, he said.

"Twenty years from now people will look at this training and say, 'Of course, they did this. Why wouldn't they? It's just logical,'" Morris said.

Kalamazoo Public Schools

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Kalamazoo Public Schools Needs Substitute Teachers

EDUStaff who provides substitutes to KPS is hiring qualified candidates.

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Questions: Call (877) 974-6338

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

EDUStaff training dates can be found online at their website.

KPS Teachers Working to Revamp Middle-School Science Education

Yonee Bryant-Kuiphoff and Dawn Kahler, who teach science at Linden Grove Middle School and Milwood Magnet School: A Center for Math, Science and Technology, respectively, are part of a select group of teachers who are helping craft the future of middle-school science education in Michigan through the Michigan Science Teaching and Assessment Reform (Mi-STAR) Project.

Bryant-Kuiphoff and Kahler are among 21 teachers from around the state who attended a number of intensive summer workshops to help develop a new middle-school science curriculum. The Mi-STAR curriculum will empower students to learn science by thinking and acting like scientists and engineers while investigating phenomena and developing solutions to real-world problems.

At the workshop, teachers worked with scientists, engi-



Kalamazoo Public Schools' middle school teachers Yonee Bryant-Kuiphoff, left, and Dawn Kahler are helping revamp the state's science education curriculum.

neers, and curriculum development specialists from Michigan Technological, Saginaw Valley State and Grand Valley State universities. Together, they deepened their understanding of how to teach science through doing science, as called for by the new Michigan Science Standards. Bryant-Kuiphoff and Kahler are becoming statewide leaders in advancing this new

approach to science education.

"The teachers play a vital role," said Michigan Tech Provost Jacqueline Huntoon, the lead investigator on the Mi-STAR Project. "Their input is essential to Mi-STAR's twin goals: enhancing students' engagement in science and giving all students the critical-thinking skills they will need to be effective citizens."

Greg Jennings Foundation Issues BE GREAT Video Challenge to Kalamazoo Schools

Former NFL Player and Super Bowl champion Greg Jennings will recognize and celebrate great youth through The Greg Jennings Foundation's 2016-17 BE GREAT School Challenge YouTube Video Submission.

Greater Kalamazoo schools and classrooms are invited to submit group YouTube videos that show how they embrace the core values of the BE GREAT Youth Initiatives, which are literacy, citizenship, healthy lifestyles, and college readiness.

Up to three winning schools or classrooms will experience a special visit by Jennings, a Kalamazoo Central High School and Western Michigan University graduate. During each personal appearance, Jennings will stress the importance of education, making good decisions, leadership, and the attitude it takes to achieve greatness to the contest winners. In addition, up to three schools or classrooms will be awarded up to \$1,000 in funds to purchase classroom supplies or equipment.

The Greg Jennings Foun-

dation strives every day to educate youth by providing the necessary resources in order for them to reach their full academic potential by partnering with and assisting other organizations through its grant programs.

Since 2012, the goal of the BE GREAT School Challenge has been to inspire elementary, middle, and high school students to recognize greatness in themselves and to encourage making good choices in order to achieve lifelong goals, with a strong emphasis on education.

The BE GREAT School Challenge YouTube Video submission guidelines and registration form can be found after entering basic contact information on The Greg Jennings Foundation website at www.GJenningsFound.org/begreat. The deadline to email proposals to GJF@GJenningsFound.org is Feb. 28. All elementary, middle, and high schools, classrooms or school groups located in the greater Kalamazoo and Minneapolis communities are encouraged to enter the contest.

For questions, call The Greg Jennings Foundation at (269) 343- 6990 or email gjf@gjenningsfound.org.

Kalamazoo Central graduate and pro football star Greg Jennings supports schools and students through his foundation.



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Students Shine Light on Importance of CIS After School Program

Kalamazoo Public School students did their part to shed light on the need to invest in after-school programs on Oct. 20 during the 17th annual National Lights On Afterschool Awareness Day.

Elementary and secondary students who participate in the Communities In Schools of Kalamazoo (CIS) After School Program came up with their own ways to emphasize the importance of keeping lights on and doors open for these services.

At Edison Environmental Science Academy, students made signs and walked through the neighborhood to advocate for quality out-of-school programming and to share the benefits the CIS program has given them.

At Linden Grove Middle School, students made an art project of cutout schoolhouses decorated with personalized messages about the importance of after-school programming. They pinned their schoolhouses to strings of lights to decorate the walls.

Data from the report “America After 3 P.M.,” shows a vast unmet demand for after-school programs nationwide, according to CIS. The study found nationally for every child who participates in an after-school program, three children would be enrolled if a program were available to them. In Michigan, the majority of parents agree that these programs excite children about learning.

“Lights On Afterschool celebrates the remarkable work being done by students who attend the CIS After School Program as well as other after-school programs throughout the nation,” said Dr. Linda Thompson, CIS senior



Marciell Bennett, second grade, and Mariah Watt, fourth grade (L to R) joined other students at Edison Environmental Science Academy for a neighborhood march in support of after-school programs.

director of site services. “It is a powerful reminder that after-school programs offer a range of benefits to students and families.”

CIS After School Program extends the learning day Monday through Thursday in 15 KPS schools. Research demonstrates that students who regularly attend after-school programs are more likely to improve their grades, tests scores and overall academic behavior. In the 2016-17 school year, CIS anticipates serving more 1,000 children after the school day ends.

Communities In Schools of Kalamazoo (CIS) is part of a nationwide network of affiliates working to surround students with a community of support, to empower them to stay in school and to achieve in life. For more information, visit the website at www.ciskalamazoo.org.

Arcadia Elementary School Students Rack Up Miles on Annual Fun Run

Arcadia Elementary School held its annual Fun Run fundraiser in October, when students gathered pledges for running laps around the schoolyard.

At the final tally, the students in kindergarten

through fifth grade completed 3,359 laps around the back playground, which equals about 840 miles. That is about the distance from Kalamazoo to Connecticut — or driving from Kalamazoo to Copper Harbor and halfway back to Mackinaw

City, said principal Greg Socha.

With the funds earned from the event, the school’s fifth graders have raised about one-third of the cost of their Sherman Lake Camp trip planned for December.



First grader Hamid Al-Mayasi makes good time on a lap around the school yard at Arcadia Elementary School.



Kindergartener Mackenzie Burd gives it her all during the Arcadia Fun Run.



Ella Denaway, first grade, takes a water break during the Arcadia Fun Run.



Kamden Grice, kindergarten, was one of the runners in the Arcadia Elementary Fun Run.



First grader Quincy Bates is full of smiles during the Arcadia Elementary Fun Run.



First grader Marcus Mills takes a break during the Arcadia Elementary Fun Run.

Artists' Corner

Milwood Magnet School art teacher Errin Corstange said students studied the work of Wayne Thiebaud before creating their own candy compositions, using the Rule of Thirds. Students looked at candy and used scale and proportion to enlarge the pieces of candy in their compositions. Students colored their artwork with oil pastels.



Zahra Coates at Milwood Magnet School infused her drawing with detail.



Milwood Magnet School's Ella Thomas's work pops with color.



Shadae Hillsman took an abstract approach to her candy drawing at Milwood Magnet School.



Winchell third grader Savannah Robert poses with her pastel drawing of a toucan.



Winchell Elementary third grader Levi Montero created this toucan pastel with teacher Sarah Cheek-Toomey.

HANDS-ON HAPPENINGS

WINTER HOLIDAY BREAK THEATER PERFORMANCES AT NOON

Dec 27: Karen Czarnik, Storyteller

Dec 29: BenJammin, Musician

Jan 2: Ivory Williams, Storyteller

Jan 4: Gemini, Musicians

Jan 6: Gwendolyn Lewis, Storyteller

FREE



The Kalamazoo Valley Museum is operated by Kalamazoo Valley Community College and is governed by its Board of Trustees



Kalamazoo**VALLEY**
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and Soar with the Power of
The Kalamazoo Promise**

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High School Students Hold Mock Election

Democrat Hillary Clinton swept the votes among Kalamazoo area high schoolers — weeks before the general election.

In a mock election organized by the League of Women Voters of Kalamazoo, juniors and seniors at Kalamazoo Central, Loy Norrix and Phoenix high schools and the KRESA Young Adult Program overwhelmingly favored Clinton over her challenger Donald Trump, taking 695 of the votes over his 170 votes. Third party candidates earned 181 votes total.

In the Sixth Congressional district, Democratic challenger Paul Clements handily beat Republican Congressman Fred Upton by a vote of 559 to 347.

Early in October, representatives of the League of Women Voters visited with juniors and seniors at each school to talk about voting and this year's presidential election. They also registered eligible student voters. On Oct. 18, the League volunteers returned for a special mock election, using ballots printed and voting tabulators through a col-

laboration with the Kalamazoo City and County clerk's offices.

The mock election results were announced at a press conference at the KPS Administration Building on Oct. 27.

Kalamazoo Central senior Nathan Scholten said he appreciated the opportunity to volunteer as a "poll worker" on election day at the school and to fill out a ballot and to practice voting, which will come in handy when he turns 18.

Fellow Kalamazoo Central junior Victoria Minka added, "We're inheriting this country later on. I think it's important to see where the next generation is looking and where we want to make changes."

Loy Norrix junior Nick Luttrell said that he didn't realize a ballot would encompass so many different races for office, but what he appreciated the most was learning some of the history behind voting. "We learned a lot about the candidates, but not just about the candidates. We learned about females and African Americans and voting rights and that whole

educational piece was good."

The League of Women Voters implemented the Voter Education Project in 2008 and repeated it in 2012 and 2014. The program is a collaboration between Kalamazoo City Clerk's Office, Kalamazoo County Clerk's Office, Michigan Election Resources, Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency, Kalamazoo Public Schools and the League of Women Voters of the Kalamazoo Area.

Jennie Hill with the League of Women Voters went over the importance of voting with the students at their first meetings, saying, "Without your vote, your voice will not be heard."

Hill and fellow LWV volunteer Chris Kuthe told the students that before the mock election — and any election — voters should educate themselves on the candidates and the issues. They urged them to look at nonpartisan election sites such as vote411.org and factcheck.org, and also said they could visit partisan information sites such as the candidates own websites.



Alex Smith shows off his "I Voted" sticker after casting his ballot in the mock presidential election at Loy Norrix High School.



Artevia Woodson-Brooks feeds his ballot into the ballot box at Loy Norrix High School's mock presidential election.



The Loy Norrix High School back gymnasium was transformed into a polling place for the League of Women Voters' mock presidential election on Oct. 18.



Alina Offerman fills out her ballot at Loy Norrix High School as part of a voting project created by the League of Women Voters.

Chef Shaun - KPS FOOD SERVICE CHEF

Classic Sweet Potato Casserole

Welcome to the holidays Kalamazoo! Please enjoy this southern classic on any given occasion with family and friends. Bon appetite, Chef Shaun.



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

Ingredients

4 ½ pounds sweet potatoes
1 cup granulated sugar
½ cup butter, softened
¼ cup heavy cream
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon salt
1¼ cups cornflakes cereal, crushed
¼ cup chopped pecans
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 tablespoon butter, melted
1 ½ cups miniature marshmallows

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Bake sweet potatoes for 1 hour or until tender. Let stand until cool to touch (about 20 minutes). Peel and mash sweet potatoes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°.
2. Beat mashed sweet potatoes, with sugar, butter, cream, eggs,

vanilla and salt at medium speed with an electric mixer until smooth. Spoon potato mixture into a greased 11 x 7 inch baking dish.

3. Combine cornflakes cereal, pecans, brown sugar and melted butter in a small bowl. Sprinkle over casserole in diagonal rows 2 inches apart. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes.
4. Remove from oven; let stand 10 minutes. Sprinkle marshmallows in alternate rows between cornflake mixture; bake 10 minutes. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Yield: 6-8 servings

FIBER-FULL

A ½ cup of root vegetables has lots of fiber, which is good for your stomach and insides, and helps fill you up. Root vegetables also have healthy complex carbohydrates which give your body energy, especially for the brain and nervous system.



New Parkwood-Upjohn Buddy Bench Encourages Friendship, Celebrates Preschool

Recess just got a whole lot friendlier. Parkwood-Upjohn Elementary School acquired a "buddy bench" this year. The school's PTO and the Friends of Liza Wolfe joined forces to purchase the bench in honor of Wolfe's 40th year as a preschool teacher. Her preschool is across the street from Parkwood-Upjohn and has served many of the school's students and their families.

Buddy benches are located on playgrounds. Children who are lonely and looking for someone to play with can sit on the bench to signal they need a playmate. The idea of the Parkwood buddy bench was proposed by student Daisy Brady, in response to the Friends of Liza Wolfe's desire to donate funds to the school playground to mark the anniversary.



Sarah Wolfe Maurer, Daisy Brady and Liza Wolfe stand in front of the "buddy bench" that was dedicated at Parkwood-Upjohn Elementary School in honor of Wolfe's 40th year teaching preschool in the Westnedge Hill neighborhood.

Kalamazoo Public Schools Facilities Are Available for Rent to Community Groups

Need a space for a community meeting, a location for a private event or an auditorium for performance?

Kalamazoo Public Schools facilities are available for rent. Classrooms, cafeterias, multi-purpose rooms, gymnasiums, pools, auditoriums, and athletic fields are among the facilities open to public use.

Buildings and grounds are available to school-related groups; tax-supported govern-

mental units looking to provide services to residents of the school district; nonprofits providing civic, cultural, educational or fraternal services; and private, nonprofit and profit-making groups whose activities are limited to members of their organizations.

The buildings have been used for programs such as Girl Scout and Boy Scout troop meetings, performances, neighborhood association meetings, tutoring and drivers education classes.

Rental prices vary depending on the room or facility rented, but

sample prices at the high schools include \$7 for a classroom, \$20 for a cafeteria, \$60 for a gymnasium.

Rental requests should be made at least two weeks in advance of the date requested. Rental forms are available available at all school buildings and the Administration Building. Forms should be turned in to Lynn Chio in Community Education in the KPS Administration Building, 1220 Howard St.

For more information, contact Chio by emailing chiolr@kalamazoopublicschools.net or by phoning (269) 337-0461.

The Milwood Elementary School cafeteria is an example of one of the rooms for rent in KPS buildings.



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Diego Rivera, Sonia Sotomayor and Other Hispanic Leaders Spotted in Kalamazoo

Third graders at El Sol Elementary brought learning and Hispanic Heritage Month to life with a living wax museum in October.

Students in Claire Vahue’s third-grade classroom at El Sol researched and wrote about notable Hispanic

leaders and then presented their interpretations of the famous members of the Latino community.

The students researched secondary sources, took notes and wrote paragraphs about important people, their work and, most importantly, their

roles as leaders. “Researching a topic can be lots of fun,” Frankie Goldstein said.

“With the presidential election coming up, I really wanted students to reflect on the qualities of a good leader,” Vahue said. “According to my students, kindness counts.”

In an effort to tie learning to a day traditionally reserved for Halloween or fall celebrations, students dressed up “in character” and took on first-person perspectives during the wax museum.

Even though students were challenged by the hard work,

Nancy Mejia-Garcia said, “I learned to try your best, and the hard work is worth it.” They found that learning about notable Hispanics even related to the Promise. In writing about poet Julia de Burgos, Paola Vargas said, “Julia taught me that I can go to college, too.”



Jordan Lee chose artist Pablo Picasso for his living wax museum exhibit.



Kyan Martini-Zeller represented U. S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor at the living wax museum at El Sol.



Yamilet Brito-Arevalo portrayed poet Julia de Burgos in the El Sol living wax museum.



Sofia Pacheco was colorful as artist Frida Kahlo at the El Sol Hispanic Heritage Month celebration.



El Sol Elementary School teacher Clair Vahue poses with student Elijah Thompson, who came dressed as artist Diego Rivera.

Enrollment Open for Loy Norrix Child Care for 2016–2017

Registration for the 2016–2017 school year has begun at the Loy Norrix Child Care Center (LNCCC). LNCCC

is a five-star-rated Kalamazoo County Ready 4s program that provides a great start for your preschooler. Great learning and

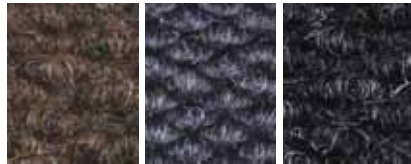
care are happening daily 7 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

The center offers reasonable full-time, part-time, and daily rates.

Openings for the current school year for 3- and 4-year-olds are still available. There is no school district residency required for the program, which is open to the public. For enrollment information and tuition costs, call (269) 337-0264 or email hentschlearlym@kalamazoopublicschools.net.



The Loy Norrix Child Care Center is place for learning and fun.



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FIRST SATURDAY

■ Saturday, December 3 / 2 pm / CEN / Enjoy stories, activities, special guests, and door prizes!

STORYTIMES

Adult caregiver must accompany babies and toddlers. Siblings attend as guests. Info: KPL.gov/storytimes.

EVENTS

■ **Reading with Tucker** / Wednesdays, December 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 / 4-5:30 pm / CEN / A "pawsative" reading experience for the family. Registration required. **R**

■ **Tumble Toddlers** / Saturday, December 3 / 10:30 am / CEN / Beginner walkers and caregivers with music and a big open space. Ages 1-2.

■ **1-2-3 Play with me** / Mondays, December 5, 12, 19, / 10:30 am / OSH / One month workshop for child development with children 1-3 years and their caregivers. Please Register. **R**

■ **Play and Learn** / Engage and play for early learning. For children 1-5 with caregiver.

Mondays, December 5, 12, 19 / 5:30-7 pm / EAS

Thursdays, December 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 / 10:30 am-12 pm / EAS

■ **Toddler Talk** / Wednesdays, December 7, 14, 21, 28 / 10:15 am / OSH / Share stories with other parents. Carolyn Call, RN, facilitator. 1-3 years.

■ **Baby Talk** / Wednesdays, December 7, 14, 21, 28 / 1:30 pm / OSH / Share stories with other parents. Carolyn Call, RN, facilitator. New- to- 1 year.

■ **Gingerbread Houses** / Create a masterpiece with graham crackers, frosting, and candies. Supplies provided, registration required. **R**

Wednesday, December 7 / 4:30 pm / WSQ

Thursday, December 15 / 4:30 pm / EAS

Monday, December 19 / 6 pm / OSH

Tuesday, December 20 / 4:30 pm / POW

■ **Holiday Ornament Making** / Colleen Heuser will lead guests in festive ornament making. Supplies provided. Registration required. **R**

Thursday, December 8 / 4:30 pm / EAS

Wednesday, December 14 / 4:30 pm / POW

■ **Reindeer Reign** / Saturday, December 10 / 10:30 am-12 pm / OSH / Take pictures with live reindeer. Crafts and activities. Family.

■ **Little Scientists** / Monday, December 12 / 10:30 am / CEN / Stories and science for preschoolers and their caregivers. Registration required. Ages 3-6.

Monday, December 12 / 10:30 am / CEN

■ **Pet Presents** / Thursday, December 15 / 4:30 pm / WSQ / Make a present for your dog or cat! Supplies provided. Ages 6-11.

■ **KPL's Winter Reading Challenge: Reading Without Walls** / December 10, 2016-January 10, 2017 / All Locations / Inspired by National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, Gene Luen Yang.

■ **Winter Solstice** / Wednesday, December 21 / 4:30 pm / WSQ / Celebrate Winter Solstice with snowy-themed make and take crafts. Ages 3-11.

■ **Kwanzaa Celebration** / Tuesday, December 27 / 5:30 pm / POW / Holiday storytelling, songs, dances and special foods!

■ **Finding Dory** / Wednesday, December 28 / 2pm / POW / Dory begins a search for her long-lost parents. Healthy snacks provided.

■ **Yummy New Year's Hats** / Wednesday, December 28 / 4:30 pm / OSH / Decorate an edible New Year's Hat. Ages 6-11. Registration Required. **R**

TWEEN/TEEN EVENTS

■ **Post it Note Art Show** / December 2016 / All Hours / CEN / Teen Area / Create your own artwork for the 3rd annual Post it Note Art Show. All supplies provided. Gr. 5-12.

■ **Tech Tuesday** / Tuesday, December 6 / 4:30-5:30 pm / CEN / This month's project is "MakeyMakey". Gr. 5-12.

■ **#TAB, GR 6-12** / Monday, December 12 / 4:30 pm / CEN / Teen Area / Volunteer for events. Earn Perks, rewards, and opportunities!

■ **Pizza and Pages: Teen Book Clubs** / Tuesday, December 13 / 4:30 pm / POW / Pick up a book, read it, come back for discussion. Gr. 5-12. Registration required. **R**

■ **Star Wars Party** / Thursday, December 15 / 4:30 pm / OSH / Celebrate the force and the release of Rogue One with Star Wars themed crafts, activities, and a costume contest.

■ **Jewelry Gifts with Meg Tang** / Wednesday, December 21 / 4:30 pm / WSQ / Teens, come and make that perfect holiday gift. All materials provided. Gr. 5-12.

■ **J-Pop Club, Teens Only** / Monday, December 19 / 4 pm / CEN / We love Japanese Pop Culture! Stop in any time during the event.

■ **Gift Making** / Make holiday gifts and wrap them. Gr. 5-12.

Monday, December 19 / 4:30-6:30 pm / CEN / Teen Area

Tuesday, December 20 / 4:30-5:30 pm / EAS

Wednesday, December 21 / 4:30-5:30 pm / POW

■ **Ozobots** / Tuesday, December 27 / 2 pm / WSQ / Explore computer programming concepts with color-coded mini robots. Hands on STEM fun!

■ **Game Central** / Tuesday, December 27 / 2 pm / CEN / From the old to the new, strategy and skill games.

■ **Crawlspace Eviction** / Wednesday, December 28 / 1 pm performance; 2:30 pm workshop / CEN / Local improvisational comedy at its finest.

■ **Emoji Party** / Thursday, December 29 / 3 pm / CEN / Join us for games, crafts, photo booths, snacks and more at this all emoji themed party!

■ **Michael Jackson: The Experience** / Friday, December 30 / 3 pm / EAS / Play the Wii and win prizes. Gr. 5-12.

■ **Rubik's Cube Day** / Friday, December 30 / 11 am-1 pm / CEN / A chance to show off your skills, compete for prizes, and meet other Rubik's Cubers.

■ Baby / Kid ■ Tween / Teen ■ Family ■ All Ages **T** Ticket Required **R** Registration Required

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1244 Portage St.
553-7970

kpl.gov/calendar



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