



THE
PIPER PRESS

VOLUME 1 | ISSUE 7

Photograph by: Lucy Menzies



Piper USD 203

INCLUSIVITY | INNOVATION | COMMUNITY | INTEGRITY | PASSION



FROM *the* HELM

A Message from the Superintendent, Dr. Jessica Dain



Dear Students, Parents, Patrons, and Staff of the Piper School District:

Summer greetings to all of you! I hope this letter finds you enjoying the warm and sunny days, embracing the joy and relaxation that this season brings. As we wrap-up on this well-deserved break, I wanted to take a moment to share some exciting updates and celebrate the growth and achievements of our remarkable school district.

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to our incredible students, whose dedication and hard work continue to inspire us. This past academic year was filled with accomplishments, from exceptional academic achievements to artistic and athletic triumphs. Your commitment to excellence has not gone unnoticed, and I am immensely proud of each and every one of you.

Our district experienced substantial growth, more than 200 students, and I am thrilled to share that we have welcomed numerous talented educators, administrators, and support staff who share our vision for delivering outstanding education. Their passion and expertise have further enriched our educational community, fostering an environment of collaboration, creativity, and innovation.

In line with our commitment to providing a well-rounded education, our district has expanded extracurricular programs and initiatives to cater to diverse interests and talents. From robotics clubs to Middle School STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) core classes, Wall to Wall Academies to Market Value Assets, our students have ample opportunities to explore their passions, develop essential life skills, and make lasting memories with their peers.

Additionally, we have invested in technology upgrades installing Interactive Flat Panels across our schools, ensuring that our students have access to cutting-edge resources and digital learning tools. These advancements will empower our students to thrive in an increasingly digital world, equipping them with the skills necessary for future success.

As we look forward to the upcoming school year, I assure you that our district remains committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all students. We will continue prioritizing safety and security measures and working collaboratively with local stakeholders to ensure the well-being of our school communities.

I encourage you to stay connected with our district through our website, social media channels, and email communications. This is where we share construction updates, important announcements, and engaging content to keep you informed and involved in our educational journey.

Lastly, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our dedicated parents and staff members. Your unwavering support, efforts, and commitment have been instrumental in our district's growth and success. Together, we are creating a nurturing environment where our students can thrive and reach their full potential.

I look forward to the exciting opportunities and achievements that await us in the coming year. Stay safe, stay curious, and let's make the most of this wonderful season!

Proud to be a Pirate,

Jessica



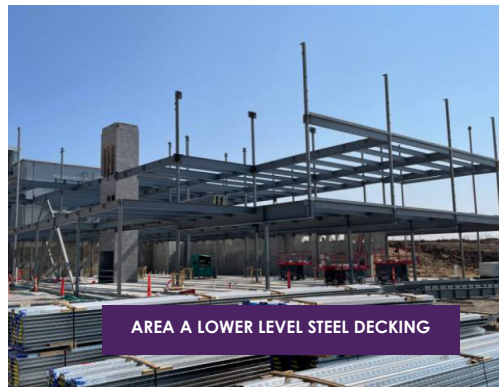
WHAT'S NEW WITH PETE? CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

Pete the Construction Pirate has had quite the busy summer! Continue to stay engaged with the District's social media pages and bi-monthly mailers to monitor the two-week progression videos and stay up-to-date with the all things "Piper Construction!"

Below, find recent progress photos. Scan the QR code to watch the latest construction update video.



AREA D AUX GYM BASEMENT



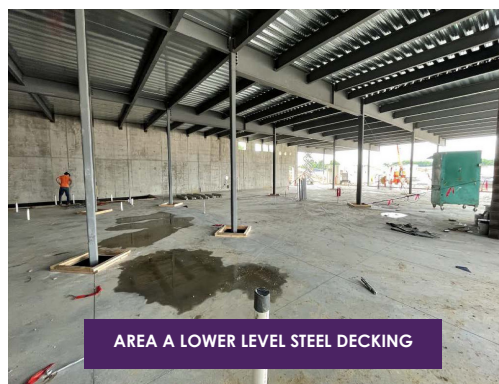
AREA A LOWER LEVEL STEEL DECKING



AREA D THEATER PIT



AREA D AUXILIARY GYM BASEMENT



AREA A LOWER LEVEL STEEL DECKING



AREA C PRECAST



AREA B THEATER PIT



STEEL AND PRECAST ERECTION-NORTHWEST VIEW



AREA C GYMNASIUM PRECAST PANELS



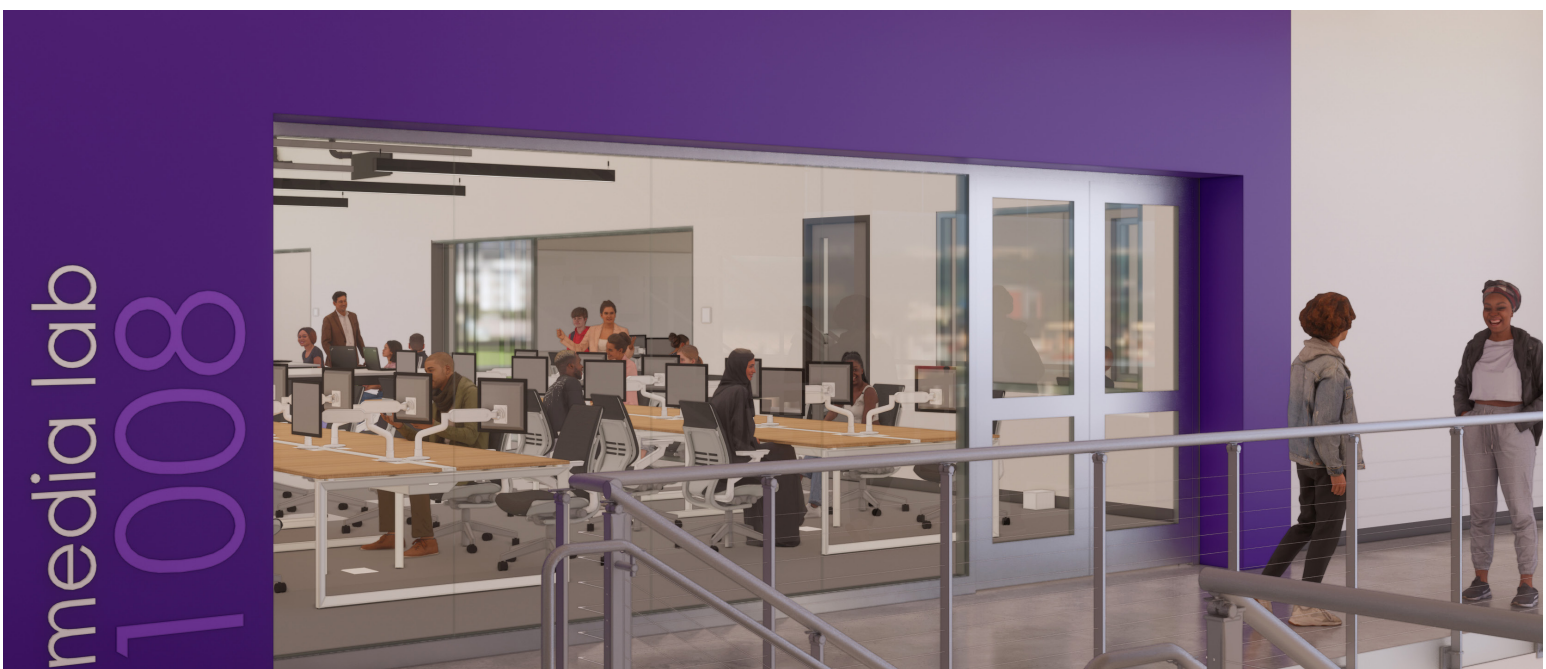


In 2021, incite Design Studio (the district's design/architecture firm) and Piper USD 203 completed a long range assessment and facilities plan. During the assessment, several key projects were identified by the community, including a new high school building. Currently serving as the district's Piper Creek Elementary School (grades 3 through 5), the remodel is underway to convert and create a cohesive wall-to-wall academy high school, the first of its kind in the state of Kansas.

The design demonstrates a lab-based learning environment, focused on experiential learning. The current space is being repurposed into "learning lab pods" to include multiple areas of education including theater, graphics, media and science. The additions displayed in the progress photos are comprised of multi-use spaces, where each area is focused around the idea of hands-on learning.

The next few pages highlight the renderings designed by iDS, and what the finished product will look like!









New EDUCATOR WELCOME



TAYLOR McEACHRON

3rd Grade & Dance Team Assistant Coach

As a Piper alumn I am so grateful to be coming back to the district that I grew up in. I am most excited to take part in the traditions that I grew up doing as well as making new ones with my future class and dance team. I can't wait to see the growth of the district!

Hobbies

Dance is a major part of my life. Throughout school I was part of a studio for 11 years where I competed as well as taught classes. I was on the high school dance team for all four years and continued dancing at Baker University.

Hobbies

Reading, writing, gardening unique fruits and veggies, and playing Dungeons and Dragons with friends.

EM DePRIEST

Piper High School English 1 and Reading Lab

I am excited to be an educator in a school where student access and creating future citizens is so important. It is so awesome that I'll be a part of a great community of teachers, families, and students where I can grow as an educator. Meeting and getting to know all the kids might be the most exciting thing! It is going to be a great year!



Hobbies

I enjoy woodworking, coaching baseball, playing golf, fishing, smoking meats, and playing video games.



AARON WARNEKE

7th Grade Science

I get to work in the same building as my wife! I'm also looking forward to starting a new year and trying out new instructional strategies.

Hobbies

I really enjoy hiking (real trail hiking, not walking paths), and I build restore electric guitars in my spare time. I hope to incorporate this into the classroom one of these years.

PETE DIEHL

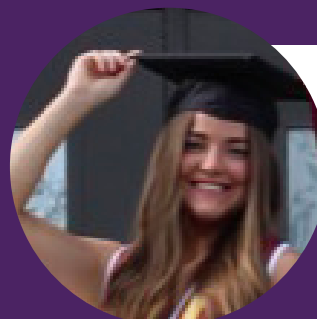
Piper High School Physics

I'm anxious to build a strong physics program and get students excited about what makes stuff work. I'm also excited to be working with a Cross Country team again.



Hobbies

I enjoy being active, working out and going for runs. I love to hang out with friends and family and explore new places!



AVERY KAMIENSKI

Piper High School Physical Education

I'm excited to start off my teaching career in a supportive school and team! I cannot wait to work alongside amazing students and staff each day!



**KELSEY ANSELM**

Piper High School Assistant Principal

I am so excited to be surrounded by a community of people who are on a mission to be GREAT! I am coming from a very large district in Texas. I'm overjoyed about coming to a smaller, yet fast growing district like Piper. Proud to be a Pirate already!

Hobbies

If I am not at work you can catch me being outside and active. I love to play golf, run, ride bikes, and rock climb! I also have a five year old golden retriever named Teddy who loves walks and playing fetch. I am a former college basketball player at Benedictine College Although my playing days are over, I still love to watch any and all sports. Go Chiefs!

Hobbies

I have 3 boys, 2 dogs, a cat, and a husband who all keep me busy. My favorite color is green, although K-State purple is a close 2nd. You will find me every morning with a cup of coffee in my hands, which helps me to be more of a morning person. I enjoy hiking, traveling, paddleboarding, reading, and crafting.

DARCY STRONG

2nd Grade Special Education



I have heard great things about the Piper community and I am excited to be a part of it. I am looking forward to learning and growing together.

**MICHELLE FOSTER**

1st Grade Teacher

I'm thrilled to be teaching first grade again - I can't wait to dive in with the team and soar into the new year!

Hobbies

I'm a busy mom of 4 & have been married for almost 20 years. I adore cooking and baking - it's like therapy for me- learning and making new recipes is my jam (see what I did there?!). I'm also an avid gardener and backyard beekeeper. We stay busy with kid events and love spending time with friends and family!

Hobbies

I enjoy spending time with family, friends, and my German Shepherd outside of work. Spending time outside is one of my favorite things to do whether it's reading a book on the patio or biking with Ellie, my dog.

MAKAYLA TITTLE

Early Childhood Center Teacher



After spending the spring semester substituting, I am excited to have a permanent place in the Piper community. I am excited to learn and grow as an educator from such a supportive and experienced team!

**JAKE HANSON**

Piper High School Psychology

Supporting students and staff as well as promoting mental health awareness.

Hobbies

I moved to Kansas City from Chicago in High School. Played and coached baseball in college and then high school for 15 years (several with Mike Williams, Piper Facilities Director). I have 2 kids, Grace just graduated and is going to be attending OU next year. Quinn is a Sophomore here at Piper. I enjoy travelling, spending time with family, fishing, hunting, kayaking.



**SARAH ANDERSON**

Piper High School Biology and Plant Science

I'm excited to work with a different age group of students, as well as teaching a specialized science course.

Hobbies

I have a baby named Oliver who was born last August, a house full of plants, I crochet things, and I watch all of the Harry Potter movies at least twice a year.

Hobbies

Hiking and exploring National Parks, following my kiddos around to their activities, listening to quirky books on Audible, and I've recently taken up gardening.

LAURA MOORE

Mental Health Professional



I am thrilled to be serving the mental health needs of students in the Piper district. As a mental health clinician for over 12 years, I am looking forward to building a strong mental health program that will benefit our most at-risk students. Also, as a Piper parent myself, I know that this school system is exceptional and it's one where I can't wait to begin establishing lasting relationships with staff, students, and their families.

**KRYSTINA WILLIAMS**

5th Grade Teacher

I am so excited to join Pirate Nation! I'm eager to meet my 5th graders and their families as well as the rest of the Piper community!

Hobbies

I live in KCK with my husband, Dylan, and our rescue dog, Arrow! We love going to BarK to hang out on some weekends and we love getting out and exploring what the Metro area has to offer! When I'm relaxing at home I love to read, build LEGO sets, dabble in some video games, and work on puzzles!

Hobbies

I am married to a middle school teacher. I have three kids. One is a freshman at JCCC, one is a sophomore and my youngest is a 7th grader. I also have my own soccer club.

JOSHUA WIKLER

9th Grade Special Education Teacher



I am excited to be a part of the Piper team that works so well together! I have had to listen to my friends at Piper talk about how amazing it is and now I get to experience it!

**MELANIE COATE**

Piper Creek Speech-Language Pathologist

Everybody I have talked to in the Piper District has been so positive and happy to be a part of the Piper team--I am excited to be part of the team too! I am looking forward to working with some former friends/colleagues and making new friends.

Hobbies

I live with my husband and (world's greatest) dog. I have two grown sons and 3 grandchildren with a grandson on the way. I really like being a speech-language pathologist and taking courses to keep learning more. In my free time I enjoy walking and hiking with my dog, nature photography, and reading.





LAUREN PETER
9-12 Life Skills/Special Education

I'm excited for the opportunity to join a new school district, staff and students this year and continue to find creative ways to meet students' needs, help students learn and grow and make a difference! In turn, I have no doubt I will grow tremendously as well through this new opportunity!

Hobbies
I love to write, spend time at the lake and in nature, play pickle ball and tennis, quality time with friends and family, travel to see new places, watch my 20 year old son chase his dreams, volunteer and find creative ways to make a difference, bake all the things I shouldn't eat but still do, and live life to the fullest one day at a time. :)

Hobbies
I'm from Spring Hill, KS and my husband and I are excited to live in the KC metro. I enjoy reading, baking, traveling, and playing with my dog, Cricket!

SERENA KEENAN
Piper Prairie Elemenatry School Counselor



What excites me the most about joining the Piper team is meeting all the students, staff, and learning about the Piper community!



JESS WELLS
Piper Early Childhood & Piper Prairie School Psychologist

I am so thrilled and ecstatic to be back HOME with my fabulous Piper coworkers. It's been 2 years too long. I'm incredibly excited to meet new colleagues and work with teachers and teams across the district. Serving and working for Piper and Piper families is a dream of mine.

Hobbies
I love running, reading, and spending time with my two daughters and husband. I am obsessed with coffee and Starbucks and love curling up with a cup of coffee and a book.

Hobbies
I enjoy golf, reading and pilates.

ANNE HOLT
Piper High School Counselor



I've worked with Bilee Jo Grable in the past and have a lot of respect for her leadership. After two years in catholic schools, I'm looking forward to being back in the public schools!



CIERRA JONES
4th-5th Grade Special Education Teacher

I am excited to meet new teachers on the Piper team who also share a passion for teaching. I look forward to continue in my learning along side my teammates to become better educators! I am excited to be part of the team too! I am looking forward to working with some former friends/colleagues and making new friends.

Hobbies
I completed my undergrad at Kansas State University. I completed my masters program in Special Education at Fort Hays State University. I have worked as a special education teacher for the last 4 years in the Kansas City area. My family is from Wisconsin and I have 3 younger sisters and a puppy named Kaden. I enjoy being outside, love reading and watching sporting events.

**CHUCK CONNOR**

8th Grade Academy Prep

Getting to know, and build relationships with students and staff. I look forward to getting involved in the Piper community!

Hobbies

I enjoy watching and playing sports, traveling, and spending time with friends and family.

Hobbies

I love to spend time with my family! When not working, I enjoy daily walks and reading a good book.

BETH HALDA

Piper Middle School Psychologist

I am really excited to get to know the Piper Middle School staff and collaborate with them to address our students' needs!

**JOSH BROWN**

Piper Creek Elementary School Psychologist

Getting to meet all of the great families in the community as well as getting to help the students I work with reach their potential every day.

Hobbies

I was born and raised outside of Pittsburg, Kansas and moved to Kansas City with my wife in 2020. I enjoy Star Wars, drumming, DnD, and anything K-State/Philly sports! When I'm not at work my wife and I love trying new restaurants around the city and being outside with our dog.

Hobbies

I enjoy reading, gardening, and traveling with my family.

SARAH OCHS

Piper Middle School Special Education Teacher

I'm excited for my new role as a Special Education teacher at Piper Middle School.

**JORDAN WAGNER**

4th Grade Teacher

I am very excited to come back to my alma mater and to teach with people that taught me. I can't wait to teach the next generation of Piper Pirates.

Hobbies

I enjoy playing with my dogs, KU basketball, doing puzzles and hanging out with friends and family.





ALYSSA McGILL
Piper High School Mathematics

I am excited to be in a new environment and get to know my new co-workers.

Hobbies
I enjoy spending time with family and friends. I also enjoy painting pictures in my free time. I have a dog that I enjoy going on walks with.



HANNAH WILLIAMS
Piper High School Library Media Specialist

I am really excited to join Piper because I love working in a school that has a small town feel in the big city. I am also excited to join Piper high school and work with a talented group of older students.

Hobbies
I have been a Kansan all my life and I was born in Augusta, Kansas. I am in a book club and I cross stitch and embroider in my off time. I also play bunco with friends and I love to sing karaoke when I get the chance.



BOB LOCKWOOD
Piper Prairie Elementary School Physical Education

I am excited about coming home to my community, and seeing our students grow throughout their Piper journey.

Hobbies
I have three children that are Piper students, and one that just graduated last year. I am in my 10th year of coaching track at Piper, and will be an assistant coach for cross country and middle school basketball. I spend most of my time involved in my children's activities. My other hobbies include being a Jayhawk alumni, and playing in a band with my family.

Additional New Educator Welcomes:

- Amanda Adams, 3rd Grade Teacher
- Eleanor Ballay, Piper Middle School Math
- Ashlynn Villaca, Piper Middle School Vocal Music
- Diane Fleming, Special Education Coordinator
- Amy Fontaine, 5th Grade Teacher
- Meghan Fuller, Piper Middle School Counselor
- Leslie Higgindotham, Piper Middle School Science
- Ashley Hruska, Piper Middle School Speech Pathologist
- Jeremy Shields, Piper Middle School Social Studies
- Kodi Shouse, Piper Middle School Counselor
- Lauren Simpson, 1st Grade Teacher



MORGAN HUNTER
EDUCATION

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Find the right fit with us as a Substitute Teacher and leave a lasting impact on our students.

APPLY TODAY!

- Enjoy a rewarding career helping our local students
- Make your own schedule
- Receive weekly paychecks





GIVE BACK BY GOING BACK

morganhuntereducation.com • 866-923-6433

Summer HAPPENINGS



There is no "breaking" for the summer when it comes to our Piper students! Wonderful to see all of the athletes this summer spanning across all age groups working to better their skills and develop lasting relationships with their peers and teammates!



INTERESTED?

Advertise to more than 3,500 residents in the Piper community!

Contact Katelyn Kaminski at katelyn.kaminski@piperschools.us for information and pricing options.

WHAT'S *New* ?



Piper Superintendent, Dr. Jessica Dain, visited Washington D.C. with fellow school administrators this month for the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Advocacy Conference. The group visited with Kansas Third District Representative Sharice Davids, retired Kansas Senator Pat Roberts, and Kansas Senator Jerry Moran's staff to discuss important advocacy issues including special education, universal preschool, and teacher retention tax credits and benefits. Dr. Dain sits on the AASA Region 2 Governing Board and is one of 16 administrators to serve on the AASA National Executive Board. AASA advocates for equitable access to the highest quality public education for ALL students. The group of administrators from Kansas that accompanied Dr. Dain on the visits were G.A. Buie, Executive Director at United Schools Administrators of Kansas, Adrian Howie, Superintendent Hugoton USD 210, Michelle Hubbard, Superintendent of Shawnee Mission School District USD 512 and Bryce Wachs, Superintendent of Fort Larned USD 495.

PIPER AWARDED SAFE & SECURE GRANT FUNDING

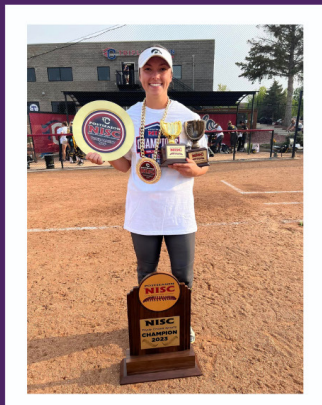
The Kansas State Board of Education awarded Piper USD 203 with a \$39,500 Safe and Secure Grant this month. Funds from the grant will be allocated to purchasing two-way radios for every administrator and Security Resource Officer in each of the buildings on campus. In addition, the funds will be utilized to correct cellular failures at Piper Prairie Elementary School.

What does this mean for student and staff safety?

The two-way radio project creates a walkie-talkie network that works district-wide, so that we have instant access to each building in the event of an emergency, despite power or network failures.

The cellular project is to correct a failure at Prairie Elementary building, where there is poor cellular signal for any of the four major cell carriers. Correcting this error will ensure that in an event of an emergency, members of staff (or even students) can utilize their cellular device to dial 911. The project will provide carrier boosting and repeating throughout the building so that anyone with a cell phone, regardless of carrier, can dial 911.

ALUMNI *Spotlight*



GRACE BANER C/O 2020

Grace, a junior at the University of Iowa, earned the MVP award during the NISC Tournament this Spring. She hit two home runs in Iowa's championship victory against Brigham Young University.



GRANT LOCKWOOD C/O 2022

Grant, a freshman at the University of Kansas, competed in the USA Track & Field Championship in Eugene, Oregon this July in the 400 meter run.

SHARE YOUR ALUMNI NEWS!

Email Katelyn Kaminski at
katelyn.kaminski@piperschools.us

Piper Fest



Power of Community

SAVE THE DATE

9-23-23

PIPER FEST 5K | PANCAKE BREAKFAST
SILENT AUCTION | CAR SHOW | CARNIVAL
FOOD TRUCKS | VENDORS



PIPER EDUCATIONAL
FOUNDATION
PARTNERING TO FUEL THE TRADITION OF SUCCESS

SILENT AUCTION ITEMS NEEDED!

PIPER FEST 2023 - 9/23/23

Your donation of products or services for the Silent Auction help fund programs to enhance the education of more than 2,800 students in the Piper School District!

FOR AUCTION INFORMATION OR TO MAKE A
DONATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

HARMONIE HAWES (913) 526-9546 | SANDY HENNESSEY (816) 590-1503

RETURN ADDRESS LOCATION

POSTAL
INDICIA
LOCATION



Now

HIRING

KITCHEN STAFF

Piper USD 203 School District

Benefits:

- Incredible Work Culture
- Working with Children in a Fun Environment
- No Nights, No Weekends
- Flexible Hours
- Opportunity for Advancement
- Competitive Wages



scan me!



Apply Today

type into your web browser
www.opaajobs.com

Opaa! Food Management is an *Equal Opportunity Employer*

Now Hiring!

PART-TIME HOURLY EMPLOYEES



Bus Drivers are an integral part of the communities they serve. They are committed to safety, customer service and have genuine, caring attitudes for children. We are your friends, family and neighbors!

We are proud to offer:

- Training leading to a commercial drive's license (CDL)
- No nights, weekends or holidays required.
- opportunities for additional hours
- competitive hourly wages

To qualify, you must be at least 21 years of age, have a valid driver's license, a safe driving record and be able to pass a background check and drug test.

Walk in interviews at
12036 Leavenworth
Kansas City, KS 66109
978-408-0845.

Benefits

HEALTH

FSA

DENTAL

SUPPLEMENTAL

LEGAL

LIFE & DISABILITY

401k

EAP

DISCOUNTS



SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION

