

Kalamazoo Public Schools

EXCELSIOR

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September 2023 · Volume 26, Issue 8



KMSI Discoveries: Scientific and Personal

(STORY AND PHOTOS ON PAGES 8-9)

WELCOME

New Board
of Education
Trustee Takisha
Johnson

pg. 3



WELCOME BACK!

KPS Grad
Naomi Johnson
comes full circle

pg. 10



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** ECRWS **

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Anything Is Possible in the New Year

I'M THE new kid in town. And, I'm just being honest with you, it can be hard to be the new kid. No one knows you. Everyone is pointing and talking — until you come into the room and then they're just looking. And the hardest time to be the new kid is at the start of the school year.

A Message from the Superintendent



Dr. Darrin Slade

Why is that hard? Because in addition to being new and trying to figure out who everybody is, you have to learn your way around the school, what the classes are like, what to eat in the cafeteria, what the rules are, what the fight song is. You have to figure

out what sports you're going to try out for — and you need a plan to ace the science test and become the captain of the team.

All said, there's a lot of work to do when you're the new kid in town. But as difficult as that can be, it can also be the most exciting time because everything is new and anything is possible.

Anything is possible.

Especially in a great school district like Kalamazoo Public Schools.

I have never been in a community with so many resources, with such a large number of community partners, with such strong support from community members who give their time and financial support, and with a tremendous opportunity like The Kalamazoo Promise. These are things that other school districts

wish they had for their students.

This is also a district with a highly committed school board, a dedicated staff of talented teachers, administrators, and support personnel. This is a team that wants to do its best for its students.

This is also a school district that can do more — has to do more — for Kalamazoo's children.

Our graduation rates are good for some subgroups, but those numbers need to improve for all groups. There are some students who attend school on a regular basis, but we need more children at their desks every day, because we know you can't learn if you aren't in school. This is a district that engages some students, but we need every student to find the activity, the relationship, the way of learn-

ing that keeps them coming back excited to learn every day. This is a district that has to expand opportunities for students, parents, and community members to be involved with each other and their schools.

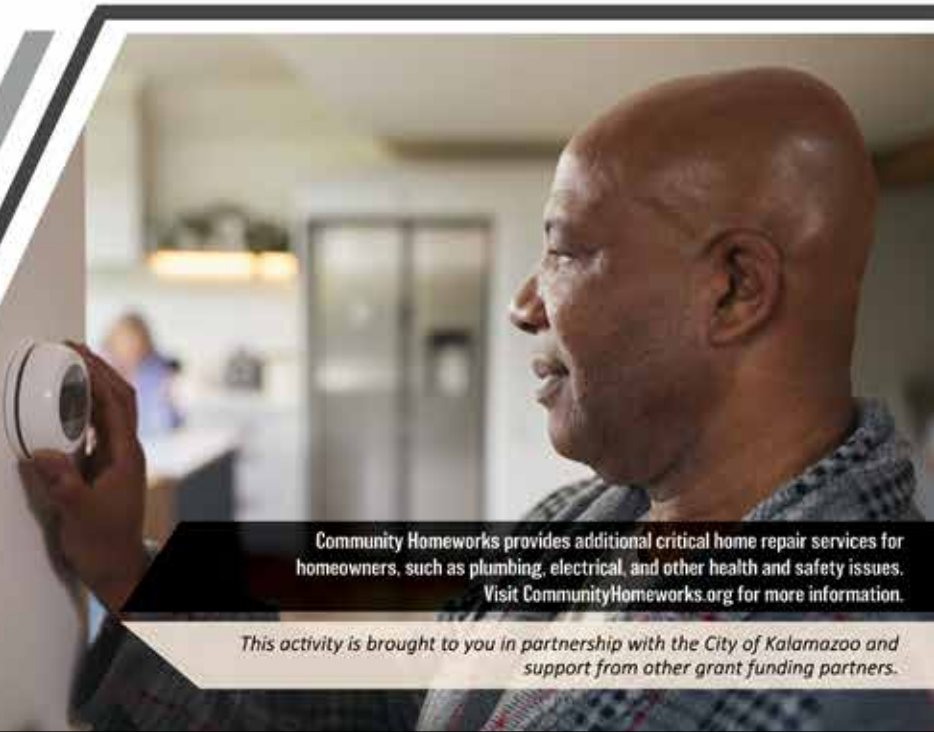
I know these things take hard work. I know that we need to cooperate. I know that parents and the community must be a part of the discussion, the changes, and the work that lies ahead. I know that I am the new kid in town and sometimes my ideas and approaches will take getting used to. But I also know what KPS is capable of, what our students are capable of, and what we can achieve. I look forward to working with you to achieve these goals.

Have a great 2023-24 KPS.

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KPS Board of Education Selects Takisha Johnson to Fill Trustee Vacancy

THE KALAMAZOO Public Schools Board of Education unanimously selected Takisha Johnson to fill its trustee vacancy in a special board meeting Aug. 3.

Johnson is the founder of the Young Kings and Queens Inc., a Kalamazoo nonprofit dedicated to providing young people between the ages of 13 and 19 with life skills to become successful and to expand their cultural opportunities. She is also a former educator and is a community volunteer with experience in fundraising and program development.

Johnson holds degrees in psychology, sociology and accounting and has experience as a business owner.

She will serve the remainder of the term of Megan Maddock, who announced her resignation from the board July 20. Maddock has moved to Ann Arbor for employment. Maddock was elected in 2020 to a six-year term, from January 2021 to Dec. 31, 2026. Because of state law, Johnson’s appointment will run through Dec. 31, 2024. A trustee will be elected to fill the remainder of the term in the November 2024 general election.

The board reviewed 14 applications for the po-



New board trustee Takisha Johnson.

sition during a special board meeting Aug. 2 and selected four candidates to interview. One applicant declined to continue the process because of a scheduling conflict.

“I would help to build positive relationships with community partners to better use available resources to serve our youth,” Johnson said in her application. “I will ensure youth voices are at the table whether in person or by survey of sorts to ensure we are truly serving their best interests.”

Board President TiAnna Harrison thanked everyone who applied to fill the vacancy and for the community’s support during the past few months of transition.

“The members of the board would like to acknowledge that our task of overseeing the district is made easier by the tremendous support of the community,” Harrison said. “We are grateful for the number of extremely qualified applicants who expressed interest in serving on the board. We look forward to working with Takisha Johnson and utilizing her skills as a youth advocate to enhance the educational opportunities for all of our students.”



THE CHALICE OF THE GODS

BY RICK RIORDAN

RELEASE PARTY

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Come to the release party to celebrate nearly 20 years of the Half-Bloods world. The first 50 gets a free copy!

X



Grades 6–12

Tuesday, September 12 | 4 pm | Central/Teen Studio
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Academically Talented Youth Program Info Sessions Available for Families

WESTERN Michigan University's Academically Talented Youth Program (ATYP) teaches high school content to qualifying middle schoolers.

Beginning in seventh or eighth grade, ATYP students come to class on WMU's campus one or two afternoons a week to participate in accelerated classes in math and English.

Tuition for these classes is paid by the public schools, with families paying a per-semester registration fee that is waived if the student qualifies for free or reduced lunch.

Students can enroll in ATYP after receiving qualifying scores on a high school-level exam. Students can also qualify by submitting a portfolio.

Families learn about ATYP from informational meetings offered in the fall of each year; testing occurs during the winter months, and students are notified of eligibility in the spring.

Families can attend an informational meeting to learn more about the program at 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 12, at WMU. A complete list of all presentation dates, times, and locations is at www.wmich.edu/precollege/atyp/qualifying.

ATYP also offers an AP Computer Science class, available to any student who has completed Algebra 1.

WHAT'S NEW

@

Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo

COMMUNITY Arts AWARDS

Who will we celebrate in 2023?

NOW ACCEPTING 2023 NOMINATIONS UNTIL OCTOBER 10TH!

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View all of the award categories and make your nomination on the Community Arts Awards page on our website.

The Awards Ceremony will take place on Tuesday, December 5th at the Gull Lake Center for the Fine Arts.

Visit KalamazooArts.org

arts council of greater kalamazoo

Visit www.wmich.edu/precollege/atyp for more

i information about the program, or feel free to contact the ATYP office by email at atyp-info@wmich.edu or by phone at (269) 387-3553.

Loy Norrix Class of 1983 Plans 40th Reunion

THE LOY NORRIX High School Class of 1983 will be holding a reunion weekend Oct. 6-8.

The weekend will include an Oct. 6 tour of Loy Norrix, a tailgate party at Milham Park, participation in the Loy Norrix High School homecoming parade, and attending the LNHS 2023 homecoming game and an afterparty.

Saturday, Oct. 7 will include a golf outing and the highlight of the weekend — a party and dance from 7-10 p.m. at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in downtown Kalamazoo. Tickets are \$60 a person.

Festivities wrap up with brunch on Oct. 8.



i For more information on all reunion events, visit LNHS83.com.

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SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Darrin Slade

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Inquiries by students and/or their parents/guardians should be directed to:

**Director of School Improvement,
Title I and Assessments**

Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0161

All other inquiries should be directed to:

**Assistant Superintendent of
Human Resources**

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District Directory at:

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Recipe

from the **KPS Food Service, Chartwells**

Kirsten Strong, registered dietician

Samuel Dunn, executive chef

Mexican Street Corn Salad or Dip

IT'S SEPTEMBER in Michigan and that means sweet corn is abundant and delicious! If you are looking for a way to change up how you serve corn, try this Mexican street corn salad or dip. This trendy dish is sweet, citrusy, creamy, and crunchy, with a spicy kick. It has it all and is sure to please!

**INGREDIENTS**

4 cups corn (cut fresh from the cob is recommended, but canned or frozen will work)
1 tablespoon avocado oil (or any plant oil)
½ red bell pepper, diced
½ red onion, diced
1 jalapeno, seeded and finely chopped
½ cup cilantro, chopped

½ cup Greek yogurt
1 large lime, juiced (about 3 tablespoons)
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon chili powder
½ teaspoon cumin
½ teaspoon smoked paprika
⅓ cup crumbled cotija cheese, plus more for sprinkling on top. If you don't have cotija, parmesan cheese can be substituted.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat a large skillet with oil over high heat. Once hot, add corn. Char corn slightly so it has a roasted flavor and some browned bits. This will take about 4-6 minutes, toss occasionally. Pour into a large bowl and let cool.
2. Prepare the peppers, onion, and cilantro by chopping. Once chopped, add them to the bowl with the corn.

3. In a small bowl, whisk together Greek yogurt, lime juice, salt, chili powder, cumin, and paprika. Stir in cheese.
4. Add yogurt sauce to bowl and stir to combine well.
5. Top with more cheese and cilantro to taste and serve as a side or as a dip with tortilla chips. Store in the refrigerator for up to five days.

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**NEW YOUTH CLASSES
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Students Are the Stars of ‘We Are Kalamazoo Artists’ Installation in Bronson Park

ALMOST 1,000 Kalamazoo Public Schools students’ portraits were featured in “We Are Kalamazoo Artists,” an installation that was part of the international “Inside Out” art project. It was held in conjunction with the school district’s annual Bronson Park Outdoor Art Show, which ran May 19–31.

“Inside Out Project” is a participatory art platform created by the French artist known as JR. “Inside Out” allows everyone to share their untold

stories by creating a work of public art. Since 2011, more than 400,000 people from 149 countries and territories have participated in the project.

Students’ faces — smiling, laughing, thinking, frowning, squinting — were the focus of the display of black-and-white portraits that lined the interior side-walks of Bronson Park. The exhibition was organized by KPS lead art teacher Mandy Clearwaters.

The portraits, which were about 3 feet by 4½
(continued on page 7)



KPS lead art teacher Mandy Clearwaters, in red, works with volunteers to position the first photo for the “Inside Out” project.



Drone footage by KPS tech services’ Jacob Cieslak shows the completed “Inside Out” project in Bronson Park.



Michael Moore, a Winchell Elementary student, finds his portrait among the almost 1,000 images in Bronson Park.

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'Kalamazoo Artists' (cont. from pg. 6)

feet, were taken by KPS staff and volunteers over two months in the spring. "Inside Out" coordinators told Clearwaters that with 982 images, it was the organization's largest educational installation in the nation.

Students in the exhibition all agreed with the statement: "We are Kalamazoo artists," which was part of a statement that Clearwaters wrote: "We are innovators, dreamers, and creators. Our hands generate images, sculptures, pottery, photographs, and films to make our viewers pause. These pauses are important. You may pause for beauty, maybe for curiosity. Most critically we hope you pause to think and feel. Thinking and feeling amplifies the human experience."

Students posed for three photos: serious, smiling, and a pose of their choice — and they selected the image that they wanted used in the show. Clearwater was surprised how many students opted to use one rather than the "smiling" image. "It kind of brought out their personalities," she said.

When the show opened, students and families scoured the park for their images.

"It was incredible. For families and kids to find their pictures was really impactful. To see their faces that big was pretty exciting."



Winchell Elementary student Charlie Liberty poses with his portrait in the "Inside Out" art project.

2023-2024 School Calendar

through winter break*

Kalamazoo Public Schools

August 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

September 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

October 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Aug. 28	First Day K-12; half day
Sept. 1	K-12 no students; schools open for enrollment
Sept. 4	Labor Day, all buildings closed
Sept. 5	First Day PreK ECSE (see special dates below)
Sept. 11	First day PEEP (see special dates below)
Oct. 6	PK-8 half day; records day
Oct. 11	9-12 half day; conferences in p.m.
Oct. 12	K-8 half day; a.m. schedule
Oct. 13	K-5 half day; p.m. schedule
Oct. 18	PK-12 early release; 1.5 hours early
Nov. 1	PK-12 no students; teacher PD
Nov. 1	Phoenix, KILP & virtual - virtual day or activity
Nov. 3	No school for Phoenix, KILP & virtual students
Nov. 17 & 20	9-12 half day
Nov. 21	PK-12 no students; records day
Nov. 22	Schools closed; no county programs
Nov. 23 & 24	Thanksgiving Break; all buildings closed
Dec. 13	PK-12 early release; 1.5 hours early
Dec. 25 - Jan. 5	Winter Break

First and last day of school

Half days (check for grade levels, dismissal times and schedules a.m./p.m.)

No school for students (holidays, breaks, teacher PD or records days)

Early release dates (1.5 hours early)

Oct. 18, Dec. 13, Jan. 17 and March 13

On these days, students will be released 1.5 hours early. This will allow all employee groups to participate in training. Check with schools for the early release dismissal times.

November 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

December 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Special dates: Phoenix High School

Parent-Teacher Conferences, 4-7 PM: Sept. 28, Nov. 16

Full days: Nov 1, Nov. 17

Half days: Oct. 6, Nov. 20

No school: Nov. 1, 3 & 21

Special dates: PEEP & ESCE Preschool

PEEP first day: Sept. 11

ESCE first day: Sept. 5

PEEP and ESCE PreK no school: Oct 11, Dec. 13

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Kalamazoo Math and Science Institute Continues to Expand Minds and Opportunities

MORE STUDENTS, more field trips, more opportunities to explore science through hands-on activities. Now in its third year, the Kalamazoo Math and Science Institute has continued to expand its learning opportunities for rising Kalamazoo Public Schools ninth graders.

This year, the intensive math and science program expanded to five weeks — having started as a one-week pilot in 2021 — and provided students with five field trips — to the City of Kalamazoo Water Reclamation Plant, the Kalamazoo Valley Community College Food Hub and Innovation Center, Kalamazoo County's River Oaks Park, the Kalamazoo Nature Center, and The Kalamazoo Promise Building — where



students participated in science in their community with a focus on water quality in the Kalamazoo area, said Kristen Miller, the KPS math and science coordinator, who helped design the program.

Students worked with drones and Sphero robots, and studied water quality and the health of the Kalamazoo River and its surrounding environments, testing for dissolved oxygen levels and examining biodiversity among macroinvertebrates. Students also studied the health of environments for Monarch butterflies and studied the issue of stormwater runoff.

Inari Powell and Tyree Burton work with Kalamazoo College biology student Katie Rock to collect macroinvertebrates at River Oaks Park.



Tejashreya Dantu examines a specimen with a Foldscope, a portable microscope.



KMSI students study specimens from the Kalamazoo River tributary at the Kalamazoo Nature Center.

Ethan Katz, who will be a freshman at Kalamazoo Central in the fall, said he was attracted to the program because he wanted to earn the half credit in science that the program offers, but “I also thought it would be fun learning and I want to know more about science.”

KMSI is a collaborative effort between KPS and the Michigan Colleges Alliance, a consortium of the 14 top private colleges in the state. KPS teachers Megan Doorlag and Susan Oesterle designed this



Adonai Adewale checks to see what interesting specimens landed in his net as he collects water samples at the Kalamazoo Nature Center.

year’s program with Jason Raddatz from Marshall Public Schools, who works with MCA.

The program helps prepare rising ninth graders for the rigors of high school — especially in the areas of biology and algebra, Raddatz said. “Those seem to be tricky stumbling points for kids when it comes to graduating from high school and moving on to college,” he said.

Raddatz said to find success students really have to learn how to work together with people they may not know.



Cinthya Martinez, Anthony Boy, and Ethan Katz present their research on pollution in the Kalamazoo River to a group of parents and educators.

“It’s a high-stakes, academically rigorous program but you can see kids are having fun doing it,” Raddatz said. “That’s the difference when you’re able to take kids outside of the traditional classroom environment and mix them with peers with similar interests.”

Doorlag said what makes KMSI unique is that it affords students that rare chance “to try out real scientific research before they even get into high school.” Students not only work with scientific instruments while following the scientific process, but they also work alongside college professors and students, “which opens the door to real, natural conversations about college.”

The field trips were essential learning experiences, because “the KMSI scholars became more knowledgeable about their community and how science impacts it,” Doorlag said.

Miller said the hope is to grow the program over the next few years and to increase student participation.

Oesterle said the learning opportunities go far beyond math and science skills.

“They also develop many soft skills that are so necessary for their futures, such as problem solving, effective communication, teamwork, leadership, adaptability, time management, creativity and negotiation skills.”

ON THE FRONT COVER:

Science teacher Megan Doorlag shows, from left, Annika Freeman-Piper, Tejashreya Dantu and Ethan Katz how to measure soil pH levels at River Oaks Park.

Naomi Johnson Will Teach Art Where She Learned Art

WHEN NEW art teacher Naomi Johnson walked into her classroom at Northeastern Elementary School, she glanced up and saw a familiar image: A ceiling tile that she painted as a young Northeastern student.



Naomi Johnson's ceiling tile in Northeastern Elementary School.

"It's still hanging in the room where I'm going to be teaching," she said. "It's like a full circle moment."

Johnson, 24, attended Northeastern and Linden Grove Middle School and graduated from Kalamazoo Central High School in 2017. She double majored in professional writing and graphic design from Michigan State University in 2021. She is working with Michigan Teachers of Tomorrow to earn her teaching certification.

Johnson earned 100 percent of The Kalamazoo Promise. That gift was essential to her ability to attend college.

"If it wasn't for The Kalamazoo Promise, I wouldn't have gone to college. I



Naomi Johnson

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Naomi Johnson Will Teach Art Where She Learned Art (continued from page 10)

don't come from a family that has trust funds and savings accounts," she said. "Without the Promise, all of my academic success would not be a thing.

"I wanted to come back and be a part of the movement to help kids make something of themselves."

She's been working as a communications coordinator for Western Michigan University's Seita Scholars program, which provides supports for students coming out of the foster care system. She had always thought about working for a large graphic design firm and living in a big city "with a lot of hustle and bustle." But, after she had her daughter Luna in 2022, her goals shifted.

"I wanted a job serving a strong purpose," Johnson said. "I still love making art and I want a job that will allow me to create, but I don't want to work for a big company and focus on making them money. I'd rather work a job where it's more purposeful and it's helping people.

"I'd rather work at job helping kids and working

in the same community that I grew up in."

She will be dividing her teaching time between Northeastern and Lincoln International Studies School, which is down the street from where she grew up.

No one is more thrilled that she will be teaching at Northeastern than Al Harris, the longtime Northeastern art teacher, who calls Johnson one of the most talented students out of the 4,000 he worked with.

"She's probably in the Top 20 as far as art talent," said Harris, who still lives and paints in Kalamazoo. He has a show up at Soul Artistry in downtown Kalamazoo through September. "She's on her own course. She's in a neighborhood that she grew up in. She'll probably see kids or nieces and nephews of people that she knows. I think it's going to be fun for her."

Johnson said that Harris was one of her most memorable teachers and definitely inspired her art career. As for her teaching career, she cites another teacher who had an influence, her favorite middle school teacher Steve Leland, who is now the KPS administrative personnel officer and interviewed Johnson for her teaching position.

"When he called me, it was just another sign that I made the right choice coming back home and being a teacher," she said. "I had no idea I'd end up being placed at the school I used to go to."

As an artist, she said she loves the freedom of expression that comes with exploring your creativity. "With art there is no right or wrong answer. I love being able to express myself the way that I want. It's always something different.

"I want to help kids figure out what they love — even if it isn't art. I want to get to the bottom of what it is that comes to them naturally and to help them find that within themselves. Art can open you up to that, to figuring out who you are."

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New Administrators, Administrative Moves for 2023-24 School Year



Anthony Barnes

*Secondary Coordinator of Special Education
Student Services*

Barnes transitioned to the Secondary Special Education Coordinator position during the summer of 2023 after serving as a special education teacher at Hillside Middle School since 2016. He earned a bachelor of science degree in special education in the areas of cognitive impairments and learning disabilities; and a master's degree in special education administration from Western Michigan University.

Barnes has served in many roles during his career with KPS, including serving as Hillside's special education department lead teacher, the Hillside School Improvement Team chair, and a member of the KPS Student Code of Conduct committee. He is a member of the Michigan Board of Speech and Language Pathology.



Dr. April Enicks

*Elementary Coordinator of Special Education
Student Services*

Enicks earned a bachelor of science in education with a major in Spanish and minors in math, science, and elementary education; a master's degree in special education with certification in emotional impairments and learning disabilities; and a doctorate in education with a focus in educational leadership and special education. Most recently, she served as a special education supervisor for National Heritage Academies for 10 years, and prior to that she taught for six years at the Woodward School and Milwood Magnet School for Technology and Research.

She has been an adjunct instructor at Western Michigan University, is a Nonviolent Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) trainer, and has presented at the local, state, and national level on key topics in special education.



Gloria Foster-Wimbley

*Assistant Principal
Kalamazoo Central High School*

Foster-Wimbley has more than 16 years of experience as a KPS educator, including as principal of Hillside Middle School from 2007 to 2012, as an administrator with Teaching and Learning Services, and as an assistant principal for the last 10 years. She previously was a math teacher at Kalamazoo Central and a middle school principal with Three Rivers Community Schools.

She has a bachelor of science in secondary education and teaching and a master of arts in educational leadership and administration.



Dr. Angela Justice

*Interim Director of Curriculum,
Instruction, and Professional
Development*

Since November 2013, Justice has been the Coordinator of English Language Arts, Social Studies, Library Services for Kalamazoo Public Schools. She held that position as an interim for one year before her appointment. Prior to that, Justice was the district literacy/numeracy coach and spent five years as a reading specialist at Lincoln International Studies School, where she taught every grade level and mentored new teachers.

She has bachelor, master and doctoral degrees from

Western Michigan University. Her doctorate is in education and human development. She holds her specialist certification in educational leadership from Oakland University.



Nina LeSuer

*Interim Coordinator of
English Language Arts, Social
Studies, and Library Services*

LeSuer is a 28-year educator with experience in Louisiana, Minnesota, and Michigan. She has a bachelor of arts in early childhood and elementary education from Xavier University of Louisiana and a master of education in curriculum and instruction from the University of Minnesota.

She started her career in KPS in 2007 as a third grade teacher at Lincoln International Studies School. Other positions she has held in KPS include kindergarten teacher and data coach at Washington Writers' Academy, School Improvement Team/leadership team chair at Washington, elementary summer school literacy coach, mentor teacher, and K-5 district literacy coach since 2020.



Aaron Mason

*Intern Assistant Principal
King-Westwood Elementary School*

Mason is joining King-Westwood Elementary School as an intern assistant principal for the 2023-24 school year. He earned a bachelor of science degree in elementary education with minors in language arts and social studies, and a master's degree in educational leadership at Western Michigan University. Before coming to King-Westwood, he served as a fourth grade ELA/social

(continued on page 14)

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New Administrators, Administrative Moves *(continued from page 13)*

studies/writing teacher, fourth grade science/social studies teacher, and fifth grade science/social studies teacher at Washington Writers' Academy for 10 years.

He has been a leadership team member, Multi-Tiered System of Support team chair, crisis team member, member of the improvement grant team, ELA upper elementary lead, and grade level lead at Washington.



Tammo Nelson
Principal
Indian Prairie Elementary School

Nelson was the assistant principal at Winchell Elementary School for the 2022-23 school year. Nelson earned a bachelor of science degree from Central Michigan University in elementary education and a master of science degree in principalship from Saginaw Valley State University.

She has worked as a district culture and climate coach for KPS and was a School Improvement Grant (SIG) Math Interventionist at Northeastern Elementary School for three years. Before coming to KPS, she worked in Saginaw Public Schools for 15 years as an elementary teacher, math interventionist, and summer school principal. She has served on the School Improvement Team in all build-

ings she worked in and has been on the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support and Child Study teams in her schools.



Dionna Roberts
Principal
Lincoln International Studies School

Roberts has worked for Kalamazoo Public Schools for 20 years, including 13 years at Northeastern Elementary School, five years at Winchell, and three years as a district literacy coach. She is an adjunct faculty member at Western Michigan University in the Department of Special Education and Literacy Studies, and a literacy coach with the nonprofit KYD Network.



Aaron Sauter
Assistant Principal
Milwood Magnet School

Sauter is coming to Milwood Middle school after serving as the culture and climate coach at Linden Grove Middle School. He earned a bache-

lor of arts in education, a master of science in education and a master's in educational leadership. Before coming to Milwood, he served as an educator at Linden Grove Middle School and taught multiple grade levels in Louisville, Ky, and Woodbridge, Va.

He has served as a mentor teacher, a member of the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports and School Improvement teams at Linden Grove, as well as collaborated with Western Michigan University to assist several intern teachers.



Ebony Sikaundi
Intern Principal
Greenwood Elementary School

Ebony Sikaundi has a bachelor of science degree in early childhood education, master of arts in literacy studies, and master of arts in educational leadership.

Sikaundi is no stranger to KPS. She was a classroom teacher and literacy interventionist for Woods Lake Elementary: A Magnet Center for the Arts for 13 years. She has served as KPS's summer literacy coach, a High Impact Leadership Team member, and other roles throughout her career. She is coming from Portage Public Schools where she was an engagement specialist.

(continued on page 15)

The Kalamazoo Promise
wishes you a successful
school year!

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New Administrators, Administrative Moves *(continued from page 14)*



Greg Straka
Interim Assistant Principal/Athletic Director
Kalamazoo Central High School
Greg Straka came to Kalamazoo Central High School as an assistant principal in the Freshman Academies seven years ago. He holds a bachelor of arts degree in elementary education and science and a master's degree in educational leadership from Western Michigan University. Before coming to Kalamazoo Central, he served as a science teacher at Maple Street Magnet School.

He is excited to serve the students and families in his new role as the athletic director at Kalamazoo Central. Go Giants!



Erika Zavasky
Interim Principal
King-Westwood Elementary School
Zavasky came to King-Westwood Elementary School as an assistant principal in 2022-23. She earned a bachelor of arts in elementary education and Spanish; and a master's degree in educational leadership from Western Michigan University. Before coming to King-Westwood, she served as the culture and climate coach at Hillside Middle School, prior to that she taught

for 14 years at Edison Academy, and she started her career in KPS as a paraprofessional. She has been a mentor teacher, High Impact Leadership team member, Safe and Civil Schools Foundations Team chair and served on the School Improvement Team at Edison.

TRANSFERS



Kelly Corrigan
Principal
Winchell Elementary School
Corrigan was the principal of the Indian Prairie principal for 10 years before being appointed the principal of Winchell Elementary School last spring. Before working for KPS, she worked for Paw Paw Public Schools for 10 years, eight as the early childhood and community programs coordinator and two years as an early childhood education teacher. She began her educational career as a long-term substitute and summer school teacher with Kalamazoo schools. Corrigan holds a bachelor of science in elementary education and a master's degree in educational leadership from Western Michigan University.



Sierra Prather
Assistant Principal
Woods Lake Elementary: A Magnet Center for the Arts
Prather was the assistant principal at Parkwood-Upjohn Elementary School for the 2022-23 school year. She holds a bachelor of arts in elementary education and a master of arts in instructional leadership from Western Michigan University.

Prather worked as a Kalamazoo Public Schools teacher for 14 years at Woods Lake Elementary School. She served on the School Improvement Team, was the grade level facilitator, the upper elementary science lead teacher, substituted during principal absences and organized the promotion ceremony for fifth-grade students.

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LIGHT SHOW \$3 PER PERSON

SEPT. 2 | 3:30 p.m.

ONE WEEKEND ONLY: Led Zeppelin

Experience many of Led Zeppelin's classics in 5.1 surround sound set to immersive and surrealistic computer-generated effects in the planetarium.

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Undertake a quest across land, sea and space to explore the role of mapping and navigation in everyday life in the exciting exhibit "Explore Your World!"
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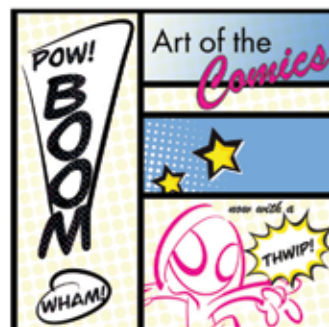


EXHIBIT

NOW - JAN. 7, 2024 | FREE

SPLAT! The Buzz About Flyswatters

Celebrate summer, and the passion of collecting everyday objects, with this unique display of over 1,000 flyswatters from Iza van Riemsdijk's collection.



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SEPT. 30 | 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Pow! Boom! Wham! Art of the Comics

Explore animation and comics with professional illustrator Aubrey Jewel Rodgers. Two mini workshops are planned, including some special guests named Spidey, Spin and Ghosty! Comic character costumes are welcome!

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**SEPTEMBER SHOWS | \$3 PER PERSON
FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS**

Lucia, The Secret of the Shooting Star | 11 a.m. | 31 min. | Grades 4 & up
Join James, a penguin, and Vladimir, a polar bear, as they investigate the Southern Lights, comets, asteroids and meteorites.

Big Astronomy | 2 p.m. | 30 min. | Grades 3 & up
Nearly 70% of major astronomical telescopes are now located high in the mountaintops of Chile. Learn about the people who operate these facilities.

SUNDAYS

Earth, Moon and Sun | 1 p.m. | 28 min. | Grades 3 - 7
Coyote is a little confused about what he sees in the sky in this amusing, fast-paced, fun full-dome show exploring lunar phases, eclipses and more.

The Sky Above Us | 2 p.m. | 40 min. | Grades 4 & up
Learn about some of the "celestial wonders" that can be seen overhead in Michigan.

HOURS: Tuesday - Friday | 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturday | 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday | Noon - 4 p.m.

FREE GENERAL ADMISSION

Note: Some areas of the museum may be closed due to exhibit changes, staffing needs, special programs or collections care. We thank you for your patience.

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



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