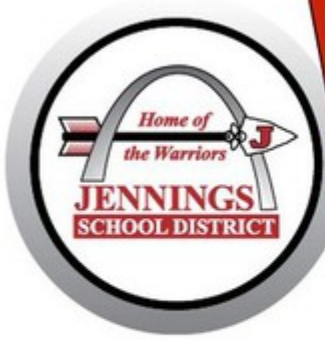




WARRIOR WAY NEWS

ISSUE 9 - June 2026

A Newsletter for the Jennings School District and Community

Message from the Superintendent

Sixteen District Staff Members are Embarking on New Chapters in their Lives

On June 11, the Jennings School District honored our 2026 retirees for their dedicated service to our children and community. Combining more than a century of educational experience, these educators leave behind a powerful legacy.

Our annual retirement celebration is always bittersweet as we try to show our retirees and their families our appreciation through testimonials, gifts and an exceptional banquet meal.



As we mingle, meet relatives, share stories and take photos, we are all excited for what comes next for our colleagues, yet it is still hard to imagine school without them.

On behalf of the generations of children who have benefited from your efforts, I thank each of our retirees – and your families – for deciding to build your career in Jennings and allowing us to benefit from your expertise. I extend my heartfelt wishes for a rich and fulfilling retirement for each of you as you discover and embrace new hobbies, embark on exciting travels and relish leisure time with loved ones.

As you reflect on your time in Jennings, please know that your contributions will continue to resonate through the halls for many years to come. And, if you find yourself missing us, please feel

free to visit or, perhaps even volunteer! We will find a place for you!
Remember, "Once a warrior, always a warrior!"

In service together,
Dr. Paula D. Knight
Superintendent of Schools



*Special thanks to **Stephanie Grice, Fershelia Richardson and Auprivave Young**, along with her Southwest Food Excellence Staff transformed the Gary Gore Center into a beautiful, white, floral banquet setting to complement a delicious menu of favorites!*



*Congratulations to JSD's 2026 retirees including Fairview Elementary's **Dr. Velma Burse, Sonja Harvey, Yvonne Henry and Michele Holmes-Bell**; Northview Elementary's **Mary Ellen Michaels, Kristen Olson and Brian Sharp**; Woodland Elementary's **Cynthia Campbell, Helen Douglas, Stella Longmeyer and Jennifer Macon**; Rose Mary Johnson Jennings Junior High's **Kimberly Goevert and Barbara Henderson**; Jennings Senior High's **Helen Douglas** along with the Facilities Department's **George Bulkley, Robert Crawford and Richard Miller**.*

Happenings in the "J"

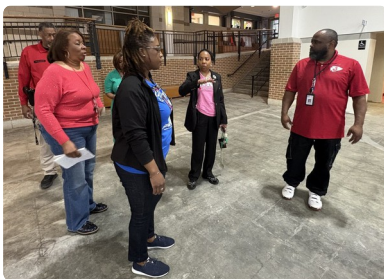
Nothing Says "Thank You" like a Yellow Boot Award!



The "Boots on the Ground" award was presented to (left to right) Colonel DeAndre Davis, director of Security; Corey Hellems, director of Facilities; Victoria Glaspy, chief financial officer, and High School Principal Dr. Cryslynn Billingsley (not pictured) by JSD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Paula Knight (far right).

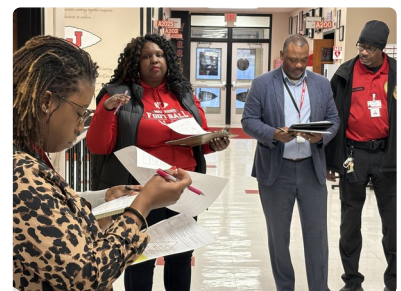
Superintendent Creates "Boots on the Ground" Award to Acknowledge Extraordinary Work During Flood

At the June 8 Board of Education meeting, Superintendent **Dr. Paula Knight** could not let this eventful year end without a proper tribute to those administrators who were either among the first on the scene during the high school flood or who otherwise played a major role in helping to reopen the school in just four months. The superintendent's unique "Boots on the Ground" award was presented to **Colonel DeAndre Davis**, director of Security; **Corey Hellems**, director of Facilities; **Victoria Glaspy**, chief financial officer and JHS Principal **Dr. Cryslynn Billingsley**.



These dedicated individuals coordinated recovery efforts; communications with insurance and the Department of Education; cleaning and sanitation; selection, purchase and installation of materials; reconfiguration of space and services; and support of the principal's hybrid (alternating days) schedule for students and teachers.

The yellow boots were Dr. Knight's unique way of thanking the team for giving up personal time and putting in long days to get the school back on track. She said, "When the team answered the emergency call, winter break had officially begun, and yet, they were on the scene with the fire department in just minutes. But, upon arrival, it became clear to everyone that they were not dressed to navigate both rushing and standing water about eight inches high." She smiled, recounting how Hellems, director of facilities, had to run home for his boots. "We can smile about it now, as we acknowledge their heroic efforts in service to our students. They truly



were our 'boots on the ground' through the recovery process. So, I thought that rubber boot plaques would help to remind them that their efforts were appreciated, and we certainly could not have done it without them."

Highlights from Summer Learning Academy 2026

Jennings SLA visits Berkeley Fire Dept. - June 16, 2026



*Thank you to the Berkeley Fire Department for offering a hands-on opportunity for Rose Mary Johnson Jennings Junior High students on Tues., June 16. Click video above for student testimonial and explanation of purpose from Jennings partner and St. Louis Family Court representative **Tammy Powell-Williamson**.*

Summer Learning Extends Beyond the Classroom

In addition to brushing up on core subject matter or recovering credits, Summer Learning gives educators the opportunity to offer students much more. Experiences outside the classroom stir the imagination and introduce students to career opportunities they may not have considered.

Dr. Leslie Thomas-Washington, district administrator for the JSD Summer Learning Academy 2026, explained that the summer program thrives thanks to strong relationships with community partners who get truly excited about working with students. "Middle school, in particular, is a critical time for young people, many of whom are just starting to form ideas on what the future looks like for them. These programs give them opportunities to explore new interests (*such as firefighting as featured in the video above*) through hands-on learning, targeted discussion and testimonials as well as fun and engaging activities that challenge them."



We are extremely grateful to all of our community partners, including Councilwoman Lisa Willis-James (Ward V), for sharing their time and talents with our scholars and for their continued

support! Check out additional Summer Learning highlights featured below and watch for more stories in the upcoming *Warrior Way* magazine later this summer.



Kitchen Conservatory Chef Jeff Friesen Teaches How to Operate as a Team

Under Kitchen Conservatory Chef **Jeff Friesen's** direction, students came to understand and appreciate food and kitchen safety along with teamwork in a "back-of-the-house" restaurant operation on June 17. They learned to follow recipes, create and press fettuccine noodles, bread and fry chicken, build and grill shrimp skewers and more.

Periodically, they would acknowledge understanding with "Yes, Chef," or "Thank you, Chef." The true buzz among the students was their eager anticipation of sitting down to enjoy the meal they created! On behalf of our students and Summer Learning team, "Thank you, Chef," and thank you, Kitchen Conservatory!



Chess Class Helps Keep Students One Move Ahead of the Game in Critical Thinking



Chess is one of the best ways to develop critical thinking skills. With one-to-one fundamentals coaching from local volunteers, including the Saint Louis Chess Club's **Tanner Leslie** (*in photo*), the JSD Summer Learning Academy's chess program at Northview and Fairview becomes more than a game. Playing chess improves a student's focus and concentration while boosting cognitive skills like pattern recognition, spatial memory and strategy development. By calculating multiple outcomes, it builds mental stamina needed for advanced problem-solving. Consequently, it

helps build stronger math and reading skills while fostering lifelong critical thinking and emotional resilience.

The Little Bit Foundation's Robotics Program Builds Fun with Engineering Concepts

The science and art of robotics help prepare students for the technology-driven future with hands-on learning, critical-thinking skills, problem-solving and adaptability. The Little Bit Foundation's robotics program at JSD's Summer Learning Academy encourages creativity and ingenuity as well as boosts skills in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Robotics also helps prepare students to problem-solve for real-world scenarios.



Fairview Clinic Offers Immunizations by Appointment

Summer Learning includes fitness and exercise as well as health and wellness. The Fairview Clinic, in partnership with Affinia, is hosting office hours to update immunizations this summer.



Thanks to JSD's new community partnership with Affinia Healthcare, the Fairview Clinic is offering immunizations by appointment throughout the summer for Jennings students. Get your child's immunizations and boosters updated at your convenience. Call your child's school nurse to schedule your summer appointment.

Summer Family Ceramic Night Welcomes Community!

Art teacher **Jennifer Kelch** coordinates Family Ceramic Nights, one which was recently held on June 17, and has built a loyal following of community artists who enjoy painting pottery with students, family, teachers and friends. With supplies displayed before them, artists of all ages creatively transformed mugs, plaques, trays and lanterns into sentimental and inspirational art objects. Please watch for upcoming events, which typically happens each fall and summer.



Upgraded Red Tennis Courts Serve Up Warrior Pride



Jennings Athletic Director **Marlos Reynolds** proudly shared news that the newly resurfaced, red-branded tennis courts at Jennings High School were completed on June 18. Reynolds added that the project was funded by a grant from the **United States Tennis Association** (USTA) in collaboration with **Breakpoint Academy**, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting tennis and life skills. Thank you to both organizations for supporting our student-athletes.

Why the Nation Celebrates Juneteenth "Freedom Day"

Juneteenth, also known as "Freedom Day," commemorates the June 19, 1865, delayed announcement of the abolition of slavery in Galveston, Texas, more than two years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. At the age of 94, Texan **Dr. Opal Lee** tirelessly campaigned for June 19th to be recognized as a federal holiday to rival the celebratory nature of the nation's "Independence Day" on the fourth of July. In 2021, Congress introduced a bill that was signed into law by **President Joe Biden**, officially making Juneteenth a federal holiday. As we approach the 250th anniversary of the United States, Juneteenth celebrations have been observed nationwide.



Catching Up with SSD Starfish Honoree Donald Stanley

Donald Stanley Accepts SSD 2026 Starfish Award



In follow-up to our original story in the [February 2026 Warrior Way enews](#) ([click here to read the full story](#)), **Donald Stanley**, a paraprofessional at Hanrahan Elementary School, officially received his **Special School District Foundation's Starfish Award** ([Starfishawards.org](#)) during an awards ceremony on June 11, from 6 to 9 p.m. at The Reverie STL in Chesterfield. It's important to note that Stanley was one of 11 honorees that evening; out of a pool of 90 candidates! Please click on the video above to hear his heartwarming acceptance speech.

Help Jennings Athletics Win a \$1M T-Mobile Field Upgrade

The Jennings High School Athletic Department is seeking community support to win the [T-Mobile Friday Night 5G Lights](#) sweepstakes for a \$1 million grand prize for a field upgrade. Supporters are encouraged to post daily on all their social media platforms by tagging @TMobile and @jenningsathletics and including the hashtags #FN5GL and #Entry. [Click here to share the JSD Athletic's Facebook post](#). Thanks for your support!



Jennings School Board Recognitions

The Jennings Board of Education recognizes schools for attendance and students for achievement each month. At the June 8 meeting, the board did not name students of the month but honored the May school attendance winners and the top three schools for the 2025–26 school year. *See details and photo below.*

School Attendance Awardees

The Jennings School District recognized three schools for outstanding attendance at the June 8 board of education meeting. Jennings Junior High School and Woodland Elementary School repeated as winners in the staff and 90/90 attendance categories. Jennings Senior High School secured its first average daily attendance award, following strong attendance during virtual and hybrid schedules prompted by flood repairs. This month's award winners are:

- ✓ **Rose Mary Johnson Jennings Junior High – 97.69% Staff Attendance**
- ✓ **Jennings Senior High School – 94.16% ADA (Average Daily Attendance)**
- ✓ **Woodland Elementary School – 76.89% 90/90 Attendance**

Consistent attendance is vital to student success, and district leaders commended the staff and students at these schools for setting a strong example.

For MONTH of	STAFF ATTENDANCE	ADA ATTENDANCE	90/90 ATTENDANCE
MAY	Junior High (97.69%)	Senior High (94.16%)	Woodland (76.89%)
APRIL	Junior High (97.69%)	Fairview (93.32%)	Woodland (76.89%)
MARCH	Northview (96.75%)	Woodland (93.32%)	Woodland (76.89%)
FEBRUARY	Fairview (96.34%)	Hanrahan (90.45%)	Hanrahan (53.82%)
JANUARY	Northview (96.88%)	Hanrahan (86.76%)	Hanrahan (53.59%)
DECEMBER	Junior High (96.58%)	Hanrahan (91.47%)	Fairview (73.23%)
NOVEMBER	Fairview (97.28%)	Hanrahan (96.90%)	Hanrahan (85.06%)
OCTOBER	Woodland (96.43%)	Hanrahan (92.42%)	Hanrahan (77.48%)
SEPTEMBER	Fairview (98.45%)	Hanrahan (94.41%)	Hanrahan (81.17%)
AUGUST	Fairview (96.38%)	Hanrahan (92.42%)	Hanrahan (77.48%)

Attendance Awards

#1 - Hanrahan

#2 - Fairview

#3 - Woodland



Overall TOP THREE for the YEAR!



At the June 8 Jennings Board of Education meeting, the Jennings School District announced the top three winners for the overall student attendance awards for the 2025–26 school year. The top-performing elementary schools recognized are:

- **First place: Hanrahan Elementary School** finished with a 91.17% average daily attendance rate and a 67.02% average 90/90 attendance rate.
- **Second place: Fairview Elementary School** recorded an 89.44% average daily attendance rate and a 63.92% average 90/90 attendance rate.

- **Third place: Woodland Elementary School** posted an 87.95% average daily attendance rate and a 61.12% average 90/90 attendance rate.

Congratulations to not only these three schools, but all our schools that have earned the monthly honors over the past school year. A job well done by all!

Upcoming Calendar Dates

Important 2026-2027 District Calendar Dates!

- July 3: District Closed for Independence Day Holiday
- Aug. 3-7: New Teacher Orientation
- Aug. 8: District Jamboree for SY 2026-27 ([Click here for table registration](#))
- Aug. 10: District Convocation for Staff, Collaborative Planning and Cultural/Climate
- Aug. 11-14: District Professional Learning
- Aug. 17-19: Building Orientation and Professional Learning
- Aug. 20-21: Teacher Workdays
- Aug. 24: First Day of School for SY 2026-27
- Sept. 7: Labor Day Holiday
- Sept. 14-18: Open House Week
- Nov. 23-27: Thanksgiving Break
- Dec. 21-Jan. 4: Winter Break and J Readiness Day
- March 22-29: Spring Break
- May 27: Last Day of School for Students

[Click here for printable 2026-27 JSD District Calendar Below](#)

Aug. 3-7	New Teacher Orientation	July 2026	August 2026
Aug. 8	Back To School Jamboree	Su M Tu W Th F Sa	Su M Tu W Th F Sa
Aug. 10	District Convocation/Collaborative Planning/Culture & Climate	1 2 3 4	1
Aug. 11-14	District Professional Learning	5 6 7 8 9 10 11	2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Aug. 17-19	Building Orientation/Professional Learning	12 13 14 15 16 17 18	9 10 11 12 13 14 15
Aug. 20-21	Teacher Work Days	19 20 21 22 23 24 25	16 17 18 19 20 21 22
Aug. 24	First Day of School for Students	26 27 28 29 30 31	23 24 25 26 27 28 29
	Blackout Dates: Aug. 3 - Aug. 21		30 31
Sept. 7	Labor Day Holiday	September 2026	October 2026
Sept. 14-18	Open House Week	Su M Tu W Th F Sa	Su M Tu W Th F Sa
Sept. 25	Half Day for Students - Professional Learning (Building)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
Oct. 16	End of First Quarter (39 days)/Homecoming Game	6 7 8 9 10 11 12	4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Oct. 16	Half Day for Students - Professional Learning (District)	13 14 15 16 17 18 19	11 12 13 14 15 16 17
Oct. 19 - 22	Parent Teacher Conference Week (Oct. 22: 3:30pm-7:30pm)	20 21 22 23 24 25 26	18 19 20 21 22 23 24
		27 28 29 30	25 26 27 28 29 30 31
Nov. 13	Half Day for Students - Professional Learning (Building)	November 2026	December 2026
Nov. 23-27	Thanksgiving Break	Su M Tu W Th F Sa	Su M Tu W Th F Sa
Dec. 14-18	Finals Week	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5
Dec. 18	End of Second Quarter (40 days)	8 9 10 11 12 13 14	6 7 8 9 10 11 12
Dec. 21-Jan.1	Winter Break	15 16 17 18 19 20 21	13 14 15 16 17 18 19
	Blackout Dates: Nov. 13	22 23 24 25 26 27 28	20 21 22 23 24 25 26
		29 30	27 28 29 30 31
Jan. 4	J Readiness Day	January 2027	February 2027
Jan. 5	Students Return to School	Su M Tu W Th F Sa	Su M Tu W Th F Sa
Jan. 18	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Holiday	1 2	1 2 3 4 5 6
Feb. 5	Half Day for Students - Professional Learning (District)	3 4 5 6 7 8 9	7 8 9 10 11 12 13
Feb. 15	Presidents' Day Holiday	10 11 12 13 14 15 16	14 15 16 17 18 19 20
	Blackout Dates: Jan. 4, Feb. 5	17 18 19 20 21 22 23	21 22 23 24 25 26 27
		24 25 26 27 28 29 30	28
		31	
Mar. 12	End of Third Quarter (47 days)	March 2027	April 2027
Mar. 15-19	Parent Teacher Conference Week (Mar. 18: 3:30pm-7:30pm)	Su M Tu W Th F Sa	Su M Tu W Th F Sa
Mar. 22-29	Spring Break	1 2 3 4 5 6	1 2 3
Apr. 16	Half Day for Students - Test Prep/ Instructional Planning (Building)	7 8 9 10 11 12 13	4 5 6 7 8 9 10
		14 15 16 17 18 19 20	11 12 13 14 15 16 17
		21 22 23 24 25 26 27	18 19 20 21 22 23 24
		28 29 30 31	25 26 27 28 29 30
May 24-27	Finals Week	May 2027	June/July 2027
May 27	Last Day of School for Students (48 Days)	Su M Tu W Th F Sa	Su M Tu W Th F Sa
May 28	Teacher Work Day	1	1 2 3 4 5
May 28	Graduation	2 3 4 5 6 7 8	6 7 8 9 10 11 12
June 1-4	Make Up Days (If Needed)	9 10 11 12 13 14 15	13 14 15 16 17 18 19
June 7-July 1	Extended School Year	16 17 18 19 20 21 22	20 21 22 23 24 25 26
June 14-July 8	Should Make Up Days Be Used	23 24 25 26 27 28 29	27 28 29 30 1 2 3
		30 31	4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Blue	Legend
Orange	Blackout Day
Red	Professional Learning
Yellow	No School/Breaks/Holidays
Green	End of Quarter
Pink	Extended School Year/Summer School
	Half Day for Student - Professional Learning

Half Day Dismissal Time:
11:30 am for all students

The calendar may be adjusted during the school year to ensure compliance with state law.

Annual Back-to-School Jamboree: August 8 at Gore



Back-to-School Jamboree

Saturday, August 8, 2026
10 AM to 2 PM • Gary Gore Campus

FREE Backpacks, School Supplies, Immunizations & Physicals

Family-Friendly Entertainment:
Arts & Crafts • Music • Prizes • Food • Fun & MORE!

School starts Monday, August 24, 2026

The 2026-27 Jennings Back-to-School Jamboree is set for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 8 on the Gary Gore Campus (NEW LOCATION!) This year's FREE event for the Jennings community promises to be even bigger and better than ever with free backpacks, school supplies and immunizations. Family-friendly entertainment includes arts and crafts, music, prizes, food, fun and more! Note to school clubs, activities and others interested in participating with a table: Please help organizers by registering early at <https://bit.ly/JSD-Jamboree-Table-2026>.

School Year 2026-27 Starts Aug. 24!



WARRIOR WAY NEWS

ISSUE 5 - February 2026 (Webinar)

Special Note
Due to last week's technology issues, we suspect this newsletter was not fully displayed. We are working with the vendor and a replacement is being prepared.

Message from the Superintendent
Celebrating Black Excellence Yearlong

February is nationally recognized as Black History Month and we are excited to celebrate the achievements of Black men and women who have been instrumental in the success of our community. It is our goal to ensure that these heroes are recognized through our curriculum, our staff, our students and our community. We are proud to have a Black Excellence Yearlong celebration that will honor and celebrate the contributions of Black men and women to our community.

We realize that some of you may have missed prior issues of our monthly e-news publications. To catch up on ALL the news, please check out our new website at www.JenningsK12.org/WWNews.

To submit tips for upcoming news stories, please email them to communications@JenningsK12.org. Thank you!

Having **Warrior Way eNews** emailed directly ensures receipt of important school news, updates and other timely reminders – helping you to never miss news that impacts students and school community. While parents and staff should automatically receive this e-newsletter, community members are encouraged to opt in. [Click here to complete a brief registration form](#). Thank you!

**WARRIOR
WAY NEWS**
A Newsletter for the Jennings School District and Community

JSD Community Opt-In Form
The Jennings School District has launched a virtual Warrior Way newsletter with information for and about students, staff and community partners. If interested in receiving this newsletter via email, please complete the form below.
If you OPTED IN and want to discontinue / OPT OUT, simply note CANCEL in the Action Requested section. Thank you!
Questions? Please email Communications@jenningsk12.org.

Jennings School District

www.jenningsk12.org

Find our social media and other important links via linktr.ee/JenningsK12

