

District Celebrates Ubuntu to Open the 2022-23 School Year



HUMANIZE: Learning Reimagined

On Monday, August 22, The School District of University City welcomed 2,550 students back into its school buildings for the 2022-23 school year. Always a joyful day, students at the high school walked the traditional red carpet to the front steps of the high school, cheered on by parents, alumni and staff. Just a few minutes away, students at the middle school were also greeted by staff and alumni with cheers and balloons to mark their first day. Students in preschool and elementary school each had their own warm welcomes after enjoying evening ice cream or popsicle socials the prior week.

The first day of classes marked the culmination of a summer of activities designed to prepare students, staff, teachers and parents for an awesome school year ahead.

On August 15, the District welcomed back its entire staff during its annual Opening Day celebration.

The theme was Ubuntu, an African Nguni Bantu term meaning “humanity.” It is often translated as “I am because we are.”

As all of the staff came together for the first time in several months, the spirit of Ubuntu was powerful because the District’s shared community had so actively helped one another after severe flooding devastated parts of University City in late July.

In the aftermath, staff and our partners reached out to one another and to our many University City students, families and caregivers to ensure everyone was cared for and no one went hungry, or went without proper

“If you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together.”

*African proverb
in the spirit of Ubuntu*



The District celebrated the return of staff at its annual Opening Day celebration on August 15. More than 500 staff members, contractors and district partners attended a special ceremony at University High School followed by a barbecue lunch and an afternoon of fun wellness activities – including the Wobble dance.

shoes, clothing or personal items (see page 14). Individual pain was also the community’s pain, and in the spirit of Ubuntu, the U. City community rallied to heal.

On staff opening day, there were hugs and tears and a profound sense of gratitude among all members of staff to reconnect as a full community. Amy Hunter, UCHS Class of ’88 and the vice president of diversity, equity and inclusion at Calares, gave a rousing keynote on the impact of teachers on students with a personal story about excelling in math. Afterward, everyone, from teachers and bus drivers to custodians and principals, enjoyed an outdoor barbecue. Then they celebrated wellness and joy by

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District Named U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Awardee



PROBLEMATIZE: Learning Reimagined

More than 10 years ago, district leadership staff shared a vision as they planned for the construction of two new buildings to house Barbara C. Jordan and Pershing Elementary Schools. The schools, both north of Olive Boulevard in historically Black neighborhoods, would distinctly look forward in a world where environmental sustainability was becoming increasingly urgent.

What resulted under the leadership of former Superintendent Joylynn Pruitt-Adams was the construction of two Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified schools, a prestigious designation that recognizes buildings that are healthy, energy efficient and cost-saving. It was not a coincidence that the state-of-the-art buildings were built in neighborhoods ready for investment and innovation.

The buildings were a starting point for a new journey for the District. Students, staff and ensuing leadership began exploring and integrating environmental conservation and sustainability into student learning and social experiences.

On April 25, that journey reached a significant landmark, when The School District of University City was named a 2022 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Awardee. The District was one of only two school systems in Missouri to be selected for

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Students at Brittany Woods Middle School show off their fresh lettuce harvest grown in the school’s Giving Garden. In May, the District was honored as a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Awardee for its integration of outdoor school gardens into its grades K-12 STEAM curriculum and its use of the gardens in community service projects promoting sustainability.

From our Superintendent of Schools



Sharonica Hardin-Bartley
Superintendent

Dear University City Community:

On July 1, 2022, I began my seventh year as superintendent of The School District of University City. Seven years! The time has passed very, very quickly. It led me to pause and reflect on our community’s journey under our strategic vision of Learning Reimagined. That vision, created with your input during my first years here, has endured and thrived.

Learning Reimagined focuses on relevant and rigorous educational experiences and intentionally creates a community rooted and connected in well-being and joy. Though no one could have predicted it when we first embarked on Learning Reimagined, it prepared us for the emotional, social and academic challenges of a global pandemic. It prepared our students to engage in and act intentionally on pressing issues like sustainability, gun violence and health inequity. It prepared them for the culture wars that continue to threaten what books they read, what texts their teachers can use in classrooms, and even truthful narratives of African American history that they can openly discuss in school. It also does not escape me that Learning Reimagined will enable our students and faculty to advocate for true solutions to the overwhelming flooding that devastated our community this summer.

I think of the overwhelming news of the past few years, and the promise of the years ahead. I can only conclude that

Learning Reimagined was a golden thread for all of us. In the new year, we will keep weaving that thread through all that we do.

And yet, seven years is a long time in a fast world. The world has changed. So, this year, we will also engage our community to refresh and strengthen our vision of our schools. Like all innovation, our vision of Learning Reimagined must adapt and evolve.

I invite all of you to again be part of the process of updating and refining our vision for our students, teachers, families, caregivers, residents, and community.

We have scheduled community meetings to gather your input on Saturday, October 22, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. or Tuesday, October 25, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., location to be determined. These sessions are open to everyone in the University City community.

With courage, a commitment to racial equity and student voice, unflinching aspirations for excellence, and our hearts, we have the agency to build on both our successes and our challenges to ensure that every student flourishes. Please join us as we envision another seven years, or more!

In Service Of Our Children,

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

From our Board of Education



George Lenard
Board of Education
Director

Greetings, University City:

Advocacy for legislative action is an important area of school board work in which our board is increasingly involved.

As a board candidate, I knew the District was subject to many state and federal laws, and I viewed these as a given, not as something I thought I could influence if elected. Once elected, however, I developed a broader view, learning of the ways in which a school board can influence legislative action. Our membership in the Missouri School Boards’ Association (MSBA) is one of the main vehicles for such influence.

At one of the earlier MSBA annual conferences I attended, I heard a presentation about some rural districts that had combined into a group to exert greater influence on state legislation. They had the member boards agree on legislative positions, communicate them to the relevant legislators, and communicate back to the public how those legislators had voted relative to these positions. This opened my eyes to the potential role of a school board in influencing the policies and laws I had initially taken as a given.

Beginning in 2015, I began joining other board members in attending annual MSBA Legislative Forums in Jefferson City, which included opportunities to visit our legislators in the Capitol. We developed a routine of anticipating these visits by preparing brief letters to legislators highlighting the issues we found most important, adopting them by vote of the entire Board, and hand-distributing them to our legislators as we made our rounds in the Capitol. We also began regularly participating in monthly legislative breakfasts with local school districts to keep current on proposed education bills and issues.

MSBA employs lobbyists, and the member school districts provide them with written guidance by adopting statements of principles concerning various aspects of school operations and potential legislative changes impacting them. The lobbyists communicate these principles to legislators as powerful evidence of the majority views of school districts across the state.

As our delegate to the MSBA conference, I vote on proposed amendments or additions to these principles. Last year, I drafted a proposed amendment to counter the growing threat of politically motivated interference with local control over curriculum and instructional materials, specifically the banning of teaching “Critical Race Theory” and “The 1619 Project.” This amendment, as slightly modified by the MSBA advocacy committee, was successfully passed at the 2021 annual conference. The censorship movement failed to pass their proposed legislation, although they will likely try again — but when they do, MSBA will be armed with statewide consensus in favor of local control, meaning that the legislature should not interfere.

This year, we are planning to propose amendments regarding the role of gun law reform in school safety and the need to reform school finance to avoid the inequities associated with reliance on local property taxes for the majority of funding. Both of these issues are critical to the well-being and the future success of our students. I welcome your input.

Sincerely,

George Lenard
George Lenard, University City Board of Education Director

The personal opinions expressed in the letter above may not reflect that of the entire University City Board of Education.

School Board Elections Public Notice of Filing

The School District of University City encourages any qualified person interested in running for a position on the school board to file to be a candidate in the April 4, 2023 election. There are three positions available with voter approval for three-year terms.

Interested persons may file at the University City Board of Education office located at 7700 Olive Blvd., University City, MO 63130. Filing will begin at 8 a.m. on December 6, 2022, and will continue during business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. through December 20, 2022; plus 3 - 5 p.m. on December 27, 2022, which is the last day of filing for this election.

Filing will not be available if central offices are closed due to inclement weather or other emergency closings.

For more information, visit www.ucityschools.org/BOE or contact Juli Lashley at 314-290-4002 or jlashley@ucityschools.org.

Meet our School Board Members



Matt Bellows
President
Liaison to Julia Goldstein ECEC, Lieberman Learning Center and Adult Education & Literacy Program



Lisa Brenner, Ph.D.
Vice President
Liaison to Jackson Park Elementary School



LaVerne Ford-Williams
Secretary
Liaison to Pershing Elementary School



Michael Simmons
Student Representative
University City High School



George Lenard
Director
Liaison to Flynn Park Elementary School



Joanne Soudah
Director
Liaison to Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School



Monica Stewart, Ed.D.
Director
Liaison to Brittany Woods Middle School



Interim Director
TBD
Liaison to University City High School

Board of Education News

In May 2022, the University City Board of Education welcomed University City High School senior Michael Simmons as the District’s student representative.

The Board meets twice a month except for July, December and April when there are no work sessions. Work sessions are typically held on the first Thursday of the month at 5:45 p.m. Regular board meetings are typically held on the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m.

Regular board meetings are held in-person at the McNair Administration Building located at 7700 Olive Boulevard unless otherwise specified. Board work sessions will be held virtually.

Online pre-registration is available for those wishing to attend in-person meetings or virtual sessions, as well as to file a citizen comment.

For more information regarding upcoming meetings and links to register, go to www.ucityschools.org/BOE.

For more school board information including agendas and minutes, go to www.ucityschools.org/BoardDocs.

New Hires/Staff Changes for the 2022-23 School Year

PERSONALIZE: Learning Reimagined

Joseph Miller, a longtime Wyman partner with the District, has transitioned from his position as vice president of Wyman to a new role as the District’s chief of staff for organizational health and effectiveness, a grant-funded position. He served more than 15 years in a senior leadership role at Wyman and has previous corporate leadership experience. Miller will work to streamline district processes and procedures to ensure highly effective administrative and leadership practices.



Joseph Miller
District Chief of Staff, Organizational Health & Effectiveness

University City High School Principal **Michael Peoples, Ph.D.** now has an expanded position that supports district-wide secondary school strengthening initiatives to ensure a smooth, academically and socially aligned transition experience for students as they move from elementary to middle and to high school.



Michael Peoples, Ph.D.
University City High School Principal / Director of Secondary Education

Christina Grove, most recently a social studies teacher at Brittany Woods, will support new teacher development through a racial equity lens as the District’s new cultural and linguistic responsiveness (CLR) instructional leader. Grove graduated from UCHS in 1994 and was the University City Teacher of the Year in the 2021-22 academic year. She brings a wealth of expertise to empower and support classroom teachers to recognize and remediate racial bias in teaching.



Christina Grove
Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness (CLR) Instructional Leader

Darren Brooks is the new Girls Varsity Basketball Team coach. Brooks, a graduate of Jennings High School and a legendary basketball player for Southern Illinois University Carbondale, joins the team after coaching and teaching in Texas for six years. Brooks is the founder of the Brooks Basketball Academy, which he started in st. Louis. He holds an MA in Education from Lindenwood University.

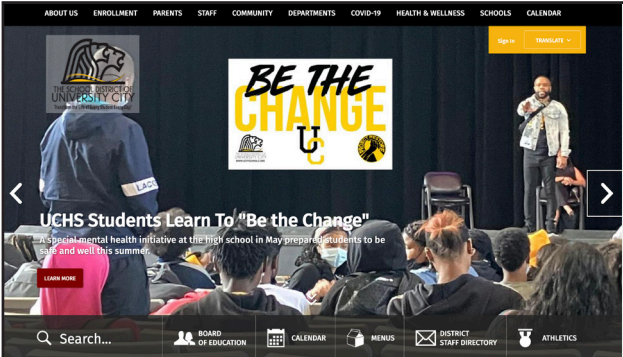


Darren Brooks
UCHS Girls Varsity Basketball Coach

Nikole Shurn, most recently a building director in the District with Wyman, has transitioned to the role of the District’s well-being director, a grant-funded position. She will implement special wellness and organizational effectiveness initiatives in all of the District’s buildings.



Nikole Shurn
District Well-Being Director



Have a question about
U. City Schools?
Visit www.ucityschools.org

District Celebrates Ubuntu to Open the 2022-23 School Year

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participating together in about 20 different fun activities from line dancing to walking with llamas.

Staff wore black and gold Ubuntu T-shirts with an African proverb that read, “If you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together.”

“University City truly has a powerful identity because it is a resilient, caring and active community,” said Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley. “I can’t think of a better phrase to embody that spirit.”

Ubuntu also shined at the District’s Back to School Rally and National Night Out celebration outside Jackson Park Elementary School on August 2. The devastating storms the week before did not stop hundreds of students, families, caregivers, first responders, residents, volunteers and staff from joining in a joyful

community celebration of wellness and school readiness. Youngsters chased cascades of bubbles from The Bubble Bus, ran and climbed on the playground, and enjoyed Icee pops, hot dogs and free soda donated by Fitz’s. Adults visited with more than 30 community partners to learn about local resources. University City High School Golden Girls taught dance moves to children and adults. The community spirit was palpable as the District staff, city staff and first responders hugged and thanked one another for their teamwork and support during the flooding.

The warmth and power of Ubuntu continued through the month of August. Kindergartners in all four elementary schools attended a three-day Jump Start to Kindergarten orientation to meet their teachers and peers, learn the ropes of riding the bus, tour the school and more. At

Brittany Woods Middle School, students and parents visited with teachers at an evening open house the Friday before the first day of school. Students met their teachers, received their schedules, found their classrooms and were personally greeted by new Principal Justin Davis. Davis has been busy introducing his new sixth- through eighth-graders to the Four C’s of the Brittany Woods community: Commit, Communicate, Collaborate, Create.

The District is ready for an outstanding year. In the spirit of Ubuntu, equity, student voice, restorative justice and well-being remain critical parts of the District’s vision of Learning Reimagined. The District is grateful to the entire University City community and its support of all children in our classrooms. Indeed, if we want to go far, we go together. #Ubuntu



New staff gathered for a full week of welcomes, special orientation activities and professional development. On their first day, the group gathered in a large circle, introduced themselves and checked in with one word on how they were feeling. The words included inspired, excited, validated, ready and energized.

Return to School Plan: Safe, Healthy, Flourishing and Connected

District continues with a complete plan addressing COVID-19

The District has released its 2022-23 COVID-19 Planning Guide outlining how it will strive to be safe, healthy, flourishing and connected while still dealing with a global pandemic. The guide can be found at www.ucityschools.org/ReturntoSchoolGuide2022. Here are the key strategies in the plan.

Safe

- Face masks are recommended, but not required, to be worn by staff, visitors, and all children PreK-12 inside district buildings, regardless of vaccination status. Any future decision to return to a mask-mandatory status will be based on school-specific transmission rates. If a school rises above a 1.5% transmission rate, the building will return to mandating face masks until the transmission rate again falls below the threshold.

Healthy

- Vaccination of staff is mandatory.
- Vaccination of qualifying students is highly encouraged.
- COVID-19 vaccine clinics will be offered at regular intervals for our University City community.
- Free and easy saliva COVID-19 testing will continue to be offered for all students, staff and affiliated household members in partnership with Washington University.
- Intensive contact tracing in partnership with Washington University will continue throughout the District.

Flourishing

- Additional resources have been allocated for mental health and well-being of students, staff and families.
- The District continues its pledge to provide rigorous and relevant learning.
- The District has a heightened focus on racial equity and resources.
- The District will strive to maintain athletics, clubs, field trips, activities and community events in a safe and healthy way.

Connected

- The District will continue to maintain a COVID-19 Dashboard to track active cases and quarantines in all district buildings. (www.ucityschools.org/coviddashboard)



The complete Return to School Planning Guide can be found at www.ucityschools.org/ReturntoSchoolGuide2022.



Congratulations UCHS Class of 2022!

PERSONALIZE: Learning Reimagined

On Monday, May 23, 151 members of the University City High School Class of 2022 received their diplomas amid music, speeches and the special traditions of the District’s annual commencement. The ceremony was held in Chaifetz Arena on the campus of Saint Louis University for the first time since 2019 after two years of disruptions caused by COVID-19. The return to Chaifetz provided plenty of room for family and friends to watch their loved ones step across the stage.

The sounds of the high school choir and band echoed in the rafters – along with the cheers of parents and friends. The UCHS choir, led by Director Caroline Ibnabdeljalil, sang the national anthem and “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” The UCHS band and orchestra accompanied the trained voices of the high school choir. Student commencement addresses shared hopes and dreams of a bright future and were delivered by 2022 graduates Yaniya Battle and Albert Smith Jr.

Ninety students from the class of 2022 will be attending two- and four-year colleges this fall, including Columbia College Chicago, Harris-Stowe State University, Missouri State University, Saint Louis University, Saint Louis Community College, Webster University, University of Missouri-Columbia, University of Missouri-Saint Louis, University of Colorado-Denver, University of Miami, and Pace University. The graduating class was awarded a record \$7 million in academic scholarships from more than 150 different colleges.

Ten of the graduating seniors earned significant dual college credits that qualified them to also obtain an associates degree from Saint Louis Community College Forest Park. Nineteen students earned more than 12 hours of community college credit, and nine were recognized for receiving more than 30 credit hours.

In his speech to the students, Board of Education President Matt Bellows warned students that current systems of economic and social injustice are not normal and should make them feel uncomfortable. He encouraged students to take action against what makes them uncomfortable and injustices they find in their futures. Never stop the “unending quest for knowledge through a career, college, the military or whatever else you may do. Do not look for a new normal. Do not look to be comfortable,” he said.

This ceremony marked the introduction of the new graduates to the long list of proud alumni from University City High School. Congratulations to the Class of 2022!

To view a full recording of the Commencement Ceremony, go to www.ucityschools.org/Commencement2022.

Larry De’Wayne Abbey
Maxine Adams
Folake T. Adewale
Jonathan Ezequiel
Aguilar Sanchez
Kellie N. Aitch
Joseph Aiman Al
Samaraiy
Joshua Devon Allen-
Wilson
Tyleah Anderson
Yara Aliuska Aviles
Jiron
Jayla Marie Bailey
Yaniya Yvette Battle
Xavier L. Blake
Mya Faye Atheena
Blanks
Benjamin Blumenhorst
Jada Simone Bolden-
Jackson
Michael Ke’Shon Bostic
Quincey Brown
Karnell A. Buress
Da’Shaun Calicutt
Ella Braegan Chisholm
Jakada Adia Christmas
Eniya C. Clopton
Angelica Cole
Ellery Cole
Mariah (Mykie)
Adrianna Collins
Paris Collins
Terrell Commings
Breia Conner
Jaiah Conners
Larrion Corley
Darrell Culton
Cameron Jayson Davis
Shyria Day
Lucas Edward Dean
Makaila Dixon
Paris Drummer
D’Anyah Edwards
Jaionna Epps
Emmett Feld
Kylín Emariae M. Fisher
Arionna Lashay Flowers
Aniya Foley
Sterling Foote
Isabel R. Forster
Vinecia Fortson
Gregory Foster
Khloé Ashtun Fox
Corey Franklin
Jacardion M. French
Patrick O. Fuller

Margaret Elizabeth
(Marley) Gardner
Zakiya Glenn
James Dwayne Gordon
Joy Alzada Gordon
Connor Goulet
Lila Gralnick
Alexander Gutierrez
Isaiah M. Harris
Mhari Harris
Jamonny L’Michael
Hatcher
Gage B. Hendrix
Myecia Nicole Hill
Marcus Antwon Holman
Demarco Howard
Abdinajib Hussein
Ethan Charles Immer
Gabriel Arie Emilio
(Gabe) Ivey
Tiyah Renee Jackman
Tyler D. Jackson
Alonzo Johnson
Jeremiah Jackson-Boller
Jerod Rodney Richard
Johnson
Terrel Johnson
Kamryn I. Jones
Quavion Jones
Rashad Lawrence Jones
Cheyenne Elise Jordan
Ian Charles-Levi Jordan
Grant A. King
Jeremiah A. Lathon
Carter Lemen
Daniel J. Looby
Miguel Macias
Christian A. Malloyd
Christi Lusukamu
Mapengo
Cameron Martin
Traonna Breonna Martin
Morgan Dane McGinnis
Jonai McGruder
Kenyon A. McTyer
Demarco Michael
Layla Michelle Mills
Renaye Moseley
Jeremy Donovan
Musaddiq
Reina V. Nadal
Julia Skye Nelson
Michael Grafeman O’Neil
Kareem Oglesby
Annalise Overlin
Chaniya Lynn Owens
Daniel L. Person

Jazmyne Breanna Pierce
Chance Pinkston
Darius Pointer
Jasper Primm
Jemmy Alexandra
Ramirez Chavez
Darryl Rankins
Chloe Janelle
Richardson
Leslie Y. Rico Garcia
Salena Jade Roach
Kamren Robinson
Mia M. J. Robinson
Jeremiah Robinson-
Lowe
Terrell Joaquin Roebuck
Gianna Yanira Rosales
Emma G. Scharff
Emma Grace Schock
Jaden Sekou
Omarion Shinell
Aidan Shostak
Damontony Travon
Simpson
Victoria Trice
Joshua Simpson
Bailee Sistrunk
Albert Aaron Smith
Daniel D. Smith
Diara Smith
Rontina Smith
Janaye Stampley
Alex Quinlan (Quinn)
Standish
Mark A. Starks
Jordan Cortez Stokes
Jyrin Jyrell Sutton
Demitrius M. Taylor
Carlton Thomas
Charles Edward
Thompson
Alametta Brionna
Thompson-Hinton
Kamoryn A. Trussel
Thomas Tucker
Jordan J. Turner
Carl Lamont Walker
Demoni Warren
Ericka Warren
Diara J. West
Jordynn White
Kahleb Jamal Williams
Tamira Denise Williams
Terrell Lamar Williams
James I. Wines
Antonio Woodson
Xavia G. Wright-Jones

Green Ribbon District

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the honor. Principia School in St. Louis County was the other.

Across the country, 27 schools, five school districts and four postsecondary institutions were honored for their innovative efforts to reduce environmental impact and utility costs, improve health and wellness, and ensure effective sustainability education.

“As educators, we owe it to our students and our local and global community to be as responsive to and appreciative of the environment as possible. The environment includes our social-emotional well-being and support,” said Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley. “And, yes, racial equity matters! Our youth will be tasked with the restoration of our living planet while solving very real issues of scarcity, sustainability and racially unjust systems.”

“Our youth will be tasked with restoration of our living planet while solving very real issues of scarcity, sustainability and racially unjust systems.”

Sharonica Hardin-Bartley
Superintendent of Schools



Brittany Woods Middle School Teacher Anne Cummings, left, and Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator Beverly Velloff, right, traveled to Washington, D.C., to attend a special reception honoring this year’s U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Awardees.

Anne Cummings began teaching Sustainability I and II classes in which students design and execute significant community service projects. This includes the creation of Growing Together: The U. City Schools Food Gardening Network, which provides free vegetable plants, gardening materials and tools to encourage food gardening in households across University City. The event strives to include residents in the joy and community of growing food, and ensures that a lack of resources is not a barrier.

Students as young as kindergartners are further engaged in social action regarding conservation, recycling and fair access to resources. At Jackson Park Elementary School, for example, students participated in a peaceful neighborhood march for clean water in all communities and further raised money for Flint, Michigan, residents who continue to deal with lead contamination in their water system.

The judges also recognized that U. City students practice environmental stewardship because they are given the power, voice and tools to shape their own school community to be healthy and well. The District was commended for its high school Restorative Practices class, trauma specialists, social workers and nurses at each school building. The District was also lauded for creating considerable partnerships with premier environmental and science institutions, including the Saint Louis Zoo, The Green Center, St. Louis Science Center, St. Louis Aquarium and Forest Park.

In July, Curriculum and Instructor Coordinator Beverly Velloff and Cummings attended a reception in Washington, D.C., for all the awardees. Pruitt-Adams was also honored for her contributions at the May 19 regular University City Board of Education meeting.

Jackson Park Fourth-Graders #HelptheKids With Coin Drive for Ukrainian Refugees

HUMANIZE: Learning Reimagined

Jackson Park students were deeply affected by news of a hostile invasion of Ukraine earlier this year. They empathized with the children who were being forced to flee their country.

Together, the students created the #HelptheKids coin drive. They designed their own posters and advertising and rallied the entire school to donate coins or cash through a GoFundMe site. Their efforts attracted TV news attention, which further increased their fundraising.

The students counted and graphed every coin donated to the cause, and even hosted a pizza party for the classroom that gave the most coins. In total, the students exceeded their goal six times over and raised \$6,140 in just three weeks.

The University City Board of Education and District administration recognize U.C. teacher Alex McCune and her student philanthropists for their worldview, their empathy and their action to help children in need whom they may never meet and live more than 5,432 miles away from St. Louis.



It was a lot of work counting more than \$6,000 donated to Jackson Park’s #HelptheKids coin drive held in the weeks after the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The community service event was designed by fourth-graders to help child refugees with food, shelter, clothing, housing and other needs.

Brittany Woods Sustainability Students Win Green Schools Quest Award

PROBLEMATIZE: Learning Reimagined

The Pollinator 3000 is a 21-year-old school district cargo van that’s been repurposed into some sweet wheels for Brittany Woods Middle School students buzzing around U. City to encourage healthy plant pollination by bees and butterflies.

A group of about 10 Brittany Woods students, The Pollinator Squad, is so successful at getting around town and promoting environmentally friendly practices and sustainability, they were awarded a 2021-2022 Green Schools Quest award in the middle school division. The awards are given annually by the Missouri Gateway Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council. The students learned they won the award at a special Zoom ceremony held April 28.

Green Schools Quest is an annual project-based challenge to students in PreK-12 schools to implement creative, effective and low-cost sustainable practices with the help of a Green Mentor.

Under the mentorship of Brittany Woods Sustainability Teacher Anne Cummings, the seventh- and eighth-graders are part of the Sustainability II Class. Many are also beekeepers in training as they work to maintain and care for the school’s apiary, home to two thriving bee colonies. As part of their work, the students continue to learn about environmental stewardship and the importance of maintaining a healthy population of pollinators such as bees and butterflies to help plants and flowers thrive, produce food and reproduce.

The Green Schools Quest judges took notice this year when the students created The Parsley Project, an initiative to make University City a haven for Eastern Black Swallowtail caterpillars and butterflies. The butterflies do an excellent job of flitting from flower to flower, transferring pollen to help plants seed and produce fruits and vegetables. Without pollinators, our environment would collapse – yet environmental stressors are making it harder for pollinators to survive on Earth and do their critical jobs.

In The Parsley Project, students are planting parsley in various areas around University City. Additionally, they gave out parsley seed packets to students in kindergarten and first grade and encourage them and their families or caregivers to plant the seeds in their neighborhoods. In the future, participants will be asked to log where they planted the seeds or parsley and/or cilantro plants into a computer mapping system to enable the Pollinator



When it comes to nurturing our local pollinators, you’ve got to “bee” active. In May, Brittany Woods Sustainability students traveled around town in the Pollinator 3000 van spreading the word – and parsley seeds – about how to feed and nurture bees and butterflies in University City. Their efforts won them a Green Schools Quest award.

Squad to monitor possible areas in the city where pollinators may need more of the herbs.

Why parsley? As any gardener will tell you, insects love to munch on certain herbs. The nutrients in the herbs enable caterpillars to first cocoon inside a chrysalis as a pupa, then undergo their metamorphosis, and finally emerge as butterflies. Once in flight, the butterflies search for nectar in flowers and spread the plants’ pollen to flora along the way, fertilizing plants and encouraging growth of fruits, vegetables and seedlings.

The Pollinator Squad knows that bees, butterflies and their function as pollinators are often misunderstood. Bees are often feared and destroyed by humans because they sting when threatened. So, as part of The Parsley Project, the students plan to hit the road in the Pollinator 3000 van (driven by Cummings). They plan to visit younger elementary district classrooms and teach the students about the pollination cycle and also the life cycle of butterflies. Part of their talk includes the game Bees Freeze – a way to teach children how to avoid getting stung. Each student will go home with a packet of parsley seeds to germinate and grow and a “BWMS Pollinator” sticker to show their support.

Camp U Finishes Another Successful Summer Session

PERSONALIZE: Learning Reimagined

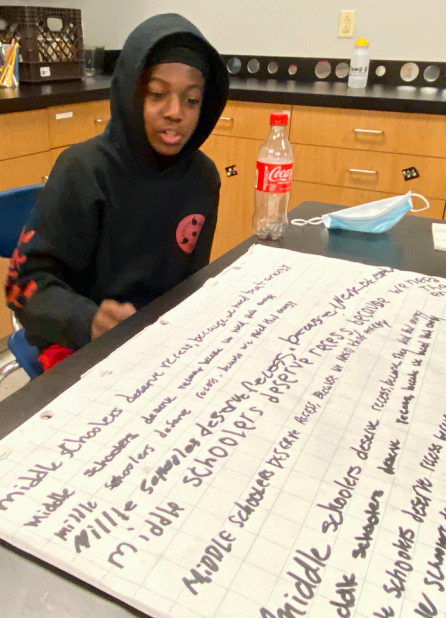
More than 500 students in grades 1-5 participated in this summer’s Camp U, the District’s free summer experience that offers hands-on learning coupled with enrichment activities at premier St. Louis institutions.

The month-long session in June and early July featured a variety of themed classes by grade, including Second Grade Community Superheroes, Fifth Grade Starting a Business, Sixth Grade U Broadcast, Seventh Grade Forensics 101 and others. Students participated in 40 different field trips relevant to their topics of study. Elementary school students had a chance to participate in The Little Medical School Program. Students traveled around the region visiting the Saint Louis Zoo, The Magic House Made for Children makerspace, Forest Park, Saint Louis Science Center, Wild Bird Sanctuary, Soulard Market, the chef’s training kitchen at Saint Louis Community College Forest Park, Lindenwood University and the National Blues Museum.

Camp U is designed to improve literacy and math skills, prevent academic loss over the summer and provide equitable access to fun summer destinations in the region.

On the last day of the program, students at Brittany Woods hosted a showcase of what they learned for parents and friends. Visitors learned about a student-designed irrigation system to be installed this year to water the Giving Garden in the school’s courtyard. They tasted samples of comfort foods cooked by students in a culinary arts class. They learned about crime solving as students demonstrated their forensic skills on dental identification and handwriting analysis. They finished the day with a spirited student drumline performance in the gym.

Camp U will continue next summer. Enrollment typically begins after Spring Break.



UCHS Students Strive to “Be the Change”

PROBLEMATIZE: Learning Reimagined

By Nancy Cambria, Director of Communications

This spring, students at University City High School worked to address one of the more devastating effects of a global pandemic: its harm to student mental health.

The result was a dynamic school campaign called “Be the Change.” Led by youth motivational speaker Koran Bolden and done in partnership with students and staff, Be the Change strived to help students understand that they could take action to better their well-being and mental health despite many factors outside of their control.

Be the Change was timed to prepare students for the summer months when most don’t have the safety net of teachers and school-based services and may be challenged with difficult decisions and home situations that can impact physical and mental health. The past year was tough and demanded action and empowerment for our students, said Gary Spiller, executive director of student services and innovation.

“Our students are smart and resilient, but they are also emotionally tired. The demands on them, the worries, and the trauma regarding COVID and world events call for special attention to their wellness. They needed tools and support to empower them, particularly over the summer,” Spiller said.

As part of that effort, the high school conducted its first-ever wellness fair on May 20 in the school cafeteria during lunchtime, complete with snacks, Be the Change T-shirts and bags, a DJ, and Bolden as the emcee. The upbeat event enabled students to visit community organizations that offered resources such as summer jobs, mental and medical health services, student wellness activities, and food and housing support to ensure basic needs. Traffic was heavy at all of the information booths, and students came away with brochures, phone numbers and referrals.

“Seeing all of these tragedies, such as the shootings in Buffalo, what happened in Texas – we are seeing this in the media around us every day. It can be very, very burdensome. It can make it feel like the weight of the world is on our shoulders because this is the world that we are inheriting,” said rising senior Michael Simmons.

COVID-19 continues to harm humans and disrupt lives. It has taken a particular toll on youth mental health. Hospitals nationwide report alarming rates of suicidal ideation and emergency mental health hospitalizations of children and teens.

The issue is complex, but tied to a sense of helplessness, trauma among COVID-19 victims and its loved ones, and social isolation during the first year of COVID-19. At University City Schools, leaders also recognize a “double pandemic” of both COVID-19 and systemic racism affecting students and staff. Research and data show that COVID-19 disparately harmed Black and brown communities and those living in segregated and impoverished neighborhoods. Impacts included anxiety and uncertainty in a country grappling with climate change, extremism and gun violence targeting students, teachers, schools, churches, synagogues and other places where people gather to build humanity.

And yet, talking about mental health and getting help when needed remains a stigma among many young people and adults in the African American community. Bolden, who is invited to speak to thousands of urban students every year about mental health, said such conversations

can be considered taboo. Bolden is a successful music producer and an author. He lost a brother to gun violence when he was 9. And yet, he said, as an African American male, he was reluctant to get professional mental health treatment, even though he knew he was suffering from severe anxiety. It was not until COVID-19 hit that he took a big step and began therapy – a decision, he said, that was life transforming.

“I want to let students know it’s OK to not be OK,” Bolden said. “But there’s a flip side to that as well. It’s also not OK for things to say the same.”

In May, Bolden spoke individually with UCHS freshman, sophomore and junior classes about a positive mindset and how they can drive change not only in their school, but in their personal relationships and their own motivation. Part of the work of being the change is first making important changes in how you see yourself and how you interact with others, he said. When Bolden speaks with youth, he breaks the ice with fun. From there, he talks about how he wants them to be bold about themselves. He encourages young people to not let fear of what others think of them and their own doubts hold them back in reaching for dreams. He discusses particular social emotional skills to set boundaries with negative individuals without creating conflict. He discusses his theory of rock, paper, scissors (also the title of his book). Part of that involves knowing when to cut ties from negative or damaging influences, without “cutting yourself” in the process by losing your temper or worse.

Bolden also met with the high school’s Restorative Practices Class, a group of students who are learning the social science of conflict resolution and creating positive change based on equal communication, building relationships and repairing harm. During that class, Bolden opened up about his own struggle with anxiety and his experience of going to a therapist. Students immediately responded with their own examples of how hard it is to talk about mental health and to follow through with getting help.

Bolden praised the students in the class, but he said he wasn’t surprised given what they are going through at this period in history. He considers this a catalyst that can “fortify our character and our dreams and visions” for large institutional change.

“The students are speaking like I never heard them speak,” he said. “Our students are now taking responsibility for their own actions, their own mental health and their own education. I see this as a great opportunity to be able to transform what education looks like and to really figure out what’s working and what’s not working in an underserved urban community.”

Be the Change also lets students know they are not isolated or alone, said Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley.

“That sense of community – that sense of togetherness – is really what Be the Change is also about,” Hardin-Bartley said. “We need to destigmatize mental health and, again, make it OK and make it something that is not a negative. I think it is strength. I think it is courage.”



Be the Change” for Mental Health

*“Be the Change
also lets students
know they are
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alone... We need
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mental health
and, again, make
it OK and make
it something that
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I think it is strength.
I think it is courage.”*

Sharonica Hardin-Bartley
Superintendent of Schools



Julia Goldstein Students Study the Science of Sound

 **PERSONALIZE: Learning Reimagined**

Sound is everywhere, even if we can't see it. Preschoolers in Annie Mann's classroom at Julia Goldstein Early Childhood Education Center had the unique chance to explore the science and the magic of sound with the St. Louis Science Center and The Sheldon concert hall and galleries through a program called the SOLID Project, which stands for Science of Learning Instrument Design.

As part of the class' STEAM exploration, the preschoolers worked with science center staff to experiment with everyday objects to create and learn about the origin of sound. They then used their exploration to create unique musical instruments out of everyday objects and repurposed materials.

The students' learning struck a high note for the school year. Students produced unique music with handmade drums, maracas, xylophones and string instruments out of used canisters, tightly wound string, rocks and more.

The students' instruments were showcased at a special gallery reception on May 3 inside the Sheldon's main ballroom.

This is the fifth classroom of students at Julia Goldstein Early Childhood Education Center to participate in the SOLID Project.



Jesse Bulle, a Julia Goldstein Early Education Childhood Center pre-kindergartner, received a blue ribbon during a reception at The Sheldon for his African thumb piano made out of cardboard, styrofoam and bobby pins.



Induction Ceremony

has been rescheduled
to

Friday, October 14, 2022

University City High School

Charles A. Banks Auditorium

**Tickets on sale now through October 3.
Early discount ends September 14.
Sponsor a student.**

**Purchase tickets online at
www.ucityschools.org/HOFTickets.**

**To donate business gift cards and baskets
for the Silent Auction or discuss event sponsorship,
please email dchase@ucityschools.org**

**For more information including a list of inductees,
go to www.ucityschools.org/HOF2021**

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**Adding the ARTS
to Science, Technology,
Engineering and Math
turns STEM
into STEAM**

Mark your calendar for

**Tuesday
November 15, 2022**

6 - 7:30 p.m.

 **of a Lion**  THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
UNIVERSITY CITY
WWW.UCITYSCHOOLS.ORG

University City High School

Homecoming 2022



**Saturday
October 15, 2022**

10 a.m. - Homecoming Parade
1 p.m. - Homecoming Football Game
University City Lions vs. Clayton Greyhounds

One U City Expands to Become the Umbrella PTO for the District’s Elementary and Middle Schools

One U City is growing! On July 1, the University City Schools’ unique parent organization incorporated as a nonprofit representing the District’s four elementary schools and, additionally, Brittany Woods Middle School.

Four separate community meetings are scheduled this school year to help inform and engage the entire University City community about the new structure and ways to join and volunteer for U. City Schools. They are scheduled for Tuesday evenings on:

- Sept. 27 at Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School
- Jan. 10 at Pershing Elementary School
- April 11, location TBD

Dinner will be served at all meetings, and free child care is available. Additionally, the following fun One U City community events are planned for the 2022-23 school year:

- Oct. 29: Trunk or Treat and Pumpkin Stroll at Jackson Park Elementary School and University City High School
- Feb. 5: Spice & Spark Chili Cookoff and Social Justice Expo at Flynn Park Elementary School
- March 11: Multicultural/Passport Night, location TBD
- May 6: Adult Trivia Night, location TBD
- May 14: End of Year Community Celebration, location TBD

Founded just three years ago, One U City was created to bridge the District’s elementary schools with a parent group that focused on equity as its guiding principle so that all schools would have equal resources when it came to sponsoring special parent events and other support. At the time, One U City worked to support existing PTOs from each school.

In its infancy, the model brought the issue of inclusion and fair resources to the forefront and was productive in unifying District families long before

the start of middle school, when all the students join together in one school.

In collaboration with the middle school, the separate elementary school PTOs and an ad hoc design team, it was decided that One U City would be the sole PTO for the District’s K-8 schools. A governing board of 14 members was envisioned representing Barbara C. Jordan, Flynn Park, Jackson Park and Pershing Elementary Schools as well as Brittany Woods. The governing board further provides room for representation from up to five University City residents who do not have children in the school system.

Six separate Zoom meetings were held over the summer to introduce the new structure to the community and to recruit board members.

Read more about One U City in a St. Louis Post-Dispatch article reprinted on page 13.

University City High School PTO

The University City High School PTO invites all guardians, parents, teachers and staff to join their monthly meetings and special activities throughout the school year. PTO meetings are typically held at 6:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month in the UCHS Pruitt Library (Jackson entrance), except the first meeting of the year that is scheduled for Sept. 21, 2022. Meetings may toggle to virtual or hybrid.

Watch for meeting and activity updates, agendas and more on the UCHS PTO Facebook group or visit www.ucityschools.org/UCHSPTO.

Community Joins Together in Back to School Rally and National Night Out

A week of major flooding and high temperatures proved no match for University City’s tremendous community spirit demonstrated at the annual Back to School Rally/ National Night Out celebration on August 2. Hundreds of residents, students, parents and caregivers attended the fun event outside Jackson Park Elementary School. Hosted by the District in partnership with the University City Police Department, the event promotes public safety, school readiness and community unity. Families visited with teachers and staff. Some 50 community partners hosted information booths. Police Department volunteers served up free hot dogs and soda donated by Fitz’s. Children reveled in a bubble shower provided by The Bubble Bus. There was a lot of dancing and music. Free haircuts were offered by area stylists, including Nikkia Bennett-Stewart, the mom of the late Xavier Bennett-Stewart, UCHS Class of 2024, who passed away this past spring. Thank you to all of our volunteers!



St. Louis-area students want to read challenged books to understand race in America

By ANDREA Y. HENDERSON, St. Louis Public Radio

Mya Walker reads two or three books a month. She enjoys literature that depicts unfamiliar experiences, particularly by authors of color or those who are LGBTQ.

The Francis Howell North High School senior said the works offer lessons in life that teachers or parents may not know how to discuss with their students or children.

“The next couple books that I plan on reading are ‘The Bluest Eye’ by Toni Morrison and some of the books that are being challenged,” Walker said. “I just really enjoy reading things that are new and different to me; it’s really, really important.”

According to the American Library Association, the novel by Morrison, a Nobel Prize laureate, is one of the 10 most challenged books of 2021. Some people want the book removed from school library shelves because they say it contains sexually explicit content and describes child sexual abuse.

Walker and other students may have to carry on reading books outside of the required lesson plans, if school boards continue to face demands to take books that discuss racism, gender, sexuality and history from school libraries.

Some students say white parents and Republican lawmakers are trying to keep them from learning by banning books, especially by Black authors.

Walker said students should read what they want to read and adults should be willing to talk to them about difficult subjects. “They don’t want stories that are different than their own to be heard, and I want to hear from those stories,” she said about those who are attempting to get books banned in schools.

Walker, who has a Black dad and a white mom, said she wants to read books by Black authors, because she is not learning enough about Black history. To help her gain a deeper understanding about race in America, she registered in an dual enrollment program at St. Charles Community College.

“I’ve always been the kind of student who’s like: ‘Oh, I want to know more about that. I’m going to go home and look it up or I’m going to read a book about it,’” Walker, 17, said. “I was tired of having to do that outside of class, rather than having that information provided for me.”

A group of students from University City High School also was determined to learn more about Black history. After studying the New York Times Magazine’s 1619 Project initiative, some high school students asked district officials in 2019 to provide more materials from the African American perspective by Black writers. Administrators agreed and encouraged them to produce their own projects to explore how race has played a role in the nation’s history.

University City High School junior Mouhamad Ly and his classmates participated in those projects, which led them to continue reading books that discuss racism and history, like “Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You” by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds. It was the second most challenged book in 2020.

Students need to keep reading books that discuss hard history with different perspectives to accurately reflect what has occurred over centuries, Ly said.

The 16-year-old said when teachers do not include materials on Black people, it makes him feel excluded in the classroom. He said some white people want to prevent students from learning the truth.

“Black history is American history, and it cannot be ignored,” Ly said. “It just needs to be addressed, and all Black students, white students and all students need to be able to learn about Black history if they want to.”

“Black history is American history, and it cannot be ignored.”

Mouhamad Ly, UCHS Class of 2023

Some white parents say teaching about race and history alienates white students and makes them feel as if they are oppressors. But another University City High School junior, Michael Simmons, said Black history is meant to teach where African Americans came from, the hardships they endured and how they contributed to the foundation of the country.

“Even though those things may be hard to deal with, it’s the truth,” Simmons, 17, said. “It happened, and there’s nothing we can do about it to change what happened, but accept it and do whatever we can to make sure that it doesn’t happen again.”

Simmons is one of the students who participated in the community’s reading of “The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story Book.”

A recent report by PEN America, a nonprofit that fights for freedom of expression, found that schools across the country banned 1,586 books in the past nine months. The American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom tracked 729 challenges to ban library books or university reading materials in 2021, which resulted in 1,597 book challenges or removal of reading materials. Association officials said it was the highest number of attempted book bans since they began gathering the list 20 years ago.

The Missouri Library Association does not keep track of statewide book challenges, but association officials said many Missouri parents mainly oppose certain books because they include obscenities or references to the sex lives of queer people.

Librarians and educators are the connection between readers and books, and it is the association’s responsibility to fight for books to stay on library shelves, association President Cindy Thompson said in February.

The group rejects claims that removing books will hide children from the ideas inside the books when students have access to them digitally.

Kirkwood High School senior Ajah Green has found materials and ideas about gender and sexuality that some parents are trying to shield from their children on social applications such as TikTok.

“You’re going to learn more on social media or if you don’t learn it somewhere, you’re going to look it up on the internet,” Green said. “So, I don’t think that they should ban or I don’t think that parents should choose what they want their children to read because they’re going to get exposed to it eventually.”

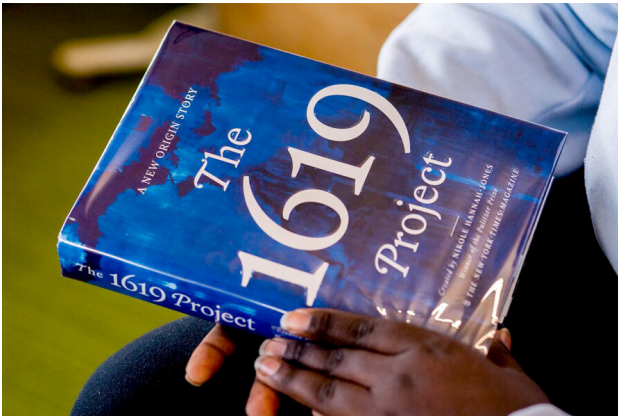
The 18-year-old said one of her favorite books is “The Hate U Give” by Angie Thomas. It discusses police violence toward African Americans and its effects. The book, published in 2017, has made the American Library Association’s 10 most challenged books list every year, except for 2019.

Green, who is Black, thinks the book should remain in school libraries because it teaches Black children how to be prepared to deal with police encounters and about discrimination.

“It shows what happens out in the real world today and what has been going on between the police and Black people in general,” Green, an avid



Michael Simmons
UCHS Class of 2023



Photos by Brian Munoz/St. Louis Public Radio



Mouhamad Ly, UCHS Class of 2023

Pioneering parents share fundraising across University City schools

By **BLYTHE BERNARD**, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

UNIVERSITY CITY — The imbalance of public funding for schools across rich and poor communities is well documented. What’s more hidden is the inequity driven by private donations from parents and local businesses.

Parent-teacher organizations can serve to enrich schools through donations for foreign language teachers, yoga classes or new science labs. Meanwhile, a majority of schools in lower-income areas lack the volunteers and resources to even organize a parent group.

The 50 richest PTOs in the country raise an average of \$851,000 for their schools each year, according to a 2017 report from the think tank Center for American Progress.

“Wealthy parents are raising large sums of money to improve their already-advantaged schools,” the authors wrote.

Superintendent Sharonica Hardin-Bartley of University City wanted to do something different. A few years ago, she gathered parents from the district’s schools to brainstorm new ideas for sharing resources.

The four elementary schools in University City range from poverty levels of 84% at Pershing to 50% at Flynn Park, where the PTO has had an annual budget of about \$25,000 in recent years.

The parents and administration decided to form One U City, a consolidation of the district’s separate PTOs that launched this summer with a single bank account.

One U City is the first such group in the St. Louis region and one of only a few in the country. As of July 1, the registered nonprofit made these moves:

- Each school’s PTO was renamed as a “community collaborative.”
- All funds were pooled into the One U City account.
- Donations cannot be made directly to a school, and schools cannot solicit funds.
- The common fund will be distributed with 60% to community events, meetings and staff appreciation. The remaining 40% will be split among the four elementary schools and Brittany Woods Middle School.

The One U City board will meet monthly, with representatives from each school and the district administration. Public meetings will be held quarterly with the boards from each school. Community events including a fall festival, winter chili cookoff and multicultural night will continue to rotate among the campuses.

“We wanted to get into each other’s spaces and think more broadly about the U. City community as opposed to ‘my’ child’s elementary school,” said Tricia Sanders, a district parent and one of the founders of One U City.

Some local districts including St. Louis Public Schools have their own nonprofit foundations, but individual schools still raise their own funds.

University City’s program is a rare example of equal revenue-sharing across schools. The Evanston/Skokie (Illinois) School District launched a similar program this year. In both districts, all students attend the same high school, making it a natural shift to combine resources in lower grades,

parents said.

Other school districts, including District of Columbia Public Schools, have tried to encourage higher-funded PTOs to donate a small portion of their budgets to a fund for lower-income schools, but participation has

been spotty. In the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District in California, plans to combine PTO funds across all schools fizzled when Malibu parents threatened to pull their donations.

“Nothing sinks a booster club faster than a parent thinking their kid isn’t getting a fair shake,” said Drew Englund of Parent Booster USA, a Florida nonprofit that helps PTOs navigate tax laws. “The biggest challenge is getting volunteers who are into raising money not just for their local kids but for all of the schools generally.”

In University City, some larger donors to Flynn Park balked at giving money if it wasn’t guaranteed to be used for the school, Sanders said.

“We told them we hoped they would continue to give, but we are starting to think holistically about our community,” Sanders said. “What’s good for all of our children is what’s best for each of our children.”

Sanders said One U City is also committed to preventing over-representation of white parents on the board to “make sure we aren’t creating the same thing with a different name.”

“We have this unique opportunity to try this,” Sanders said. “We hope that we’re able to show that it can work and we can do a lot better by our children and community.”

“We wanted to get into each other’s spaces and think more broadly about the U. City community as opposed to ‘my’ child’s elementary school.”

*Tricia Sanders,
One U City Founder*

Students want to read challenged books

Continued from page 12

reader, said. “It gives a real view to people who don’t really know — like other races — what we go through and what we are being accused of daily.”

Green wants to continue reading banned books by Black authors. She said without them she would miss out on learning about various Black experiences.

“Taking the books off shelves will affect the learning of students because they wouldn’t be able to know their history, because a lot Black authors write about history and students wouldn’t be able to learn their culture and they would be clueless in that subject.”

Pumpkin Stroll

& Trunk or Treat Return!

Sponsored by **One U City**

Saturday, October 29, 2022

University City High School
& Jackson Park Elementary School

- Carve pumpkins
- Get treats
- Stroll among 200 glowing, hand-carved jack-o-lanterns

Carving:
2 to 4:30 p.m.
outside UCHS (7401 Balson)

Drop-off your pumpkin at UCHS for display in the stroll: 2 to 4:30 p.m.

Stroll:
6 to 7:30 p.m.
UCHS stadium

Trunk or Treat

6 to 7:30 p.m.

Jackson Park Elementary School
7400 Balson (63130)

Needed! Hosts of car trunk stations & candy donations: oneucity@ucityschools.org

University City Community Rises Above Disaster to Help District Families

Devastating flooding during the last week of July forced University City residents from their homes and caused millions of dollars in property damage. About 30 University City Schools families and caregivers had to flee their homes or relocate after the flooding, and dozens more suffered intensive personal property loss.

The U. City community, rose immediately to the challenge with resources, empathy and support.

As news spread of the flooding in the early morning of July 26, the District and its many partners and supporters took action. By 6 a.m., District staff were on the streets, offering emergency van shuttles to help evacuate families. Pershing Elementary School was opened as a temporary emergency shelter for residents. Staff immediately began providing snacks, clothing and shoes from the University City Boutique, the district’s clothing pantry.

Within hours, the District fielded nearly 50 phone calls and emails from citizens asking how they could help. Under the leadership of the student services office, a donation center was set up in the Ronald E. McNair Administration Building on Olive Boulevard.

Volunteers from The Journey Hanley Road and One Family churches arrived immediately and began folding and sorting clothes into sizes. Emergency baskets featuring personal hygiene, household cleaning supplies and paper products were assembled. Throughout the afternoon, District staff and volunteers transported boxed lunches, blankets, pillows, extra clothes, supply baskets and shoes to assist families who had been relocated to the St. Louis County evacuation center at the Richmond Heights Community Center.

As the day continued, the University City Education Foundation established an online monetary donation site. The donations came in steadily. More than \$1,000 was raised overnight. By Thursday afternoon, donations had piled up into both conference rooms and the hallway of McNair. By the weekend, members of the University City Varsity Football Team were out in neighborhoods, helping residents remove debris and damaged items from homes. National news was celebrating rising sophomore John Trotter for his heroic efforts that led to the rescue of a young child trapped in rising floodwaters.

The District collected more than \$35,000 in monetary donations and more than a ton of household donations – so much so, that it halted donations to give volunteers time to catch up and get the items to families.

The donations have helped families with purchasing kitchen supplies, beds, dressers and pet supplies. Families continue to struggle with replacement housing, but the District has been reaching out to ensure their children are safe and ready to learn. The work to support our students, parents, caregivers and staff continues.



Within hours of disastrous flooding in University City, community and district volunteers came together at the McNair Administration Building and began collecting, sorting and distributing donated supplies such as shoes, clothing, personal hygiene products and household cleaning products to families in need.

Congratulations!

2021-22
Teacher of the Year



Brea Hieke
University City
High School

2021-22
Educational Support
Person of the Year



Jasmine Jones
Jackson Park
Elementary School



Marie Smith
Julia Goldstein
Early Childhood
Education Center



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<i>See page 3 for University City Board of Education members and their liaison assignments</i>	

Julia Goldstein Early Childhood Education Center	290-4390
737 Kingsland Avenue, University City, MO 63130	
Principal: Crystal Cauley - ccauley@ucityschools.org	290-4391
Secretary: Barbara Dickerson - bdickerson@ucityschools.org	290-4391
Nurse: Pat Wilson - pwilson@ucityschools.org	290-4393
Well-Being Specialist: Crystal Webb - cwebb@ucityschools.org	290-4391

Barbara C. Jordan Elementary School	290-4360
1500 North 82nd Boulevard, University City, MO 63132	
Principal: Dorlita Adams - dadams@ucityschools.org	290-4361
Secretary: Darlene Holliday - dholliday@ucityschools.org	290-4361
Nurse: Dr. Ramona Symonette - rsymonette@ucityschools.org	290-4362
Social Worker: Rosa Vance - rvance@ucityschools.org	290-4407
Counselor: Anita Qualls - aqualls@ucityschools.org	290-4364
Well-Being Specialist: Jamal Bailey - jbailey@ucityschools.org	290-4361
After-School Care: Shawnica Andrews - sandrews@upstl.org	269-7502

Flynn Park Elementary School	290-4420
7220 Waterman Avenue, University City, MO 63130	
Principal: Nicalee Wilson - nwilson@ucityschools.org	290-4421
Secretary: Portia House - phouse@ucityschools.org	290-4421
Nurse: Cherich Jones - cherichjones@ucityschools.org	290-4422
Social Worker: Sara Goede - sgoede@ucityschools.org	290-4397
Counselor: Jona Ross - jross@ucityschools.org	290-4424
Well-Being Specialist: Jamal Bailey - jbailey@ucityschools.org	290-4421
After-School Care: Rachele Johnson-Bell - rjohnsonbell@upstl.org	728-1254

Jackson Park Elementary School	290-4450
7400 Balson Avenue, University City, MO 63130)	
Principal: Rebecca O'Connell - roconnell@ucityschools.org	290-4451
Secretary: Laela Weems - laweems@ucityschools.org	290-4451
Nurse: Johnnye Farrell - jfarrell@ucityschools.org	290-4453
Social Worker: Christine Parks - cparks@ucityschools.org	290-4456
Counselor: Shalonda Haynes - shaynes@ucityschools.org	290-4455
Well-Being Specialist: Craig Morris - cmorris@ucityschools.org	290-4490
After-School Care: Shanise Lewis - slewis@upstl.org	290-4055

Pershing Elementary School	290-4150
6761 Bartmer Avenue, University City, MO 63130	
Co-Principal: Deitra Colquitt - dcolquitt@ucityschools.org	290-4152
Co-Principal: Jessica Hawkins - jhawkins@ucityschools.org	290-4152
Office Coordinator: Krista Jones - krjones@ucityschools.org	290-4152
Nurse: Patricia Chandler - pchandler@ucityschools.org	290-4155
Social Worker: Stacey Miller - smiller@ucityschools.org	290-4160
Counselor: Michelle Turner - miturner@ucityschools.org	290-4154
Well-Being Specialist: Craig Morris - cmorris@ucityschools.org	290-4153
After-School Care: Donyalde Sherrod - dsherrod@upstl.org	680-1796

Brittany Woods Middle School	290-4280
8125 Groby Road, University City, MO 63130	
Principal: Justin Davis - judavis@ucityschools.org	290-4280
Secretary/Athletics: Kimberly Walker - kwalker@ucityschools.org ...	290-4278
Assistant Principals:	290-4281
Yvonne Rooks (6th grade) - yrooks@ucityschools.org	
Catherine Pautsch (7th grade) - cpautsch@ucityschools.org	
Pablo Flinn (8th grade) - pflinn@ucityschools.org	
Dean of Students: Joe Green - jgreen@ucityschools.org	290-4280
Nurse: Cristin Latimore - clatimore@ucityschools.org	290-4286
Social Worker: LaKaysha Shields - lshields@ucityschools.org	290-4238
Counselors:	
Scharma Banks (6th grade) - sbanks@ucityschools.org	
Kristen Collins (7th grade) - krcollins@ucityschools.org	
Kellie Willis (8th grade) - kwillis@ucityschools.org	
Registrar: Lorna Nichols - lnichols@ucityschools.org	290-4293
Well-Being Specialist: Crystal Webb - cwebb@ucityschools.org	290-4280

University City High School	290-4100
7401 Balson Avenue, University City, MO 63130	
Principal/Director of Secondary Education: Michael Peoples	
- mpeoples@ucityschools.org	
Secretary: Britini Ward - bward@ucityschools.org	
Receptionist: Jaki Cooke - jcooke@ucityschools.org	
Associate Principal: Kimberly Austin - kaustin@ucityschools.org	
Assistant Principal: Ernest Carter - ecarter@ucityschools.org	
Dean of Students: Lawndale Thomas - lthomas@ucityschools.org	
Athletic Director: David (Matt) Brooks - dbrooks@ucityschools.org	
Sports Medicine: Ashley Jenkins - ajenkins@ucityschools.org	
Nurse: Kendress Hughes - khughes@ucityschools.org	
Social Worker: Christine Woodward - cwoodward@ucityschools.org	
Counselors (Last Names):	
Counseling Secretary: Bella Quintal - bquintal@ucityschools.org	
Kimberly Merrill (Lead/Early College) - kimerrill@ucityschools.org	
Theresa Covington (A-G) - tcovington@ucityschools.org	
Melvin Bond (H-O) - mbond@ucityschools.org	
April Money (P-Z) - apmoney@ucityschools.org	
Registrar: Robyn Murry - rmurry@ucityschools.org	
Well-Being Specialist: Darren Brooks - dabrooks@ucityschools.org	

Lieberman Learning Center	290-4330
7401 Balson Avenue, University City, MO 63130	
Director: Paula Sams - pasams@ucityschools.org	290-4330
Secretary: Annette Allen - aallen@ucityschools.org	290-4330
Counselor: Cynthia Ross - cross@ucityschools.org	290-4025
Well-Being Specialist: Kelvin Lee - klee@ucityschools.org	290-4064
See UCHS for Nurse and Social Worker	

Legal notices for school families (www.ucityschools.org/LegalNotices)

- The following policies and information important for families are available in parent/student handbooks as well as the District website at www.ucityschools.org/LegalNotices. Please take time to read them. If you have any questions, please contact the office of Communications at (314) 290-4001 or email communications@ucityschools.org.
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** was signed by President Obama on Dec. 10, 2015, to replace the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002. ESSA was enacted to ensure educational equity and ultimately, to close the achievement gap. It maintains that all children, no matter where they live, what income level, what type of family unit or what challenges they have – all are entitled to a quality education. ESSA includes:
 - Title I.A:** Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged
 - Title II:** Preparing, Training and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers, Principals, and Other School Leaders
 - Title III:** Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students
 - Title IV.A:** 21st Century SchoolsAll are federal programs under ESSA aimed at closing the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility and choice. More details including ESSA's Parents Right to Know letter and Complaint Procedures are available at www.ucityschools.org/LegalNotices. Any additional questions should be directed to Rebecca Soriano at (314) 290-4020 or via email at rsoriano@ucityschools.org.
 - ADA accommodations:** The School District of University City wants all students, parents, staff and community members to be able to attend and enjoy District events, meetings and activities. For special assistance or accommodations to participate, contact the office of Operations at (314) 290-4044.

- English Language Learners** are offered appropriate instructional services and content modifications, as needed based on assessments.
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** Parents/guardians and students who are at least 18 years of age have rights regarding education records. FERPA explains these rights and offers a process to file complaints if those rights are violated.
- Students In Foster Care:** The School District of University City is committed to the identification, support and enrollment of foster care students living within the District. For more information, contact Gary Spiller at (314) 290-4045.
- The McKinney-Vento Education Assistance Act** protects the rights of school-aged children of homeless and migrant workers. The executive director of Student Services serves as the link between homeless families and school staff, district personnel, shelter workers and social service providers. For more information, contact the District's homeless liaison, Gary Spiller, at (314) 290-4045.
- Notice of Non-Discrimination** is printed on the back cover of all issues of PRIDE as well as other school and District publications.
- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)** affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes and certain physical exams.
- Senate Bill 319** calls for early reading assessments, reading improvement plans and student retention.
- Students with Disabilities** are offered services in partnership with the Special School District of St. Louis County to all eligible children ages 3 to 21, with disabilities, under the District's jurisdiction.

University City Board of Education

Matthew Bellows, President
Lisa Brenner, Ph.D., Vice President
LaVerne Ford-Williams, Secretary
George Lenard, Director
Joanne Soudah, Director
Monica Stewart, Ed.D., Director
Interim TBD, Director

The School District of University City

Sharonica L. Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D. PHR
Superintendent of Schools
Nancy Cambria,
Communications Director
CarolAnn Cole & Amanda Isom
Communications Specialists

314-290-4000 • www.ucityschools.org

Michael Simmons, Student Representative

Applicants for admission or employment, students, parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, vendors of physical and applicants for employment and all professional organizations that have entered into agreements with the School District of University City, are hereby notified that the District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. In addition, the District provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Any person having inquiries concerning the District's compliance with the laws and regulations implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, The IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title IX, the Age Discrimination Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) or the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, is directed to the respective Compliance Coordinator listed below, who oversees the school district's efforts to comply with the laws and regulations implementing the laws and regulations cited above. The School District has established grievance procedures for persons unable to resolve problems arising under the statutes above. The School District's Compliance Coordinator will provide information regarding these procedures upon request. Any person who is unable to resolve a problem or grievance arising under any of the laws and regulations cited above may contact the Office for Civil Rights, Region VII at 800 West Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, Missouri 64114 or 866-666-6650. Adult and Employee Compliance Coordinator: Dawn Superintendent: Ronald E. McKee Administrative Building, School District of University City, 7700 Olive Blvd., University City, MO 63130, 314-990-4021. Student Compliance Coordinator: Director of Student Services, Ronald E. McKee Administrative Building, School District of University City, 7700 Olive Blvd., University City, MO 63130, 314-990-4065.

Key Dates for the 2022-23 School Year

October 14..... UCHS Hall of Fame (2021) *Reservations required: www.ucityschools.org/HOFTickets*

October 15..... UCHS Homecoming Parade, Game and Dance

October 22 Community Meeting: Learning Reimagined

October 25 Community Meeting: Learning Reimagined

October 29 One U City Trunk or Treat and Pumpkin Stroll at Jackson Park and University City High Schools

November 1..... See Our Schools - All Elementary Schools

November 9 See Our Schools - University City High School

November 10..... See Our Schools - Brittany Woods Middle School

November 15 STEAM Expo at Brittany Woods Middle School

November 16 Returning Artist (Scott Black) Reception at University City High School Pruitt Library

February 5..... One U City Spice and Spark: Chili Cook-Off and Community Action Expo at Flynn Park School

March 11..... One U City Multicultural/Passport Night, location TBD

April 21..... District Arts Night at University City High School

May 2 Growing Together Plant Giveaway at Brittany Woods Middle School

May 6 One U City Adult Trivia Night, location TBD

May 14..... One U City Growing Together Year-End Celebration, location TBD

May 23 UCHS Class of 2023 Commencement at Chaifetz Arena

Save the Dates! Your Input Needed

The District is seeking community input from the University City Community on its vision of Learning Reimagined with the intention of updating its strategic plan.

Saturday, October 22

from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

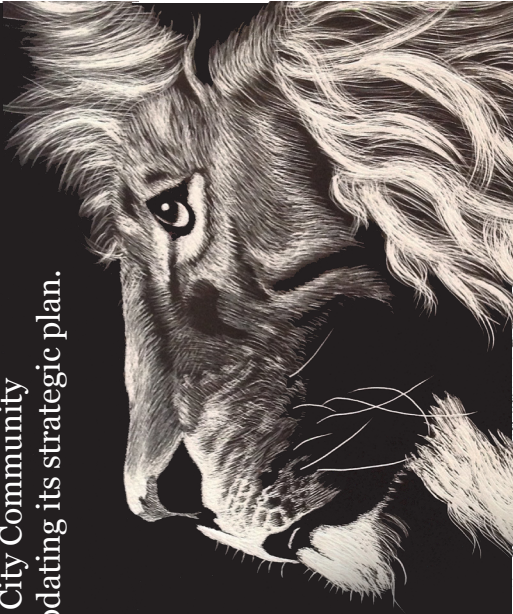
or

Tuesday, October 25

from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Location to be determined.

More information coming soon!



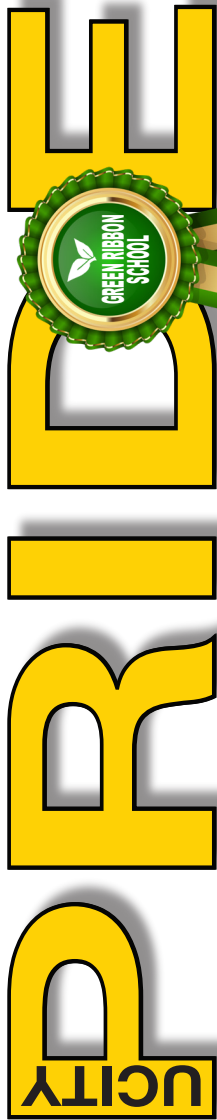
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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
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Transform the Life of Every Student Every Day!

A publication for and about The School District of University City, Missouri

September 2022

This Issue's Highlights:

- Be the Change Initiative Highlights Well-Being and Mental Health at UCHS
- District Honored as a Prestigious U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Sustainability Awardee
- One U City is Growing
- Meet the BWMS Pollinator Squad
- Community Rises Above Flooding to Help One Another