September 9, 2024 Regular Board of Education Meeting

Board Items

Real World Learning Update

Pam Lewis, associate superintendent of leadership and learning, introduced Dr. Ryan Flurry, principal of career education campuses, and Laura Harsch, business to education program officer, to present an update on Real World Learning in the Shawnee Mission School District.

Dr. Flurry shared how Real World Learning connects to the Strategic Plan in the strategy areas of Learning and Belonging. The Strategic Plan states that every student will have a personalized learning plan, which will prepare them for college and careers, with the interpersonal skills they need for life success.

Since 2019-2020, Real World Learning has been part of a regional effort, in collaboration with the Kauffman Foundation and other districts across the Kansas City metro area. The initiative now spans 75 high schools across more than 31 school districts, reaching over 80,000 students. Dr. Flurry noted this is the last year of grant support for SMSD by the Kauffman Foundation.

A key focus of Real World Learning has been on student attainment of Market Value Assets (MVAs), which include work opportunities and certifications that help students succeed beyond high school. The four categories of MVAs are entrepreneurial experiences, work experience (internships and client connected projects), nine or more college credit hours, and industry recognized credentials. The district aims for 100% of students to graduate with an MVA by 2028. Dr. Flurry shared data showing 72.8% of the current class of 2024 has earned an MVA.

Erica Jablonski, real world learning counselor, and Grayson Furjanic, SM West senior, shared their experiences with client-connected projects in

collaboration with The History Co: Lab and the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce. Ashley Ardon Baltazar, SM South junior, spoke about her internship with the Immigrant Connection.

Ms. Lewis shared that looking ahead, SMSD will continue expanding Real World Learning opportunities by enhancing career exploration from Pre-K to 12th grade, supporting the costs of Real World Learning experiences, integrating Real World Learning with core content, developing comprehensive communications strategies and developing systems to ensure its sustainability.

Click here to view the full report.

Student Athletic Participation

Kent Glaser, director of athletics and activities, presented an update on athletic participation in the Shawnee Mission School District. He opened the presentation by sharing an article connecting participation in athletics to the five “C’s” of competence, confidence, connections, character and caring.

He highlighted that participation numbers across schools continue to rise, with the expansion of middle school programs playing a key role. At the high school level, interest in athletics remains strong, with participation numbers continuing to grow. Glaser emphasized the importance of encouraging student involvement, noting that research consistently links participation in school programs with academic success.

Click here to find links to the athletic participation update and presentation slides.

From the Superintendent Report



Forbes Ranks SMSD in the Top 15

Superintendent Dr. Schumacher noted Shawnee Mission School District has once again been recognized among America's Best Employers By State by Forbes Magazine. The rankings were developed based on employee surveys where participants were asked how likely they were to recommend their employer. The list includes 1,294 organizations. Shawnee Mission is ranked in the top 15 in the State of Kansas. "Congratulations to our human resources team and all of our schools – this is something we truly celebrate as ONE Shawnee Mission!," stated Schumacher.



Non-Teaching Career Fair

Shawnee Mission is looking for individuals interested in applying for non-teaching positions across the district. This includes positions such as custodians, food service team members, aides and paraeducators. The non-teaching career fair will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, September 25 at the Center for Academic Achievement. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend, and to share that there are opportunities available to work at one of the best organizations in the state. Click here to review open positions and submit an application.

Action Team Applications/Nominations

The Shawnee Mission School District is seeking parent and community participants, along with internal SMSD team members, to help implement the strategies and action steps of the updated Strategic Plan. Dr.

Schumacher emphasized that collaboration from many within the SMSD community is essential to bringing this exciting plan to life. Action teams are scheduled to kick off in the first quarter to begin their work, with additional teams starting later in the school year. Click here for the action plan application and nomination form.

Fall Breakfast Coming Soon!

The annual Shawnee Mission Education Foundation Fall Breakfast is exactly one month away! This event will feature hundreds of Shawnee Mission students, highlight the work of Shawnee Mission School District educators, and celebrate the many ways the Foundation supports the Shawnee Mission School District throughout the year. The event starts at 7 a.m. on Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at the Overland Park Convention Center.

This is a fundraising event that supports the work of the Foundation. Reservations and sponsorship opportunities start at $75. Click here to purchase tickets or sponsorships.



New Podcast- Episode 3

A new episode of Shawnee Mission Mic'd Up is ready for listeners. Episode #3 of season 2 highlights the ongoing Strategic Plan work. Dr. Leigh Anne Neal, chief of early childhood learning and sustainability, and Shawnee Mission South senior Remy Witt, joined hosts Dr. Schumacher and Dr. Gonser for a discussion about the process and what is next with the work of the Strategic Plan. Click here to watch or listen!



Faculty Art Show Announcement Shawnee Mission has so many multi-talented team members, and the district is currently celebrating that creativity in its gallery space. Featured in the Board Room and entryway at the Center for Academic Achievement is artwork created by Shawnee Mission School District team members.

Steve McCord, head custodian at Merriam Park Elementary School, was selected as the winner this year for his work of art, “Lillian.”

"Congratulations to Steve, and a special thanks to Megan Ellis, our incredible visual arts coordinator and Lenexa Hills Art teacher,” said Dr. Schumacher. “I’d also like to extend thanks to the Shawnee Mission Education Foundation for providing the $250 prize for the honoree and a $250 grant for the school's art department, which will further support student creativity."

The staff art show will be on display through the month of September at the Center for Academic Achievement and can be viewed during open building hours- from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

All Star The Board of Education presented two Shawnee Mission All Star awards.

The first honoree was Annie Hasan, Arabic teacher at Shawnee Mission South. Click here to see a video about Hasan.

The next honoree was Amber Pagan, preschool teacher at Nieman Elementary. Click here to see a video about Pagan.

Dr. Schumacher noted that both All Star honorees were 2024 SMSD representatives for the Kansas Teacher of the Year program. Pagan was honored as a state finalist in the program, and the final honoree will be announced later this month.

“We are so proud of the way these two teachers have represented our district and we are glad to celebrate their outstanding work in the classroom,” expressed Schumacher.

Anyone wanting to nominate a Shawnee Mission School District team member as an All Star can do so by filling out this form.

This publication, provided after each Shawnee Mission Board of Education meeting, provides a recap of some actions taken by the Shawnee Mission Board of Education and information about activities in the school district.

An archive video of the meeting can be found here.

Links to board policies, agenda, and meeting minutes can be found here.