

LINC Commission Meeting

March 15, 2021



(Above) - LINC staff at Boone Elementary in the Center School District engage with students in a socially distanced activity. (Below) - Temperature screening and hand sanitizing are two of the many new health and safety policies to protect students and staff as LINC returns to schools.



Local Investment Commission (LINC) Vision

Our Shared Vision

A caring community that builds on its strengths to provide meaningful opportunities for children, families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency, attain their highest potential, and contribute to the public good.

Our Mission

To provide leadership and influence to engage the Kansas City Community in creating the best service delivery system to support and strengthen children, families and individuals, holding that system accountable, and changing public attitudes towards the system.

Our Guiding Principles

1. **COMPREHENSIVENESS:** Provide ready access to a full array of effective services.
2. **PREVENTION:** Emphasize “front-end” services that enhance development and prevent problems, rather than “back-end” crisis intervention.
3. **OUTCOMES:** Measure system performance by improved outcomes for children and families, not simply by the number and kind of services delivered.
4. **INTENSITY:** Offering services to the needed degree and in the appropriate time.
5. **PARTICIPANT INVOLVEMENT:** Use the needs, concerns, and opinions of individuals who use the service delivery system to drive improvements in the operation of the system.
6. **NEIGHBORHOODS:** Decentralize services to the places where people live, wherever appropriate, and utilize services to strengthen neighborhood capacity.
7. **FLEXIBILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS:** Create a delivery system, including programs and reimbursement mechanisms, that are sufficiently flexible and adaptable to respond to the full spectrum of child, family and individual needs.
8. **COLLABORATION:** Connect public, private and community resources to create an integrated service delivery system.
9. **STRONG FAMILIES:** Work to strengthen families, especially the capacity of parents to support and nurture the development of their children.
10. **RESPECT AND DIGNITY:** Treat families, and the staff who work with them, in a respectful and dignified manner.
11. **INTERDEPENDENCE/MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Balance the need for individuals to be accountable and responsible with the obligation of community to enhance the welfare of all citizens.
12. **CULTURAL COMPETENCY:** Demonstrate the belief that diversity in the historical, cultural, religious and spiritual values of different groups is a source of great strength.
13. **CREATIVITY:** Encourage and allow participants and staff to think and act innovatively, to take risks, and to learn from their experiences and mistakes.
14. **COMPASSION:** Display an unconditional regard and a caring, non-judgmental attitude toward, participants that recognizes their strengths and empowers them to meet their own needs.
15. **HONESTY:** Encourage and allow honesty among all people in the system.



Monday, March 15, 2021 | 4 – 5:30 pm Online Meeting

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Announcements
- II. Approvals
 - a. February 2021 minutes (motion)
- III. Superintendent Reports
- IV. School District Bond Issues
 - a. Grandview
 - b. Fort Osage
 - c. Other – Earnings Tax
- V. COVID-19 Vaccination Update
- VI. Caring Communities
 - a. Return to School
 - b. Other activities
- VII. LINC Data System
 - a. Social Solutions
 - b. Other
- VIII. Other
 - a. Utility Assistance Update
- IX. Adjournment



THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – FEBRUARY 22, 2021

The Local Investment Commission met via Zoom. Treasurer **David Ross** presided. Commissioners attending were:

Bert Berkley
Sharon Cheers
Tom Davis
Aaron Deacon
David Disney
Mark Flaherty

Rob Givens
Tom Lewin
Ken Powell
Marge Randle
Marj Williams

Ross welcomed everyone to the meeting.

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2021, LINC Commission meeting was approved unanimously.

Superintendents Reports

- **Steve Morgan**, Assistant Superintendent (Fort Osage School District), reported on the district's Covid-19 cases; the district is in process of bringing students back to campus, with grades K-8 in-person and grades 9-12 hybrid. Last day of school is June 1 unless there are further inclement weather days. The district is planning staff and budget for next year and starting a traffic study at the main campus to prepare for traffic decongestion process.
- **Yaw Obeng**, Superintendent (Hickman Mills School District), reported on the district's re-entry plan including expected student population growth and increasing diversity, patron feedback on priorities, and strategic directives; the plan is available on the district website. The district is preparing for the gradual reentry of students to in-person school in March.
- **Terry Ward**, Board Member (North Kansas City School District), reported the district is awaiting guidance from the Kansas City and Clay County health departments prior to reopening. Enrollment has increased over the year, and a further increase is expected next year. The early childhood center opened this year, and 1,000 students are expected to be enrolled there in the fall, making it the largest in the state. The district is working with the Chamber of Commerce and developers to recommend revisions of economic development policies.
- **Kevin Foster**, Executive Director (Genesis School), reported the school continues to operate in person, having had no Covid-19 incidents since the first week of January. Genesis is planning for the fall semester with a focus on using blended learning, promoting student's executive function, and student-centered learning to prepare students for high school.
- **Vivian Roper**, Superintendent (Tolbert Academy), reported only some staff members have been vaccinated so far. Tolbert's was one of many superintendents who sent a letter to the Governor stating concerns about teachers not being given priority for vaccines. Tolbert is planning for students to return to school on March 15. Staff are planning for summer school with concerns about learning loss because of lack of engagement in online learning. Tolbert will hold a drive-in recruitment fair on April 8.
- **Christina Medina**, Director of Public Relations (Center School District), reported about 1,000 returned to school today for in-person learning; families are grateful to have the LINC Before & After School program. District is developing plans to address learning loss during summer

school. Design of the new strategic plan (2021-2026) is under way. Indian Creek Elementary construction is proceeding ahead of schedule.

Caring Communities Administrator **Janet Miles-Bartee** reported that the LINC Before & After School program opened in Center today, and LINC is preparing to return to KCPS and Hickman Mills on March 15.

Rev. John Modest Miles of Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church reported on the effort to provide Covid-19 vaccinations at the Morning Star Youth and Family Life Center. So far over 1,000 vaccinations have been administered in partnership with LINC and the Missouri National Guard, with more than 1,000 more vaccinations expected over the next week, plus additional vaccinations to be delivered to nearby senior housing centers. A video on the initiative was shown. **Aaron Deacon** reported on the effort by Two Million Arms to expand delivery of vaccines in the metropolitan area, particularly Platte County. Discussion followed.

Community health advocate **Jim Nunnely** reported on the disproportionate effect of Covid-19 on medically underserved communities with high incidence of untreated comorbidities; spreading the word on the effectiveness of the vaccine is important, and that effort must be based on a foundation of trust between the community and partnerships such as LINC. A video interview with Nunnely was shown.

Deputy Director **Brent Schondelmeyer** reported on the partnership between LINC and Mid America Assistance Coalition (MAAC) to establish LINC Caring Communities sites as utility assistance locations. Area utility companies have agreed to use Free and Reduced Lunch status as eligibility requirements for assistance. Discussion followed.

The meeting was adjourned.

'Here to do our job'; LINC reopening more sites, Covid-safe

March 1, 2021

Joe Robertson/LINC Writer

For starters, says 10-year-old Annalisa, “It’s hard to breathe” running across the gym in her mask.

“You can’t touch the balls and stuff,” she adds.

But make no mistake. Annalisa is quite happy that her Center School District has joined the ranks of [schools opening in-person](#) and bringing back LINC’s Caring Communities Before & After School program.

“I’m really glad to be back,” the Boone Elementary 4th grader said. “LINC is really fun to come back to school for.”

Covid-19 cases are in rapid decline. Vaccines are coming. Reports from the Centers for Disease Control of low transmission in safe schools are encouraging.

So more children are coming back into school buildings, and LINC is ready.

“Parents have been so humbled by LINC’s willingness to open the program to them again,” said John Herrera, LINC’s site coordinator at Boone. “We’re here to do our job.”

LINC’s Center School District programs opened Feb. 22, joining those in the Grandview and North Kansas City school districts that have been open most or all of the school year.

More programs are gearing up as the Kansas City Public Schools, Hickman Mills School District and Lee A. Tolbert Community Academy charter school plan to begin bringing students in March 15.

Most definitely, “it’s different,” said 8-year-old Jeremiah at Center’s Indian Creek Elementary School. “We have to wear masks — got to be six-feet (safely distanced), but I really missed being back here.”

He’d just finished showing off a robotic dance — the kind of safe-distanced, physical fun that fits the pandemic experience.

“LINC is great,” Jeremiah said. “It lets you have fun, and you learn stuff.”

And, as 8-year-old Kynlee at Boone added, it’s a relief “to see my friends now” rather than being “stuck at home.”

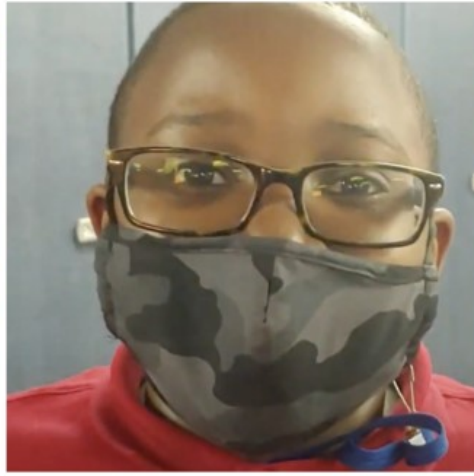
Following the lead set by LINC teams in North Kansas City and Grandview, the Center programs set to work easing the concerns of staff and helping the incoming children feel comfortable in the Covid-shadowed school year.



Starting the day with hand sanitizer at Boone Elementary School.



Individual games, like the mini xylophones at Indian Creek Elementary School, help keep everyone safe.



Things are different, but it's great to be back, say (left to right) Kynlee, 8, Jeremiah, 8, and Annalisa, 10.

“The kids come to us a little uncertain right now about what’s going on,” Herrera said. “We’ve tried to make them feel at home.”

A lot of the work of the first week was making routines of the Covid protocols, said Carl Wade, LINC’s Caring Communities Program Specialist and head of the program at Indian Creek.

“We’re practicing with these students every day,” he said. “They’re doing a great job.”

Instead of shared materials and games, the students all have individual supplies boxes and individual games. The number of children in classrooms is limited to allow safe spacing, and hand-sanitizing is a continual exercise.

Encouraging news continues to come from schools that previously opened with the same safety protocols.

Steve Morgan, an assistant superintendent at the Fort Osage School District, reported at LINC’s February Commission Meeting that the district has experienced low transmission of the virus despite having elementary students in school all year, and phasing in upper grades.

“One-tenth of one percent” of the student body and staff have active Covid cases, Morgan said. And only 0.6% have been exposed to someone who tested positive.

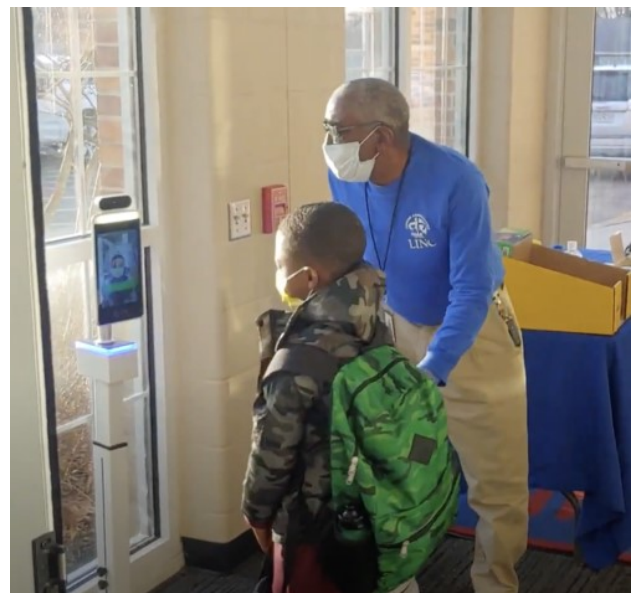
Kevin Foster, executive director of the charter Genesis School, told the Commission that his school — which has been in-person full time for K-4 and hybrid with 5-8 since the start of the school year — has had “no exposure issue since the first week of January.”

Come March 15, all of LINC’s sites will be opened as Kansas City Public Schools, Hickman Mills and Lee A. Tolbert plan to open.

The schools are eager to get back open, and keeping staff and children protected will be paramount, Kansas City Public Schools Superintendent Mark Bedell told his school board in February.

“Everybody has to understand (reopening buildings) won’t be 100% perfect,” Bedell said. “Will we have to close a class down? Will we have to close a school down? It’s a possibility. But we are going to be in position to continue providing schooling.”

And as the kids in Center can tell you, it’s a great feeling.



Getting a temperature check at Boone

Hickman Mills Family Summit shines online (and it's still live!)

March 8, 2021

By Joe Robertson/LINC Writer



The online offerings of the 2021 Hickman Mills Family Summit, like these interactive family resource links, remain active on [the summit webpage](#).

To say the least, pulling off the Hickman Mills School District’s annual Family Summit was “tricky.”

“To be in this virtual world,” said district spokesperson Marissa Cleaver-Wamble, “I’d say it was a success.”

And the best part: [It’s still there](#), online, ready to serve any family looking for help or ideas from dozens of community resources, and job opportunities, and school pages.

“It stays open,” she said.

More than 100 toured the summit’s resources page, and the district will be promoting it so more families can take advantage of the community’s offerings.

The summit also featured an in-person wellness fair at Smith-Hale Middle School to provide families dental service, free screenings, vision and hearing tests and blood pressure checks. Forty adults and children stopped by.

“I’m glad we were able to do the wellness fair,” Cleaver-Wamble said. “Those services aren’t always available close to them.”

The summit also featured kids' events that are part of LINC's regular after-school programming, including Mad Science and Kansas City Young Audiences.

A virtual fitness program was introduced by Fitness 4 Ever, and that is a program LINC would like to set up going forward for families. Contact Bryan Geddes at 816-665-5883 or bgeddes@kclinc.org to set up sessions.

The summit shows the variety of help LINC and the district are trying to bring to the community, said Geddes, LINC's Caring Communities site coordinator at Smith-Hale and Ruskin High School.

"We're trying to make sure we're meeting families where they are," he said.

LINC also carried on its tradition of supporting the event with a drawing for dozens of prizes. Winners' names were drawn in a live Facebook event, LINC staff contacted them in order by phone and they picked their prizes.

Next year, the Family Summit can expect to return with a crowd all together, but also with new skills to share resources widely in a virtual world.

"We learned a lot (going virtual)," Geddes said. "We'll continue to use what we learned moving forward to support families."

To access the online community resources, go to the district's [Family Summit webpage](#).



Mad Science was one of the virtual events at the Hickman Mills Family Summit on March 6. Many of the family resources can still be reached at the district's [Family Summit webpage](#).



LINC's Janet Miles-Bartee announces a prize winner at the Hickman Mills Family Summit on March 6 as LINC site coordinators Rashad Wahab and Bryan Geddes look on.

Hickman Mills families grateful for 'Justice in the Schools' legal aid

March 02, 2021

Joe Robertson/LINC Writer



The Taylors — Mark Sr., Mylan and Valorie — and Lazanay Wandick (right) are grateful for legal services from the Justice in the Schools program in Hickman Mills.

The letter in June that told Lazanay Wandick the government was cutting off her pandemic unemployment benefits was not even the worst of the news.

Far from it.

That came two months later when she held a followup letter in her hands. Before she was cut off, she'd received three months worth of benefits — roughly \$8,000 that had helped her stay afloat in her pandemic-scrambled summer.

The second letter came with a demand: Pay it all back.

"It was a shock," Wandick said.

First off, she hadn't understood why she'd been denied, having been laid off by a Plaza restaurant last March after Covid forced it to shut down.

Her mother had also lost her job at a carpet store, leading them to move in together with Wandick's fiancé, whose general contractor business had slowed and who was straining to carry them all through.

“It was very stressful,” she said, “. . . trying to figure out how to redistribute funds.”

Her breakthrough came after she was hired in October to be a receptionist in the Hickman Mills School District — because that’s when she saw the district’s flyer for “[Justice in the Schools.](#)”

Eligible Hickman Mills families, it said, could get help from [Legal Aid of Western Missouri](#) through its program dedicated to the district and supported by LINC.

Wandick’s case would become one of nearly 100 that Justice in the Schools has handled since it began in January 2020, said program attorney Garrett Christensen.

Many of the cases have dealt with intense situations of guardianships, custody and domestic strife. Others have navigated document-heavy court struggles with tenant issues, property disputes, government benefits and other entanglements that program clients could scarcely afford to tackle on their own.

The program also has attorneys who are working with families in [the Kansas City Public Schools.](#)

Wandick just hoped that Justice in the Schools could help her get at least some of that \$8,000 debt relieved.

What had complicated Wandick’s case was that prior to her Plaza job, a broken-down car forced her to resign a previous job that required her to drive. She’d been denied benefits based on the prior job.

Christensen represented her at her appeal hearing in November and provided clarifying information that the Department should instead qualify her under a special pandemic-related unemployment program and back-date the benefits to when she first applied after her layoff from the restaurant.

The Department agreed and withdrew the \$8,000 overpayment notice. She thought it was done.

Then came the January morning her fiancé woke her to ask why \$4,500 was deposited in their account. The answer, Christensen was able to assure her, was that the government should have continued to pay benefits for the weeks between when she was denied and getting a job at Hickman Mills. So she got back pay.

“It worked out the way it was supposed to,” Christensen said.

Many have needed help.

Missouri offices of the U.S. Department of Labor are overwhelmed the same as in most states by the number of cases during the pandemic, and Justice in the Schools’ ability to ply through the system has aided many people.

Many situations are fraught with emotion, Christensen said. Family



Justice In the Schools Legal Clinic

School-Based Services and Family Empowerment

We can help with:

- **Landlord/Tenant Law** (eviction defense)
- **Public & Subsidized Housing Issues**
- **Foreclosure Prevention**
- **Family Law and Guardianships**
- **Domestic Violence Protection**
- **Healthcare**
- **Food Stamps, TANF, & SSI**
- **Consumer Matters** (car titles, loans, bankruptcy)
- **Tax Law Clinic**
- **Denial of Unemployment Benefits**

FREE to eligible
Hickman Mills
families and district
employees.

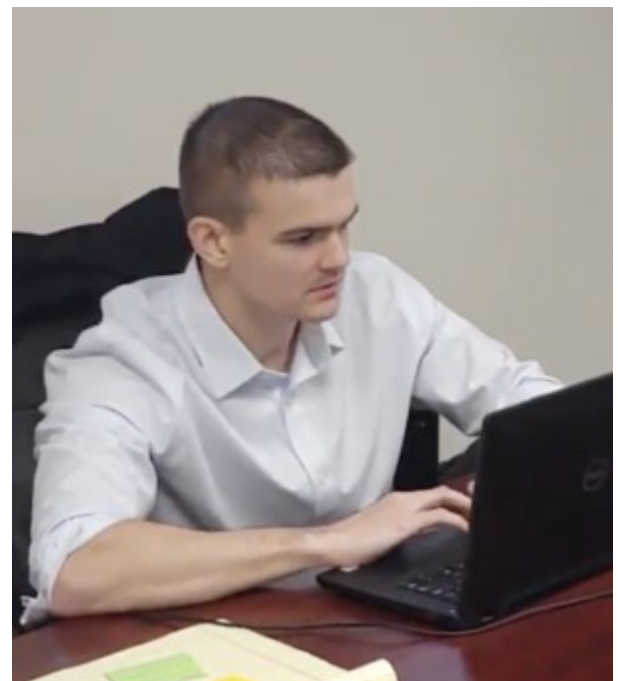


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Garrett Christensen

law cases, particularly when there is danger of domestic violence or abuse, have been tense.

The program has helped a Hickman Mills parent make use of a Kansas City ordinance that allowed her to get free of a lease to an apartment because she had a protection order from someone who was a danger to her if she remained in the apartment.

Guardianship and custody cases are also difficult, like one situation where the program is helping a grandparent secure guardianship of a child whose father, they are arguing in court, presents a risk and who is not cooperating in providing a safe home.

“These are tough cases,” Christensen said.

Other times, a family just needs help navigating a complicated civil and probate court system — like the Taylors.

Mylan Taylor, a Ruskin High School senior, was nearing his 18th birthday earlier this year. He’s a miracle, having survived a premature birth that brought him into the world at 15 ounces — not even a pound.

His parents, Mark and Valorie Taylor, have seen him through it all. And it was at some of the events shared with other parents of children with disabilities that they’d gotten a lot of advice.

Mylan had starred at the Special Olympics, and it was at track meets that Valorie Taylor remembers another Hickman Mills parent with a teenager with special needs telling Taylor all the legal details that needed to be established now that Mylan Taylor was going to be 18.

There were issues of guardianship, authority for medical decisions, life decisions . . .

“She was telling me, ‘you need to do this, this and this . . .’” Valorie Taylor said.

“She said, ‘Call Garrett.’”

The legal help the Taylors received has brought the support of the district schools and LINC full circle for her son, Valorie Taylor said.

“LINC (staffers) took him under their wings,” she said. And it was comforting for Justice in the Schools to help secure his care going forward, with Christensen taking them before the probate court, and another attorney appointed to Mylan Taylor to make sure his best interests were honored.

“I want him to be as independent as possible,” Valorie Taylor said of her son. “I want him to be able to help and volunteer . . . do the best he can, maybe get a job. He’s a great young man.”

It’s cases like these that encourage Christensen that the one-year-old Hickman Mills Justice in the Schools program is “off to a good start.”

“We continue to build relationships with our community partners and the schools,” he said. “I hope we’re helpful.”



A collection of photos from the Taylor family show Mylan during his first year after being born prematurely and weighing only 15 ounces.

GET THE FACTS

ABOUT QUESTION 1 & QUESTION 2 ON THE APRIL 6TH BALLOT

Fort Osage School District is proposing two no tax increase questions that will include supporting Fort Osage's core mission of high achievement for all, maintaining educational programs, retaining quality staff and meeting student needs.

QUESTION 1

No tax increase bond issue

- Continue the District's commitment to provide quality facilities and address safety concerns
- Projects include:
 - Renovating kitchen facilities at all five elementary schools, Fire Prairie, Osage Trail and Fort Osage High School
 - Construct a transportation/maintenance/District office building
 - Make parking lot and drive improvements at Blue Hills, Fire Prairie, Osage Trail, Career & Technology Center and Fort Osage High School

Monthly Impact to Homeowners: \$0



QUESTION 2

No tax increase levy transfer

- Allows the District to maintain educational programs, help pay salaries and benefits for staff and help fund other operating costs of the school district
- Construct a new gym at the High School and High School band room renovations and expansion

Monthly Impact to Homeowners: \$0

IMPORTANT DATES

February 23: Public Forum at 7 p.m. at Fort Osage High School PAC

March 10: Voter Registration Deadline

March 16: Public Forum at 7 p.m. at Fort Osage High School PAC

March 18: Virtual Public Forum at 7 p.m. RSVP to 816-650-7019

April 6 - Election Day:
Polls are open 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.



MORE FORT OSAGE ELECTION INFORMATION QUESTIONS?

Dr. Jason Snodgrass Superintendent of Schools
(816) 650-7000 | jsnodgrass@fortosage.net | www.fortosage.net
Created by Fort Osage R-1 School District to educate patrons about the April 6, 2021 election.



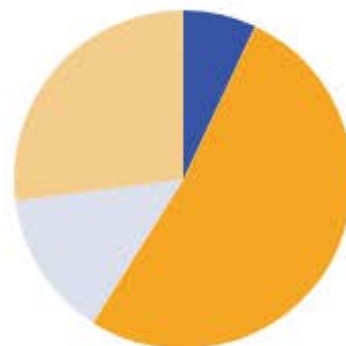


No-Tax Increase Bond Issue Proposed Projects



The bond issue will provide \$45-million to fund capital improvement projects in the Grandview C-4 School District.

Where the Money is Going



- Extra & Co-Curricular Enhancements (7%)
- Classroom/Restroom Enhancements (52%)
- Roofs and HVAC (27%)
- Safety and Security (14%)



QUESTION 1 LEVIES SUPPORT LEARNING

Q: What is an operating tax levy?

A: A property tax levy is the amount of property tax dollars a school district requires in order to operate the district for the upcoming school year.

Q: Why is an operating tax levy important for a school district?

A: Property taxes are the primary funding source for school districts and account for 46% of the Grandview C-4 School District's funding for general operations. A district relies on a property tax levy, either through extending a current levy or by a levy increase, to match revenues with increasing expenditures such as cost of living, services and materials.

Q: How is a property tax levy calculated?

A: The tax levy is determined utilizing a calculation that considers the previous year's tax rate, the current Consumer Price Index, the assessed value (AV) of the properties within the district's boundaries, and new growth of properties within the district's boundaries.

Q: Will a "no" vote on a property tax levy increase lower taxes?

A: NO, the current tax rates would remain in effect and would be calculated as outlined above.

Q: What does Grandview C-4 School District have on the April ballot?

A: There is also a .60 cent proposed tax levy increase on the ballot that will be labeled as Question 1. The ballot also has a NO TAX INCREASE bond issue that will be labeled as Question 2.

Q: Will the district's .60 cent levy increase change the tax rate?

A: Yes, the increase will be based on the county's assessed market value of your property. For an estimated annual increase please see this chart.

Q: If the tax levy increase passes how will the funds be used?

A: The additional funds will be used to support the general operations of the district. Salaries and benefits account for approximately 80% of the operating budget. The funds will be used to maintain our competitive salary and benefit package, thereby enabling the district to attract and retain quality staff to educate our students. The remaining 20% is comprised of goods and services that, in general, will continue to experience increased costs in the coming years.

FAQ'S

QUESTION 2

BONDS SUPPORT OUR BUILDINGS

Q: What is a bond issue?

A: A bond issue is a traditional way for schools to borrow money to pay for capital projects that are too costly for a typical budget. In Missouri, this requires voter approval even if the bond issue will not raise the tax rate.

Q: How does a bond issue work?

A: When voters approve a bond issue, the school district sells bonds to a purchaser who offers the lowest interest rate. These funds are used to complete the project and the debt is paid back over time. It is similar to a home loan.

Q: How can there be no tax increase when a bond issue passes?

A: Each year the district pays off old debt from past bond issues. As the loan balance decreases, the district can borrow more and pay it back from existing revenue sources such as growth in assessed valuation and low interest rates. To generate additional revenue, the existing tax rate is extended, but not increased.

Q: Will a "no" vote on a no tax increase issue lower taxes?

A: NO, the current tax rate will not be lowered if the bond issue fails.

Q: Can the money generated by passing a no tax increase bond issue be used for things other than capital expenses?

A: NO, it cannot be used for salaries, supplies, utilities, etc.

Q: What does Grandview C-4 have on the April ballot?

A: It has a NO TAX INCREASE bond issue on the April 6 ballot that will be labeled as Question 2. There is also a .60 cent proposed tax levy increase on the ballot that will be labeled as Question 1.

Q: Will the district's NO TAX INCREASE bond issue change the tax rate.

A: NO, whether it passes or fails the tax rate will remain the same. If it passes, the tax will be extended from its current end date.

Q: What are the financial reasons for passing this issue in the District?

A: Without bond money, the need for facility improvements and upgrades still exists - the only other place for the money to come from is the operating budget which supports our current programs, salaries, etc. Deep cuts would need to be made to finance the costly projects generally reserved for bond money.

Q: If the bond passes, how is the distribution of the money determined?

A: The Facilities Improvement Team, made up of board members, administrators and maintenance managers, has assessed the needs for capital repairs and improvements throughout the district and put forward a plan based on need, manageability, long term impact and other factors and made a comprehensive plan for the distribution of the funds based on projected costs.



- ▶ No Tax Increase
- ▶ Safety & Security
- ▶ Performing Arts
- ▶ Playgrounds

On April 6, 2021, voters in the Independence School District will be presented with a \$43 million no tax increase bond issue.

SAFETY & SECURITY

- ▶ The bond includes significant investments in the safety and security of students and staff, ensuring that every school in the District has a vestibule with double door secure entrance.



PERFORMING ARTS



- ▶ Performing Arts is also a key component of the bond, as ISD middle and high schools would receive auditorium, choir, band and orchestra room renovations and improvements.

PLAYGROUNDS

- ▶ ISD elementary schools will receive playground equipment upgrades and all-weather surfacing.



FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS



- ▶ Classroom renovations
- ▶ HVAC maintenance
- ▶ Field and parking lot lighting
- ▶ Window replacement
- ▶ Asphalt, concrete and roof repairs

Bond projects also include tennis courts and a softball field at Truman and William Chrisman and stadium seating at Van Horn High School. This will allow student-athletes to practice and compete on their campus.

PLEASE VOTE APRIL 6, 2021



Questions and Answers: The Kansas City Earnings Tax

What is the earnings tax?

The earnings tax (“e-tax”) is a 1% tax on income earned by residents of Kansas City and nonresidents who work within the city limits. That revenue is used to fund city services enjoyed by every resident of Kansas City, including first responders (firefighters, paramedics/EMTs, and police officers), trash pickup, road maintenance and pothole repair, and snow removal. Historically, about half the revenue generated by the e-tax is paid by people who live OUTSIDE Kansas City.

Because it is a tax on income, **retired residents or those who are not working do not pay the e-tax. Social Security, disability, and unemployment income are not subject to the e-tax.**

Will voting “yes” raise my taxes?

No. The earnings tax has been in place in Kansas City since 1963. A “yes” vote will renew the tax at its current rate, without raising taxes for anyone.

What benefits does the e-tax have for me?

The e-tax funds critical city services, including first responders (firefighters, paramedics/EMTs, and police officers), trash pickup, anti-illegal dumping efforts, road maintenance and pothole repair, snow removal, and more, without higher sales or property taxes. Kansas City has made significant investments in improving city services, especially in public safety and road repair, that have been made possible because of the earnings tax. Every resident of Kansas City benefits from these services, and from the lower property and sales tax rates that the e-tax makes possible.

Can we fund these services with other funding sources?

No. Failed renewal of the e-tax would result in cuts to city services, including first responders, trash pickup, road maintenance, snow removal, parks, increased emergency response times, and more.

Replacing the revenue generated by the e-tax would require significant increases in sales and/or property taxes, affecting every person in Kansas City, and even those increases would not replace the funding we would lose without the e-tax.

Who supports the renewal of the e-tax?

E-tax renewal is supported by a coalition of community support, business leaders, labor organizations, and elected officials, including the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, the Heavy Constructors Association, Fire Fighters Local 42, Mayor Quinton Lucas, and more. Our list of endorsements is constantly growing; for an up-to-date list, visit together-kc.com/endorsements.

Why is the e-tax being put up for a vote?

Missouri law requires that the e-tax be put up for a renewal vote every five years. This year, the economic uncertainty of COVID-19 makes it especially important that the e-tax be protected. The e-tax has been in place since it was first approved by Kansas City voters in 1963.

Is the e-tax legal?

Yes. The city attorney’s office has determined that the e-tax is legal, and it has been in place since 1963.

How can I help?

Community support across Kansas City is vitally important in this local election, where every vote counts. You can become an endorser at together-kc.com, and volunteer to take many actions to support the renewal of the earnings tax, including writing or signing letters to the editor, contacting your friends, and amplifying our message on social media by contacting action@together-kc.com.

When is the election?

The e-tax renewal will appear on the ballot in the April 6, 2021, election. Qualified voters may vote absentee in person’ beginning on February 23.

The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act puts into action the policies and budgetary requests outlined by the Biden Administration's [American Rescue Plan](#).

VACCINES:

The American Rescue Plan calls for the establishment of a national vaccination program, and this legislation provides critical funding and resources to increase COVID-19 vaccinations across the country.

- Many states [have struggled](#) to distribute vaccines after the Trump Administration chose to defer almost entirely to the states to distribute and administer all vaccines.
- The American Rescue Plan requests **\$20 billion** for improving COVID-19 vaccine administration and distribution, including vaccination clinics and mobile vaccination units, a vaccine awareness campaign, and increasing the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) to Medicaid-covered recipients of a vaccine. It also requests over **\$5 billion** for research, development, and manufacturing of vaccines, therapeutics, and ancillary supplies.
- **Specifically, the Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides:**
 - **\$7.5 billion** for Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prepare, promote, distribute, administer, monitor, and track COVID-19 vaccines. This includes distribution and administration, support for state, local, tribal, and territorial public health departments, community vaccination centers, IT enhancements, facility enhancements, and public communication;
 - **\$600 million** to be directed to the Indian Health Service (IHS) for vaccine-related activities;
 - **\$5.2 billion** to the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) to support advanced research, development, manufacturing, production, and purchase of vaccines, therapeutics, and ancillary medical products for COVID-19;
 - **\$1 billion** for the CDC to undertake a vaccine awareness and engagement campaign;
 - **\$500 million** for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to support the review, facilitate the development of, and post-marketing surveillance of COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics and address drug shortages, among other activities; and
 - Medicaid coverage of COVID-19 vaccines, including the option for states to provide coverage to the uninsured, without cost sharing at 100 percent FMAP for the duration of the public health emergency.

TESTING:

The American Rescue Plan proposes scaling up testing in order to stop the spread of COVID-19, safely reopen schools, and protect at-risk populations. A robust testing program remains a critical tool in the

fight against this virus in conjunction with vaccinations. This legislation provides the funding and resources to do just that.

- Despite innovations and adaptations in the testing space, COVID-19 tests are still not widely accessible, and supplies continue to be in shortage.
- According to a Government Accountability Office (GAO) [report from November 2020](#), a national survey to states and territories found that 21 states reported shortages of testing reagents, 16 states reported shortages of testing instruments, and 24 states reported shortages of rapid point-of-care tests in the 30 days prior to the report's release, and those same states predicted shortages would continue through the winter months.
- The American Rescue Plan requests **\$50 billion** for testing related resources and activities, including procurement and administration of regular screening tests, and investments in United States laboratory capacity for diagnostic and screening tests.
- **The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides:**
 - **\$46 billion** for testing, contact tracing, and mitigation. These activities include: implementing a national strategy for testing, contact tracing, surveillance, and mitigation; providing technical assistance, guidance, support, and grants or contracts to States; manufacturing, procurement, distribution, administration of tests, including personal protective equipment (PPE) and supplies necessary for administration; and establishing and expanding federal, State, or local testing and contact tracing capabilities, including investments in laboratory capacity, community-based testing sites, and mobile testing units;
 - **\$1.5 billion** for IHS testing, tracing, and mitigation needs;
 - **\$1.75 billion** for genomic sequencing and surveillance of the circulating strains of COVID-19. There are currently [multiple strains of COVID-19 circling the globe](#), some of which have recently [emerged in the United States](#); and
 - **\$500 million** to allow CDC to establish, expand, and maintain data surveillance and analytics, including to modernize the United States' disease warning system to forecast and track hotspots for COVID-19.

PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE:

The American Rescue Plan calls for the mobilization of a public health jobs program to support the COVID-19 response.

- **The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides:**
 - **\$7.6 billion** in funding to public health departments to hire 100,000 full time employees into the public health workforce. These positions would include contact tracers, social support specialists, community health workers, public health nurses, epidemiologists, lab personnel, and communications. Funds would also support PPE, technology, data management, supplies, and reporting;
 - **\$240 million** for IHS public health workforce needs; and

- **\$100 million** to support the Medical Reserve Corps, which consists of a network of volunteer medical and public health professionals that support emergency response efforts and community health activities.

HEALTH DISPARITIES:

The American Rescue Plan includes funding to provide health services to the underserved and addressing ongoing health disparities.

- COVID-19 has [laid bare](#) the harsh realities of health disparities in the United States. For instance, Black and Hispanic Americans are [getting vaccinated at significantly lower rates](#) than White Americans, a trend that advocates blame on the federal government’s failure to prioritize equitable distribution. Communities of color are [also experiencing higher rates of COVID-19 cases, and higher hospitalization and death rates as a result](#).
- **The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides a total of \$25.2 billion** for addressing health disparities and protecting vulnerable populations, including:
 - **\$250 million** for nursing home strike teams to help facilities manage COVID-19 outbreaks when they occur;
 - **\$7.6 billion** in funding to support COVID-19 response at Community Health Centers;
 - **\$1.8 billion** to support the purchase, procurement, or distribution of COVID-19 test and testing supplies, PPE, and vaccines for staff and individuals in congregate settings. This would include support to states, localities, territories, and tribes for strategies and activities to detect, diagnose, trace or monitor COVID-19 in congregate settings, including prisons, jails, detention centers, long-term care facilities, psychiatric hospitals and residential treatment facilities, intermediate care facilities, and other settings providing care for individuals with disabilities;
 - **\$3.3 billion** to IHS in flexible funding to support lost third-party revenue, information technology infrastructure for telehealth and electronic health records, urban Indian organizations, and other health services and costs;
 - **\$800 million** to the National Health Service Corps to support primary health care clinicians in high-need areas;
 - **\$331 million** for Teaching Health Centers to expand the number of sites nationwide, increase resident allocations, and provide administrative support for expanding the program;
 - **\$240 million** to support the Nurse Corps Loan Repayment program, which helps support nurses working in critical shortage and underserved areas;
 - A Medicaid state option to allow states to cover postpartum women for 12 months after birth, to help address the maternal mortality crisis disproportionately affecting women of color; and
 - Medicaid coverage for incarcerated individuals 30 days prior to their release, to ensure continuity of care for justice-connected individuals.

MENTAL HEALTH:

The American Rescue Plan proposes scaling up mental health services, including to expand access to behavioral and mental health prevention and treatment.

- **The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides a total of \$4 billion** for behavioral and mental health services, including:
 - **\$3.5 billion** for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency (SAMHSA) to be split between the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment and Community Mental Health block grant programs. Both programs provide funding to all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and six Pacific jurisdictions. The Substance Abuse block grant program also supports one tribal entity, the Chippewa Tribe;
 - **\$420 million** will be made available to IHS for mental and behavioral health prevention and treatment services;
 - **\$100 million** to the Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program within the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to expand access to behavioral health services by focusing on training behavioral health paraprofessionals, such as peer support specialists;
 - **\$140 million** to develop a program for mental and behavioral health and to prevent burnout among health care providers and public safety officers, including training and outreach;
 - **\$80 million** to provide support for mental health and substance use disorder services at community-based entities and behavioral health organizations;
 - **\$10 million** to support the National Childhood Traumatic Stress Network, which works to develop and promote effective community practices for children and adolescents exposed to a wide array of traumatic events; and
 - **\$50 million** to Suicide Prevention and Project Aware programs at SAMHSA, which support youth mental health services and suicide prevention efforts.

HEALTH COVERAGE:

The American Rescue Plan commits to preserving and expanding access to health care coverage during the pandemic.

- Between March and September of 2020, [roughly 2 to 3 million](#) people lost employer sponsored health insurance.
- Prior to that, [30 million people](#) already lacked coverage, barring them from accessing the health care system from the outset of the pandemic.
- **The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides a number of complementary provisions to make coverage more affordable and accessible to millions of Americans by:**
 - Expanding Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace premium tax credits to more middle-class Americans for 2021 and 2022, including those with incomes above 400 percent of the federal poverty line (FPL).
 - Allowing individuals receiving unemployment compensation during the public health emergency to access ACA premium tax credits regardless of income.

- Providing a new incentive for states to expand Medicaid by temporarily increasing the federal medical assistance percentage by five percentage points. If all 12 remaining states expanded Medicaid, more than two million people currently in the coverage gap would gain access to Medicaid.
- Ensuring that workers can continue to afford their employer health care by providing partial COBRA subsidies. COBRA allows workers who experience layoffs or reduction in hours to continue with their job-based health coverage for a limited period of time to avoid a disruption in care.

CONSUMER ENERGY AND WATER ASSISTANCE:

The American Rescue Plan helps Americans who are struggling to make ends meet keep the lights on, the heat working and the water running by proposing \$5 billion in assistance.

- Energy access is crucial to residential health and to sustaining socially-distanced and remote work lifestyles.
- Unpaid electric and natural gas bills were expected to reach \$32 billion by the end of 2020, with an estimated 20 percent of residential customers at least 60 days behind on their bills. A projected five million additional households are eligible for energy assistance due to pandemic-related job losses.
- Households in California and Virginia, two states that are tracking water debt, are facing more than \$1 billion and more than \$88 million, respectively, in unpaid water bills. These debts threaten the long-term viability of municipal water utilities and raise the risk of interruptions in water service, which is essential to maintain hygiene during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- **The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides \$5 billion to those most in need to pay their utility bills at a time when so many Americans are spending unprecedented amounts of time at home, including:**
 - **\$4.5 billion** to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for home energy assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); and
 - **\$500 million** in additional funds for HHS for the Low-Income Household Drinking Water and Wastewater Emergency Assistance Program established by Congress at the end of 2020. This brings the total amount of money available to assist families with their water and sewer bills to over \$1.1 billion.

POLLUTION AND THE PANDEMIC:

The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act helps address health outcome disparities from pollution and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- Recent work by GAO found that our national air monitoring network infrastructure is aging and needs to be modernized to identify localized pollution that threatens environmental justice communities.
- **The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with \$100 million to address health outcome disparities from pollution and the COVID-19 pandemic:**
 - **\$50 million** to EPA for environmental justice grants and activities to help communities facing a disproportionate burden of pollution and disease; and

- **\$50 million** to EPA for air quality monitoring grants and other purposes.

REMOTE LEARNING:

The American Rescue Plan will help bridge the digital divide for students and teachers without home internet access.

- To keep communities safe and prevent further spread of COVID-19, schools need the flexibility to engage in remote learning when necessary for public health and safety.
- Studies estimate that as many as 12 million students still lack internet service at their homes, with minorities and those in rural areas most often among the unconnected. Without a reliable internet connection to log into classes, submit work, and engage with teachers and other students, these students have fallen even further behind in school.
- **The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides \$7.6 billion to expand internet connectivity to students and communities by:**
 - Reimbursing schools and libraries—central points for connectivity in many communities—to purchase equipment such as hotspots, internet service, and computers on behalf of students and patrons; and
 - Ensuring schools and libraries can quickly access this critical funding by relying upon the Federal Communications Commission and its E-rate program to administer the funds.

CONSUMER PROTECTION:

The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act will make Americans safer in their homes by reducing the number of unsafe imported consumer products.

- More than \$174 billion spent by consumers online can be attributed to COVID-19-related boosts in online shopping with online spending jumping 44 percent in 2020 compared with 2019.
- The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has not been able to keep pace with changing consumer trends brought on by the pandemic, including the substantial shift to online shopping and the influx of e-commerce shipments from foreign countries. The CPSC does not have enough funding to adequately staff United States ports of entry, leaving already struggling families vulnerable to risk of injury or death from uninspected consumer products, especially in-demand COVID-19 products.
- **The Fiscal Year 2021 Reconciliation Act provides \$50 million for the CPSC to ensure the safety of consumer products entering our country and into people’s homes — an essential priority during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Morning Star-LINC partnership delivers COVID-19 vaccinations, food to East Kansas City

First, families needed healthy food when schools were shut down during the pandemic. Then vulnerable residents in hard-hit and underserved Kansas City neighborhoods needed access to COVID-19 vaccinations.

The Local Investment Commission (LINC) and Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church joined forces to serve the community at the Morning Star Youth and Family Life Center at 27th and Prospect Avenue. Hundreds of households were fed. Thousands received the essential vaccinations.

**Total
Vaccinations
5,325**

February 4-6

500 vaccinations. Pfizer. With Truman Medical Centers

February 11-13

525 vaccinations. Moderna. With the Missouri National Guard

February 25-28

1,300 vaccinations. Moderna. With the Missouri National Guard

March 4-10

3,000 vaccinations. Johnson & Johnson (2,100) and Moderna (900). With the Missouri National Guard. 500 vaccinations were to be delivered directly to area nursing facilities.



**MORNINGSTAR'S
DEVELOPMENT
COMPANY, INC.**



LINCSM
Local Investment Commission

Total Food Distribution

39,355 lbs.

612 Families and 2,675 Individuals

With Harvesters, Kanbe's Markets,
Church of the Resurrection
December 22
19,355 pounds of food,
serving 312 families, 1,371 individuals

December 29
20,000 pounds of food,
serving 300 families, 1,304 individuals.





USDA Extends Free Meals to Children through Summer 2021 Due to Pandemic

Press Release

Release No. 0041.21

Contact: USDA Press

Email: press@usda.gov

WASHINGTON, March 9, 2021 — The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the nationwide extension of several waivers that allow all children to continue to receive nutritious meals this summer when schools are out of session. These flexibilities are now available through Sept. 30, 2021.

USDA is extending these waivers to provide local program operators with clarity and certainty for the summer months ahead, when many children cannot access the school meals they depend on during the academic year. The waivers were previously extended only through June 30, 2021.

“We will do everything we can to make sure children get access to healthy, nutritious meals regardless of their families’ financial circumstances,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “Our child nutrition professionals are doing a heroic job ensuring kids across the country have proper nutrition throughout this public health emergency, often times with limited resources. USDA is committed to providing local operators with the flexibilities and resources they need to continue offering the best meal service possible to their children, given their day-to-day realities.”

The waivers extended today allow for safe meal distribution sites that serve all children for free, regardless of income. In addition, the waivers:

- Allow meals served through the [Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\)](#) and [Seamless Summer Option \(SSO\)](#) – collectively known as “[summer meal programs](#)” – to be made available in all areas at no cost;
- Allow meals to be served outside of the normally required group settings and meal times; and
- Allow parents and guardians to pick-up meals for their children, including bulk pick-up to cover multiple days of feeding children.

Right now, up to 12 million children are living in households where they may not always have enough to eat. These critically needed summer meals will provide relief to many children in families who have been hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and are fighting daily to put food on the table.

Summer meal sites are places where children and youth age 18 and under can receive meals at no cost in a safe environment. The meals are also available to persons over age 18 with mental or physical disabilities. Sites may be located in a variety of settings including schools, parks, community centers, libraries, churches and more.

USDA is issuing this guidance as early as possible to empower communities to establish as many meal sites as they can effectively manage this summer. To learn more about how the program works and the role of sponsors and meal sites, visit www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/how-become-sponsor.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.



(L-R) Sen. Barbara Anne Washington, Missouri 9th District; Joseph Palm, Chief of Missouri Office of Minority Health; Janet Miles-Bartee, LINC Caring Communities Administrator; Dr. Randall Williams, Director of Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.



Morning Star Pastor John Modest Miles & Dr. Williams

Dr. Randall Williams, Director of Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, visited Morning Star Youth and Family Life Center to see the COVID-19 vaccination clinic operated by Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church and the Local Investment Commission. In the last month, the clinic has provided over 5,300 vaccines to the community.

**I got my
COVID-19 vaccine!**



Missouri National Guard administers a COVID-19 vaccine.

