

Kalamazoo Public Schools

EXCELSIOR

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August 2024 - Volume 27, Issue 7



Summertime Smiles at KPS

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New KAMSC director **Heather Kortland** takes the reins
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The KPS Board Chooses Former Educator to Fill Trustee Vacancy

THE KALAMAZOO Public Schools Board of Education selected former KPS administrator Juanita Yvonne Payton to fill a board vacancy at a special meeting in July.

Payton, a former KPS teacher, principal, and assistant superintendent of elementary schools, is involved in numerous community organizations, including the Family Health Center, the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, Kalamazoo Links, and the Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

In her application for the board seat, Payton said, “I am concerned that all students receive a quality education, where all students achieve at or above grade level. As a life-long learner, I am still involved in education-related programs. All of my experiences as an educator have been in diverse, high-poverty, and high-minority school districts.”

During her interview, Payton said she has volunteered with Lincoln International Studies School, Edison Academy, and a tutoring group at Allen Chapel AME Church.

Payton said the board is responsible for ensuring that the superintendent is enacting and monitoring



Juanita Yvonne Payton

programs that align with the board’s vision..

“That’s how our children will achieve, if our school programs are being monitored,” she said. “We have it all in our policies. I read all the policies. You have all the policies for what needs to happen in a school district, we just need to make sure they’re adhered to and followed.”

Nine candidates applied to fill the board vacancy. Trustees chose to interview three applicants. In addition to Payton, the board interviewed Bobby Boyd, a community leader with volunteer experience in equity and environmental issues, and Alicia Swift, a KPS parent who works for the State of Michigan and volunteers with community organizations such as the Northside Association for Community Development.

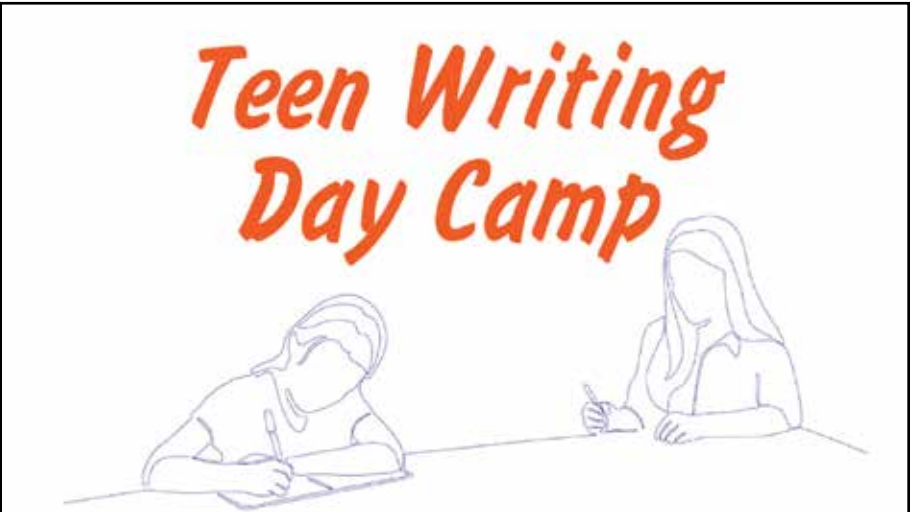
Board President TiAnna Harrison praised the quality of the applicants and thanked community members for their interest in serving the community.

Payton will serve until December 2024, filling the remainder of the term of trustee Jermaine Jackson, who resigned on June 13.



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Four KPS Graduates Earn Heyl Scholarships to Pursue STEM

FOUR Kalamazoo Public Schools high school students seeking to major in STEM-related fields will attend Kalamazoo College and Western Michigan University in the 2024-25 academic year as Heyl scholars.

This year’s KPS recipients of the Heyl and their high schools are:

- **Katherine “Kate” Suarez**, Loy Norrix and KAMSC
- **David “Dominick” Fooy**, Loy Norrix and KAMSC
- **Sean Dhanaraj**, Kalamazoo Central and KAMSC
- **Chaise Gould**, Kalamazoo Central and KAMSC

The Heyl Scholarship Fund was established in 1971 through the will of Dr. Frederick Heyl and Mrs. Elsie Heyl. The scholarship offers renewable benefits for up to four years that cover tuition, fees, housing and a book allowance.

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Loy Norrix Knight Life Wins Big at MIPAA

CONGRATULATIONS to the Loy Norrix Knight Life 2023-24 newspaper staff, which once again brought home dozens of honors at the annual Michigan Inter-scholastic Press Association Awards, which were held at

Michigan State University in the spring. MIPAA is committed to promoting and recognizing excellence in scholastic journalism at all levels through education, training and support of student journalists and their advisers.

FIRST PLACE

Sophia Ciokajo and **Josephine Velo**, Multimedia Story Package

Lexi Tuly, Advertising Layout

Aidan Zajac, Bylined Opinion Article

Chloe Rathbun, In-Depth Feature

Ethan Williams, Sports Photo

SECOND PLACE

Josephine Velo and **Eleanor Cook**, Multimedia Story Package

Eleanor Cook, Editorial Cartoon



Sophia Wrzesinski, Illustration

Rosie Hill, Informative Feature

Ethan Williams, Sports Action Photo

Rosie Hill, Environmental Portrait

THIRD PLACE

Josephine Velo and **Amelia Wood**, Social Media Promotion

Efrem Masterson, Editorial Cartoon

Rosie Hill, Environmental, Health or Science

Jordan Pritchett, Alternative Story Form

Ethan Williams, Sports Feature Photo

Lucy Langerveld, News Feature Photo

Josephine Velo, Photo Story

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Lucy Langerveld, **Rosie Hill**, **Isabella Figueroa**, **Amelia Wood**, **Isabella Figueroa**, **Sophia DeAnda**, **Efrem Masterson**, **Sophia Wrzesinski**, **Alexander Houslander**, **Sophia Ciokajo**, **Chloe Rathbun**, **Aidan Zajac**, **Josephine Velo**, **Ethan Hall**, **McKenzie Nuyen**, **Cavan Helms**, **Ethan Williams**.



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Recipe

from the KPS Food Service, Chartwells

Kirsten Strong, registered dietician nutritionist

Samuel Dunn, executive chef

Summer Salad Pizza

IS IT A salad, sandwich, or pizza?! This is a versatile recipe. You can use any combination of veggies, cheese, greens, herbs, and sauces. Add meat if you prefer! The trick is to keep the cheese and sauce lighter than a regular pizza. The bread/crust is the star of this show (and the salad greens). This recipe is a great way to use up fresh vegetables in your fridge or garden. It also gives you a reason to visit your local farmers market for inspiration. The combination possibilities are truly endless. You can't go wrong with this one.



INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound pizza dough (can be found in the freezer or refrigerated section of your grocery store)
- ½ to 1 cup flour
- 2 heads of garlic
- 1 medium onion, large dice
- 1 medium tomato, diced
- Approximately 4 tablespoons of olive oil
- 3 to 4 cups salad greens — any combination of any variety — romaine, arugula, spring mix, etc.
- 1 ½ cups fresh herbs, chopped — any combination of any variety — basil, dill, green onion, cilantro, mint, etc
- 2 to 3 tablespoons of the dressing of your choice (can substitute olive oil, lemon juice and a pinch of salt)
- 1 to 2 balls of burrata cheese, fresh mozzarella, or shredded mozzarella

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F.
2. Follow the instructions on the package to roll out your pizza dough.
3. Cut the tops off of the heads of garlic. Place on a large piece of aluminum foil. Generously drizzle with olive oil (about 1 tablespoon per head), sprinkle with salt, and then wrap in the foil. Bake at 350°F for 40-60 minutes. (Or cook in an air fryer for 15 minutes.) Let cool.
4. Increase oven temp to the temperature necessary for pizza dough (check the package).
5. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a small to medium pan. Add onions and saute over medium heat until translucent and cooked through. Set aside.
6. In a small saucepan, add diced tomatoes, 1 tablespoon of olive oil, and a pinch of salt. Cook on medium-low heat until tomatoes become like a sauce. Set aside.
7. Chop salad greens, if needed, and toss with salad dressing.
8. When garlic is done and cooled, squeeze the cut garlic out of the heads. Garlic should have a soft, spreadable consistency.
9. Spread the roasted garlic evenly (but rustically) over the pizza dough. Top with sauteed onions. Drizzle with the tomato sauce. Note: Do not use too much sauce. Crust should remain fairly dry.
10. Bake the pizza following the instructions on the pizza dough package.
11. Remove from the oven and top the pizza with the burrata cheese. Break the cheese balls open and spread pieces of the cheese casually around the pizza. Last, top the pizza with your dressed salad greens and fresh herbs.
12. Use a pizza cutter or knife to cut your salad pizza into pieces. I recommend larger pieces so you can use the crust as a vessel to hold the salad greens and herbs. Fold it, kind of like a taco, and enjoy!



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Bridin Clements Cotton Reimagines the Theater Workplace

KALAMAZOO'S rich artistic community helped one Kalamazoo Central High School graduate find her passion for theater.

Bridin Clements Cotton graduated from KCentral in 2010, and helped create the video that won the Race to the Top Commencement Challenge and a visit from President Barack Obama. She is currently based in the United Arab Emirates, where she is an instructor of Stage and Project Management at New York University Abu Dhabi.

She, her parents Aedin and Paul Clements, and sister Anna moved to Michigan in 1996. When they settled in Kalamazoo a few years later, she attended King-Westwood Elementary School and Hillside Middle School before attending Kalamazoo Central for high school.

Her interest in theater was sparked by seeing her sister in a Kalamazoo Civic Theatre production of "Pinnocchio."

"As soon as I was old enough, I started volunteering backstage," Cotton said. "I began stage managing (Civic Youth Theatre) shows when I was in middle school, and discovered my knack for facilitating creative processes. Developing myself as a stage manager helped build my confidence, gave me a circle of collaborators."

She was involved in theater at KC, served as a production apprentice at the Civic through Education For the Arts, and volunteered with every theater possible, including Whole Art, the Kindleberger Arts Festival, Farmers Alley, and Western Michigan University.

"A highlight of my time at KC was stage managing 'The Laramie Project,' a production that brought the Kalamazoo community together to rally in support of LGBTQIAA+ rights."

Those experiences inspired her and her best friend Emily Deering-Caruso to found their own theater company, Cellar Arts, in the basement of First Congregational Church.

"We produced several fully youth-run productions," Cotton said. "The church basement became our artistic home for our high school years. It allowed us to navigate every bit of the process — selecting a play and getting the rights, fundraising, budgeting, recruiting a cast and crew, facilitating the rehearsal and production process, marketing and managing front of house — all by ourselves."



Kalamazoo Central graduate Bridin Clements Cotton

After graduating from Central, she moved to New York to attend New York University Tisch School of the Arts, where she studied stage management and received a BFA in Theatre. After graduation, she worked for a variety of arts programs including the New York Musical Theatre Festival and the American Repertory Theatre at Harvard University. She has worked at NYU as an educator since 2018 and earned her master's degree in public administration from the NYU Wagner Graduate School of Public Service in 2022.

This spring, she and collaborator Natalie Robin published the book "Theatre Work: Reimagining the Labor of Theatrical Production."

"The American professional theater 'industry' is built on a foundation of racism, gender bias and harassment, ageism, and ableism, and these threads are not separate from one another," she said. "There are

discriminatory practices implicitly and explicitly woven into the fabric of how the field operates, from arts education offerings, to hiring practices, to worker safety practices."

She argues that the current systems of American professional theater production operates are failing — as evidenced by layoffs, canceled seasons, and companies that have halted their operations. But, the most compelling evidence is in the stories of theater workers.

"The 'industry' is not only failing in terms of profitability and sustainability from a business perspective, but it is failing the workers who make the art happen. She and Robin heard from thousands of theater workers who described experiencing racial microaggressions in the theater workplace; being required to perform high-risk tasks without the training, time, or support necessary to do so safely; and being sexualized on production jobs."

The book examines issues such as access to education and careers; hiring practices; pay equity; production operations; people operations; and labor and safety.

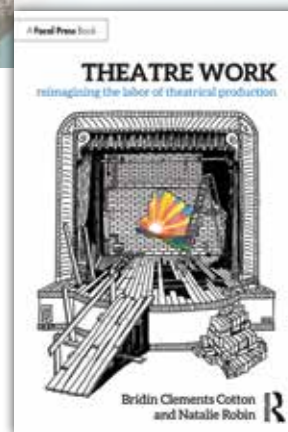
Cotton said, that to her, an accessible, inclusive, and sustainable theater production ecosystem would be a field in which:

- Every person has access to educational opportunities that lead to and enhance careers in production.
- There are just hiring practices that address the varying needs of workers.
- Work is paid equitably.
- Production operations, including budgets and schedules, are human-centered.
- Labor and safety

standards include all aspects of physical and emotional health, and are taught and followed.

- Career paths in production are sustainable and healthy.

"I am hopefully optimistic that we can reimagine how theater production operates and evolve toward an ecosystem that values its workers. Radical change is needed."



Congratulations to the 2024 KPS Retirees

CONGRATULATIONS go out to the following retirees, who were honored in the spring. Thank you for your years of service to the district, the children of Kalamazoo Public Schools and the entire Kalamazoo community.

Dolores Brinker
Teacher
Greenwood

John Buchanan
Paraprofessional
Linden Grove

Sheila Buehler
Teacher
El Sol

Bethany Caswell
Teacher
Lincoln

Margie Coleman
Montessori Teaching
Assistant
Northglade

Sheila Dorsey-Smith
Assistant Superintendent
Human Resources

Dan Emmons
Executive Assistant
Human Resources

Norma-Jean Forshey
Teacher
King-Westwood

Gloria Foster-Wimbley
Assistant Principal
Kalamazoo Central

Lillian Marie Freeman
Classroom Monitor
KAMSC/Milwood Magnet

Jaime Gordon
Interventionist
Hillside

Michelle Gregg-Marger
Reading Interventionist
Parkwood-Upjohn

Teresa Hazzard
Payroll/Benefits Supervisor
Business Office

Mark Hill
Principal
Phoenix

Danielle Howard
Library Assistant
Northglade

Karen “Katie” Jackson
Secretary
Winchell

Judy Kangas Salters
Teacher
Maple Street

Julie LaBudda
Teacher
Kalamazoo Central

Rebecca Learner
Counselor
Loy Norrix

Corie Maddox
Teacher
Prairie Ridge

Shannon Meegan
Teaching Assistant
Northglade

Suzann Middleton
Secretary
Winchell

Michael Milka
Teacher
KAMSC

Amanda Miller
Teacher
Prairie Ridge

Leanne Miller
Executive Assistant
Superintendent’s Office

Suzanne Mills
Teacher
Kalamazoo Central

Lori Nelson
Library Assistant
CEC

Joanne Parent
Paraprofessional
Parkwood-Upjohn

Virgina Rakowski
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Pathologist
Indian Prairie

Julie Scott
Teacher
Milwood Elementary

Laurie Sipes
Teacher
Prairie Ridge

Cheryl Snow
Teacher
Woodward

Michael Tanoff
Director
KAMSC

Melissa Tijerina-Herwick
Teacher
Maple Street

Maria Varnesdeel
Library Assistant
Woods Lake

Judy Warren
Social Worker
Washington

Liam Wendt
Psychologist
Itinerant

Elaine Willis
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Julie Young
Teacher
Loy Norrix

Mari Anne Zang
Teacher
Kalamazoo Central



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One Year, Many Gains for New Superintendent

Dr. Darrin Slade Pleased with Progress, Plans to Build on Foundation of First Year

WHEN Dr. Darrin Slade applied to become the superintendent of Kalamazoo Public Schools in 2023, he saw a district with potential, but he also saw a school system where he would be able to drive significant improvements in achievement and behavior.

Now, with one year under his belt as superintendent, he has more confidence than ever that Kalamazoo Public Schools can become one of the best school districts in state, because of the commitment and hard work of students, staff, the senior leadership team, and the community.



**Superintendent
Dr. Darrin Slade**

“Although a lot of great things were happening in Kalamazoo, the district still faced major challenges,” Slade said of the district a year ago. “These included poor student achievement for some student subgroups and schools, low attendance rates, low graduation rates and also perceived major issues with student behavior. And, there was a need to increase the number of students who take advantage of The Kalamazoo Promise.

“I have spent my entire career focused on these kinds of issues and have a history of success with positive results. That’s primarily why I applied. I also liked the fact that the city has many resources. It also appeared that the school board was focused on progress.”

He is proud of the district’s growth in his first year as superintendent, citing improvements in attendance and preliminary data that indicates gains in student achievement and graduation rates. Within his first few months, he focused on increased visibility as superintendent and on safety issues within the district — in response to concerns he heard from stakeholders during an initial set of community input sessions.

Because of strides made during the past year, “We will start off next year strong,” he said. “The goal is for Kalamazoo to be one of the premier school districts in the state. It can’t just be stated, but

people have to believe it. Everyday citizens have to believe in our district’s potential.”

In a year with many notable accomplishments, these are some of the gains he is most proud of:

- **Preliminary data pointing to improved achievement for all students, specifically in the areas of reading, math, science and social studies.** Early data points to major improvements in the district’s Advanced Placement classes as well, and all achievement information will be shared at the beginning of the school year.

“My philosophy has always been that the purpose of school is to prepare students for adulthood. Mainly providing the skills that they will need to be productive citizens of the United States. The four subjects mentioned establish the foundation for the skills that young people will need to be successful and compete globally for college acceptance, careers and even the military. That’s why this is the most important part of education to me. I have old-fashioned, traditional values when it comes to teaching and learning and the role of education.”

- **Attendance.** “I’m also proud of our improved student attendance at all levels and 99 percent of our schools. This is important because students cannot learn if they do not come to school on a regular basis. This is proven by research and common sense.



Malaysia Crayton achieved perfect attendance at Northeastern Elementary in October. At an attendance celebration, Superintendent Dr. Darrin Slade awards her and her mother Shanteia Smith a TV they won in a raffle.



Dr. Darrin Slade with, from left, Lucas Chavez, Gabriel Salisbury, Amuri Alenge, and Carter Boyer, at Arcadia Elementary School on the last day of the 2022-23 school year.

Great attendance is also important in adulthood. We are setting the foundation now.”

• **Improving Student Behavior.** “It’s important for students, and young people in general, to fully understand that they must follow established rules and procedures. It’s also important for students to understand that they must be respectful and have good manners, etc. as they proceed through life. We will continue to push behavior and discipline hard.

“Many employers complain about the overall negative behavior that young people bring into the workforce now. It’s our job as educators to create a strong foundation. It’s also important for students to know that there are consequences for your actions when they are negative or inappropriate. We will continue to promote strong discipline and consequences going into next school year. Many stakeholders have stated better behavior has been a positive hallmark of the year.”

• **More focus on instructional leadership.** “Staff have worked hard on finding ways to improve instructional delivery, overall pedagogy, and the instructional leadership capacity of principals and others in the district. This is important because it has a major impact on teaching and learning. The

district will continue to push Tier One instruction and consistent instructional practices.”

“As part of that work, the district’s entire leadership team has been extremely visible in schools and the community this year. This has been a major improvement compared to past practices.”

In addition, he noted that there have been 60-plus opportunities this year for community stakeholders to meet with him, and those community conversations will continue into the next school year. “Stakeholder voice is important.”

As he looks to the beginning of the second year of his tenure, Slade said he intends to remain focused on many of the initiatives from his first year including strengthening instructional leadership. The most important area of work, however, will always be student achievement.

“Improving student achievement will continue to be the No. 1 focus,” he said. “We will expand and improve on what’s working. We will make adjustments based on our data for those areas that did not improve.”

Among his planned initiatives for the upcoming school year:

- Expanded Saturday School and after-school learning opportunities.

- More field trips and opportunities for learning outside of the district.
- Efforts to begin addressing right-sizing around the district as it relates to class size.
- Continued focus and tightening of discipline and attendance protocols and practices.
- Increased opportunities in science and for advanced students.
- Expanded opportunities for alternative learning environments.

One other major focus for the district this coming year will be the completion of a new strategic plan. Work on that effort began this spring when Slade held almost 50 meetings with more than 2,000 stakeholders to discuss the district’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, in what is traditionally called a SWOT analysis.

The strategic plan will provide a valuable framework that will help guide future growth across the district, Slade said. The district has not revised its strategic plan for several years.

“The strategic plan establishes goals and a timeline for desired outcomes,” he said. “The plan will be shared with the community during the opening months of the school year.”

Slade continues to marvel at the strength and generosity of the Kalamazoo community; the dedication and compassion of the district’s Board of Education, administrators, principals, teachers and staff; and the potential of KPS students — which is even greater than he imagined when he first interviewed for the position of superintendent.

“Students in Kalamazoo are very enthusiastic and excited about learning,” he said. “They are also generally better behaved and more respectful than students in some of my previous districts. Teachers and school staff members are extremely hardworking and focused on students. They are probably the most compassionate group of adults that I have encountered in my career.

“I have never worked in a district with so many financial and social/emotional-based resources. People here in Kalamazoo love to volunteer and assist. Most people in the city graduated from the school district or have students in the district. That makes a big difference. There is a vested interest in the district by the Kalamazoo community.”

New KAMSC Director Heather Kortlandt Takes the Reins

WHEN HEATHER Kortlandt was an undergraduate student at Western Michigan University, her scientific methods class was taught by Dr. John Goudie, who was then the director of the Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center and an adjunct instructor at WMU.

The class was held at KAMSC, because, what better place to learn about teaching science to students than in a high school laboratory?

"It was my first experience in the building," Kortlandt said. "Dr. Goudie taught us a lot about KAMSC and what they do there. There was so much relevance in the curriculum with students doing research and having internship opportunities. I thought, 'Oh, I want to do this for my students.'"

Now, her students are KAMSC students. This spring, Kortlandt was named the new director of the countywide math and science program. She replaces Dr. Michael Tanoff, who retired at the end of the school year.

As she prepares to take the reins of the program, which offers advanced math and science curriculum for Kalamazoo County high school students, Kortlandt said she is excited and honored to have been chosen for the opportunity.

Kortlandt grew up near Three Oaks. After graduating from River Valley High School, she moved to Kalamazoo to study at Western Michigan University. She eventually earned a bachelor's degree in secondary education earth science and master's degrees in science education and educational leadership.

As a high school graduate, she intended to major in electrical engineering, but when she found herself tutoring other students during labs, she realized her affinity for teaching.

"I was excited to help others learn," Kortlandt said. "That's when it changed for me."

After graduating from WMU 23 years ago, she began working with Otsego Public Schools. As a math and science teacher, she took inspiration from what she'd seen at KAMSC and would place some of her students in research experiences with WMU professors and have them present at the Southwest Michigan Math and Science Symposium. She remem-

bers being very proud to see Otsego students perform competitively with big math programs like KAMSC and the Battle Creek Area Math and Science Center.

She eventually moved into administration, serving Otsego as an assistant high school principal for two years, and as the director of instruction for 12 years. During her time at Otsego, she led its STEM initiative, which included bringing Project Lead the Way to Otsego. She also served as president of the Michigan Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development for the last seven years.

She is excited for the opportunity to work with KAMSC to continue to bring high quality, rigorous learning experiences to advanced students in the area.

"I think the most special part of the program is the research aspect," she said. "I have a rising junior myself. He's quite bright and school is sort of boring. This gives kids like that a chance to explore things that are super relevant and challenging. It's akin to going to (a career and technical education) center and spending a half day in a program that you're really motivated by."

As the program's new director, she eager to work with the talented KAMSC staff, and wants to capitalize on the excitement of the rigorous learning environment while also addressing some pressing concerns for the program, such as the reality of older facilities, the need to build community partnerships, and ways



Heather Kortlandt has been named the new director of the Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center.

to find and retain traditionally underrepresented student populations.

Tanoff and the KAMSC staff had already begun looking at creating a Multi-Tiered System of Support to address issues of attrition among students. Kortlandt said that work needs to be coupled with curriculum work at early elementary school levels to ensure all middle school students are prepared to take the competitive KAMSC entrance exam.

"What are the opportunities for kids to get to take Algebra 1 by eighth grade?" she said. "If that doesn't happen then the door is already shut. It's not enough to say that we offer Algebra 1. How many kids are you actually getting through Algebra 1? How do you market it? Instead of shutting the door, you need to keep it open so

as many kids as possible feel it's open to them."

It is about building a skill set, but it is also about creating a mindset, where students believe in their abilities to excel at math and succeed in programs such as KAMSC. "There needs to be some outreach and cheerleading along the way to tell kids that you can do this," she said.

Kortlandt hopes to use her background in curriculum and instruction to hold conversations with other instructional leaders around the county to strengthen math and science education overall and promote the opportunities for all students at KAMSC.

"I am just really excited," she said. "I believe it's a privilege to lead a program like this and I'm excited to see where we can take it as a staff. I value relationships, and I'm so excited to be able to start my day with kids and to build relationships with teachers, parents and the community."

"I believe it's a privilege to lead a program like this and I'm excited to ... build relationships with teachers, parents and the community."

— Heather Kortlandt

Park Party Recess Brings Summer Smiles

STUDENTS at Milwood Elementary enjoyed a fun afternoon of games, music and Air Zoo activities in early July, thanks to the Maranda Park Party Recess from WOOD TV8. In addition to ice cream and inflatables for the students, the afternoon included generous donations from Fifth Third Bank and Biggby Coffee.



Grady Hughes and Alike Elechi-Little John get some air in the bounce house at the Maranda Park Party Recess.



Farhadullah Shinwari prepares to launch his stomp rocket at the Maranda Park Party Recess at Milwood Elementary.



Maranda, left, from WOOD TV8 presents a check from Biggby Coffee to KPS teacher Aneisha Carlisle, center, for school supplies. Principal Sylvia Washington looks on.

ON THE COVER: Luciana De La Rosa Moreira, left, and Jenifer Chilel Perez shared smiles as they shared in the fun at the Maranda party.



James Sims is ready to blast off with the Air Zoo Astronaut, also known as Air Zoo President Troy Thrash.

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info@kzoelf.org

Visit
www.kzoelf.org

Kalamazoo Public Schools Annual Notifications

UNDER federal law, parents have the right to request information on the professional qualifications of their children’s classroom teachers and the qualifications of any paraprofessionals who provide services to their children. Parents may request and receive information about: (a) whether the teacher is state-certified, (b) whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or another provisional status, and (c) the baccalaureate major of the teacher and any other graduate degree or certification. Parents may request information on the level of achievement of their child in each of the state academic assessments.

If a student attending a school that receives any Title I, Part A funds is assigned to, or taught, for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified, the school must provide timely notice to the student’s parents. Any inquiries should be directed to:

Human Resources
1220 Howard Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0177

Title VI protects people from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Kalamazoo

Public Schools operates in a non-discriminatory manner including, but not limited to, admissions, academic programs, student treatment and services, counseling and guidance, discipline, classroom assignment, grading, vocational education, recreation, physical education, and athletics. Any complaints or concerns regarding Title VI should be reported to:

Geoff Howe, Director of School Improvement, Title I and Assessments
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0180

* * *

Section 504 is a part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It applies to all persons with disabilities regardless of age. It is an anti-discrimination, civil rights statute that requires the needs of students with disabilities to be met as adequately as the needs of the non-disabled are met. Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Students are not to be excluded solely by reason of their disability or be subject to discrimination. All students with an Individual Educational

Plan are protected under Section 504. Section 504’s definition of disability is a broad definition that also protects students who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or has a record of such impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include physical, mental, self-care, learning, reading, communicating, and thinking. Any complaints or concerns regarding Section 504 should be reported to:

Barry Smith, Coordinator of Student Services
SmithBJ@kalamazoopublicschools.net
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0161

* * *

Title II provides grants to school districts to increase student achievement through teacher and administrator training. Kalamazoo Public Schools provides high quality training to assist teachers and administrators in many different areas to improve achievement for all students. Any complaints or concerns regarding Title II should be reported to:

Geoff Howe, Director of School Improvement, Title I and Assessments
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0180

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children’s education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are “eligible students.”

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student’s education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. The school must honor your request to review your child’s education records within forty-five (45) days of receiving the request. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will arrange for access and notify the par-

(continued on page 13)

AIR ZOO | AUGUST 9-12

BLACKBIRD REVEALED

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Meet the pilots & crew of the world’s fastest manned aircraft and hear their stories. Get a rare look inside the open cockpits of the SR-71B Blackbird. All included with admission during this family-friendly weekend!

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THE BLACKBIRD AFFAIR

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10 | 5:30-10PM

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ONE WELL

Jamie Pleune & David Morgan

airzoo.org/spyposium

AIR ZOO

Aerospace & Science Experience



Kalamazoo Public Schools Annual Notifications (continued from page 12)

ent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

• Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record that they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of his or her right to a formal hearing regarding the request for amendment. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

• Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student to release any information from a student’s education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest; contractors, consultants, or volunteers to whom the district has outsourced institutional services or functions. For example, the district shares data with ed-

- ucational institutions that have a vested interest in helping district students such as:
- Communities In Schools;
 - The Kalamazoo Promise;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies;
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law; and
 - Information the district has designated as “directory information.”

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that the Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS), with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to

the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, KPS may disclose appropriate designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised the district to the contrary in accordance with district procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow KPS to include this type of information from your child’s education records in certain school publications. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: a playbill, showing your student’s role in a drama production; the annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; graduation programs; or sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which includes student’s name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized school activities and sports, weight and height of athletic team members, dates of attendance and previous school(s) attended, is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish

(continued on page 14)

Ready, set, GROW!

If your child is turning 3 or 4 years old, it's time to grow with Kalamazoo County Pre-K!

- ✕ High-quality Pre-K provides essential early language, math, and social skills
- ✕ Free/low-cost options
- ✕ One application — three programs

Visit dreambigstartsmall.org or call 269-250-9333.





Kalamazoo Public Schools Annual Notifications (continued from page 13)

yearbooks. The district may disclose personally identifiable information from education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student to other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the district has determined to have legitimate educational interests, such as Communities In Schools and The Kalamazoo Promise. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the district has outsourced institutional services or functions. In addition, two federal laws require us to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories — names, addresses and telephone listings — unless parents have advised KPS that they do not want their student’s information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want KPS to disclose information from your child’s education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the district by writing to:

Department of Informational Technology
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0146
or by faxing to (269) 337-0195 on or before
February 25.

NONDISCRIMINATION, TITLE IX, SECTION 504, TITLE VI, AND TITLE II CONTACT INFORMATION

Kalamazoo Public Schools welcomes all students and staff of any religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex,

pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, and disability. The district will not tolerate or condone any act of bias or discrimination toward any person on the basis of religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, gender identification, height, weight, familial status, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability in any of its activities, hiring practices, programs, or services. In addition, Kalamazoo Public Schools will not tolerate any retaliation against individuals who submit complaints and/or who participate in investigations relating to such complaints.

Further, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), students, employees, and candidates for admission to any educational program and/or employment and all other persons are protected against all forms of sex discrimination and sexual harassment, including based on gender identity or stereotypical notions of gender identity.

The following person is designated as the Title IX coordinator with respect to any Title IX complaint of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation involving staff members or third parties:

Steve Leland
Director of Human Resources
lelandsp@kalamazoopublicschools.net
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo MI 49008
(269) 337-0177

The following person is designated as the Title IX coordinator with respect to any complaint from students regarding discrimination, harassment, retaliation and/or bullying from another student(s):

Reuquiyah Saunders, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
Kalamazoo Public Schools
1220 Howard St.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269) 337-0161

In addition, building-level administrators are responsible for monitoring adherence to the district’s nondiscrimination policy and for incorporating the district’s policy statement in all printed promotional materials and newsletters. Students should report concerns or complaints about discrimination, harassment, bullying, or cyberbullying by another student or students first to a teacher, and then if not satisfied, to the principal or assistant principal. Any concerns or complaints of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or cyberbullying not satisfied at the building level may be reported to an administrator in the Student Services Department. Concerns and/or complaints should be in writing, with the date, details of the concerns, and signature of the person making the complaint.

Any complaints and concerns of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or cyberbullying that involve adults and/or staff members should be reported to the building principal. If the inquiry is not satisfied at this level, or if the building principal is the subject of the complaint, then the concern may be directed to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. All concerns should be in writing, with the date, details of the concern, and signature of the person making the complaint.

Complaints of any violation of the district’s nondiscrimination policy will be promptly investigated and appropriate actions taken based on the results of the investigation. Individuals who report violations of the district’s nondiscrimination policy will be granted confidentiality to the extent reasonably practicable. Any questions or assistance required regarding the district’s nondiscrimination policy, bullying policy, or Title IX protections should be addressed to the office of Student Services (269) 337-0161 for students and Human Resources (269) 337-0182 for staff.

The district has modified its guidelines and a grievance procedure for complaints filed under Title IX, which prohibits discrimination based on sex in any district educational program, service, or activity. The district’s new Title IX Statement and Grievance Procedures are being updated on the KPS website at: www.kalamazoopublicschools.com/ExploreKPS/AnnualNotifications.aspx and will be included in the district’s student code of conduct.

10 Reasons to protect your business with



1. Business-related legal questions

2. Hiring, disciplining, or firing employees

3. Reviewing an employee handbook

4. Protecting assets from business risks

5. Borrowing money for your business

6. Understanding licensing laws and liens

7. Regular contract reviews

8. Addressing allegations of discrimination or harassment

9. Dealing with business tax audits

10. Addressing injuries on your property



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Model Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED):
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships,
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parent; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility,
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or

- screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:
 1. Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Kalamazoo Public School’s (KPS) policy is to follow the requirements of the PPRA, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrange-

ments to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. KPS will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. KPS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. KPS will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution,
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.



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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE



EXHIBIT NOW - JAN. 19, 2025 | FREE

KALAMAZOO STATE HOSPITAL: 165 YEARS OF PSYCHIATRIC CARE

Learn about the history of the patients, employees and buildings on the campus of Michigan's longest-operating mental hospital.



EVENT

THURSDAY, AUG. 15 | 10 A.M. | FREE CHEST/BREASTFEEDING CAFE

Discuss chest/breastfeeding and pumping with professionals from the Kalamazoo County WIC program, learn about resources and meet other new parents in an educational space designed for kids age 0 - 5 years old.



EXHIBIT ENDING SOON!

NOW - SEPT. 1 | FREE

THE QUESTIONEERS: READ. QUESTION. THINK. PLAY!

READ. QUESTION. THINK. PLAY!

The traveling exhibit "The Questioneers: Read. Question. Think. PLAY!" from DuPage Children's Museum poses questions, identifies challenges and sparks creative problem-solving.

"The Questioneers" by Andrea Beaty. Illustrations © David Roberts.

UPCOMING EVENTS FREE

OUTSIDE THE MUSEUM WALLS

Museum activities will be popping up all over Kalamazoo in August. Drop by the museum's table for an activity and to say hi!

- **Friday, Aug. 9** | Back-to-School Bash with the Family Health Center
- **Saturday, Aug. 17** | Kalamazoo Farmers Market | With our friends from Kalamazoo Valley Community College's Food Innovation Center
- **Saturday, Aug. 24** | Children's Nature Playscape | Explore play in nature

PLANETARIUM EXPERIENCE

AUGUST SHOWS | \$3 PER PERSON

FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS

One World, One Sky: Big Bird's Adventure | 11 a.m. | 30 min.
Pre-K - Grade 1

Join Big Bird, Elmo and their Chinese friend, Hu Hu Zhu, exploring the Big Dipper and North Star, and take an imaginary trip to the moon.

The Sky Above Us | 1 p.m. | 40 min. | Grades 4 & up

Learn about some of the "celestial wonders" that can be seen overhead in Michigan in this live, season-focused program.

SATURDAYS

Pink Floyd: Dark Side of the Moon | 2:30 p.m. | 45 min.

Grades 5 & up

Pink Floyd's progressive eighth album is put to stunning visuals that will send you to the moon.

SUNDAYS

Did an Asteroid Really Kill the Dinosaurs? | 1 p.m. | 24 min.

Grades 4 & up

Discover our solar system through a different set of eyes — an alien family from another star system.

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 in this live, season-focused program.

HOURS: Tuesday - Saturday | 10 a.m. - 4 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.



230 N. Rose St., Kalamazoo
kalamazoomuseum.org | 269.373.7990