

Winter Break Update: Video & Blog Highlighting Social Media Tips

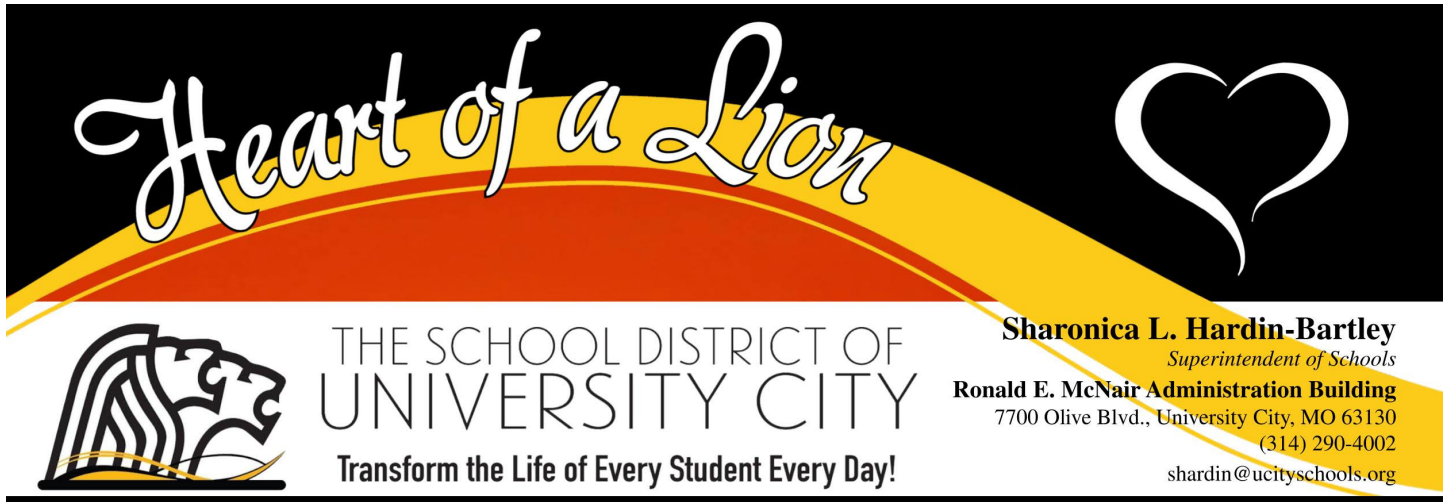
1 message

Sharonica L. Hardin-Bartley <News@ucityschools.org>

Fri, Dec 15, 2023 at 5:01 PM

Reply-To: communications@ucityschools.org

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From the Desk of Dr. Sharonica Hardin-Bartley

Hello, University City Community!

As we wrap up 2023 and look forward to Winter Break, I'm in awe of the element of time. It is a valuable resource that consumes so much of our ways of being. From juggling jobs, family, personal life and the day-to-day challenges and opportunities life brings, we all navigate time uniquely and purposefully. I'm mindful that communities both close and far away are experiencing significant pain, violence and trauma. My heart is with those communities and I hope for peace and understanding.



We also know that, while the holidays are a time of joy and celebration, they can also be a time of sadness and stress. Parents and caregivers can help by being mindful of children's social media use. Parents and caregivers, please don't underestimate the impact of social media and our youth's powerful connection to their devices... ([Read my December blog](#))

Winter Break Video

[Click here to view my annual Winter Break video.](#)

News and Updates

Save the Date: State of the District on January 22, 2024

Please join me for my State of the District community meeting on Monday, Jan. 22, 2024 in the high school library. The event is open to the public and will include a presentation with updates on the District's continuing vision of Learning Reimagined. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. for a light meal. The presentation begins at 6 p.m. Please register ahead at www.ucityschools.org/SOD2024.

Sneakers with Soul Delivers Once Again

December marked the start of distribution of 1,800 pairs of brand-new, high-quality sneakers to ALL of the District's elementary school students. This was made possible by the incredible efforts of Sneakers with Soul, a nonprofit organization based out of Manchester UM Church with a mission to help relieve families in need of the high cost of buying new shoes. Sneakers will continue to be distributed after the new year. Many thanks to our dear Sneakers with Soul partner Maurice Parisien and his team for their dedication to our students.

Thank You to Our Amazing Community

The generosity of the greater U. City community continues to amaze me. The holiday season always brings so many examples of blessings and care. This year, our social workers received \$14,295 in cash and gift card donations to help 95 families in our District with essentials and special holiday needs and gifts. This included, yet again, another truckful of toys donated by the University City Fire Department. St. Louis County also adopted 36 of our families through their holiday appeal program, providing them with toys, gifts, clothing and essentials. Last week, our social workers also held a special pop-up shop where parents and caregivers could "shop" for donated gifts that best fit the needs and interests of their children. Our ongoing partner, KidSmart, continues to wow us with huge donations. Last week, the group, in partnership with Ameren, presented more than \$30,000 in school supplies to Flynn Park Elementary School students and staff. Earlier this year, they presented a similar batch of school supplies to Jackson Park, and in January, with the help of Coke, the organization will visit Barbara C. Jordan and Pershing with similar bundles of supplies. And, finally, we are deeply grateful to Bank of America and our partner Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri, which arranged for the donation of 55 new bikes to Brittany Woods Middle School. The bikes will be used as attendance and school citizenship incentives for our middle school students in the new year.

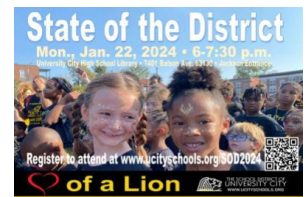
Good News in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

In case you missed it, [our high school students were featured on the front page of the St. Louis-Post Dispatch](#) in late November in an article about public school enrollments in the region. The article reported that our district had the highest percentage increase in student enrollment in St. Louis County, jumping by 6%. That growth included 87 new students at University City High School this school year. Word is getting out about our powerful teachers and programs!

Key Dates - December 2023 and January 2024

[Click here for the full list of Key Dates for the 2023-24 school year.](#)

Remember to check emails from your school principal for more details for school activities.



Dec. 18 - Jan. 2 – Winter Break

Jan. 1 – District Closed - New Year's Day

Jan. 2 – No School for Students - Teacher Work Day and Staff Health & Wellness Fair

Jan. 3 – Classes Resume for All Students

Jan. 4 – Board of Education Work Session

Jan. 8 – Parent Cafes for BCJ & Pershing Parents/Caregivers, check for emails from the school principals for times and registration

Jan. 12 – Student Early Release Day

Jan. 15 – District Closed - Martin Luther King Day

Jan. 16 – One U City Community Connect Meeting, 5:45-8 p.m., Location TBA

Jan. 18 – Board of Education Regular Meeting, 7 p.m., McNair Administration Building, [7700 Olive Blvd.](#)

Jan. 22 – State of the District, 6-7:30 p.m., University City High School library, [7401 Balson Ave.](#) (Jackson Entrance). Register at www.ucityschools.org/SOD2024.

Jan. 26 – Community Book Study Kick-Off, 6-7:30 p.m., University City High School library, [7401 Balson Ave.](#) (Jackson Entrance). Register for in-person or Zoom at www.ucityschools.org/BookStudy2024.

In Closing

I wish you rest, peace and time to connect with your loved ones in meaningful ways. As always, you may contact me at shardin@ucityschools.org or by cell phone at 314-399-0941.

In Service of Our Children,

Sharonica L. Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D., PHR
Superintendent

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