

# LINC Commission Meeting

March 21, 2022



Superintendent of Hickman Mills Yaw Obeng and LINC Caring Communities Administrator Sean Akridge announce raffle prize winners at the Hickman Mills Family Summit held on Saturday, March 5. The community event provides families information on resources in their community.



Lauryn, 6, pictured above with her brother, Jayden, 7, playing with sock puppets at one of the Kid Zone activities.



Monique Miller leaves with her raffle prize, a new air fryer.



# 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 21, 2022 | 4 – 5:30 pm  
Online Meeting

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## Agenda

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- I. Welcome and Announcements
- II. Approvals
  - a. February 2022 minutes (motion)
- III. Superintendent Reports
- IV. LINC Youth Advocates
  - a. Initiative Expansion
- V. LINC Jefferson City Visit
  - a. Meeting with Commissioner of Education
- VI. Other
  - a. LINC and A+
- VII. Adjournment



## THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – FEB. 28, 2022

The Local Investment Commission met via Zoom. Cochair **Ken Powell** presided. Commissioners attending were:

Bob Bartman  
Bert Berkley  
Tom Davis  
Aaron Deacon

David Disney  
Rob Givens  
Anita Gorman  
Tom Lewin

Powell welcomed the attendees.

*A motion to approve the minutes of the Jan. 24, 2022, LINC Commission meeting was approved unanimously.*

### Superintendents Reports

- **Rick Chambers**, Interim Director of Public Relations (Center School District), reported Center students are participating in a Parade of Hearts Exhibit; the artworks will be put up for auction after they are displayed in June. The district has begun a multiyear racial equity project involving training for staff and students; the effort will be supported by private funding raised from alumni.
- **Yaw Obeng**, Superintendent (Hickman Mills School District), reported Covid cases have been trending downward. The district's middle school redesign proposal will add a middle school and include multiple academic pathways at both middle schools. The district will be talking to LINC about how it can support students/families at the new school. The school board has been supportive of efforts to improve academic performance.
- **Terry Ward**, School Board Member (North Kansas City Public Schools), reported there is a \$140 million bond issue on the April ballot; there is also a no-tax-increase levy adjustment; and there are also two board seats up for election. The district is currently enrolling the next grade of students in the high school College and Careers Pathways program. Student population continues to increase, with 200-300 students added each year. The district is monitoring state education legislation.
- **Joana King**, Assistant Superintendent (Grandview School District), reported the district is no longer requiring masks but is recommending them. Bond-financed construction projects are under way. School board seats are up for election in April. King announced she will be retiring at the end of the school year.

Information Services Director **Dave Horn** reported on improvements made to LINC's information technology infrastructure. Investments made in 2019, including mobile device management system, Apple Business Manager, and new firewall, router, and servers, allowed LINC to quickly transition to a remote workforce in 2020. IT staff provisioned over 900 devices to facilitate remote work. Network Administrator **George Legg** reported LINC has always had needed resources on hand and been willing to improve on them.

Horn reported LINC will be moving to a cloud computing platform and has hired two technology administrators, **Jeremy Green** and **Michael McCurdy**, who are currently working on a replacement phone system and a cloud-based end-point device management project. Discussion followed.

LINC staff **Jeff Hill** gave an update on LINC finances. LINC recently received a revenue increase of \$13.1 million through 16 new contracts and amendments. Staff have been working with new state agency

staff, trying to give them a sense of who LINC is and what community partnerships are. LINC is hiring new finance staff and program staff to support the new efforts. Discussion followed.

Ken Powell introduced a video of Urban Tec founder **Ina Montgomery** explaining the mission of Urban Tec — a non-profit bringing science, technology, engineering, arts and math into after-school classrooms and community spaces where most of the children are Black like her.

Site coordinators **Yolanda Robinson, Rashad Wahab, and Sarena Weatherspoon** reported that Urban Tec STEAM activities are an effective way for students to learn concepts and develop life skills, learn teamwork, and spark creativity and curiosity.

Caring Communities Administrator **Sean Akridge** reported that at LINC Chess tournaments Urban Tec provides STEAM labs for the siblings of tournament participants; Montgomery will provide LINC staff STEAM training so they can earn clock hours.

**Aaron Deacon** reported Montgomery is an effective community advocate in her role as steering council member for the Kansas City Coalition for Digital Inclusion.

Powell reported the LINC Chess tournament will be held this Saturday at William Chrisman High School. The tournament returns to an in-person format.

The meeting was adjourned.

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Revised 3/17/2022

# LINC Youth Services Initiative

The LINC Youth Services Initiative provides support for both foster youth and youth transitioning out of care from the Missouri Division of Youth Services (DYS).

## Foster Youth Initiative

States began looking for better ways to help teens in the 1990s when concern grew nationwide that social services were struggling to prepare troubled youth for adulthood. Federal legislation, named after longtime youth advocate U.S. Sen. John H. Chafee of Rhode Island, boosted the resources provided to the states.

LINC had partnered with Missouri's Children's Division on several initiatives over the years, and when the state in 2007 put out a bid for help in running the transitions programming, LINC took on the work for Jackson, Clay and Platte counties. The LINC advocates stepped in as allies to support the important work of the state caseworkers, helping them better serve many children in need.

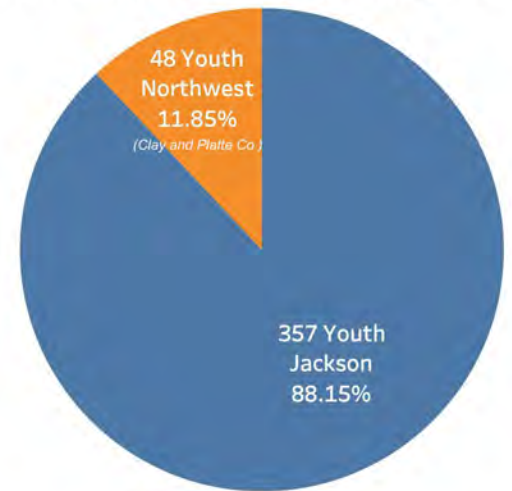
The program provides resources and mentoring for foster youth ages 14 to 23. Foster youth who are seeking supportive services are referred to LINC by the Children's Division. LINC then assigns a youth advocate who works closely with the state caseworker to identify barriers and set goals for the youth to help them become self-sufficient adults.

LINC currently has 8 youth advocates who are serving 405 foster youth in Jackson, Clay and Platte counties. 74% of youth are under 18 years of age.

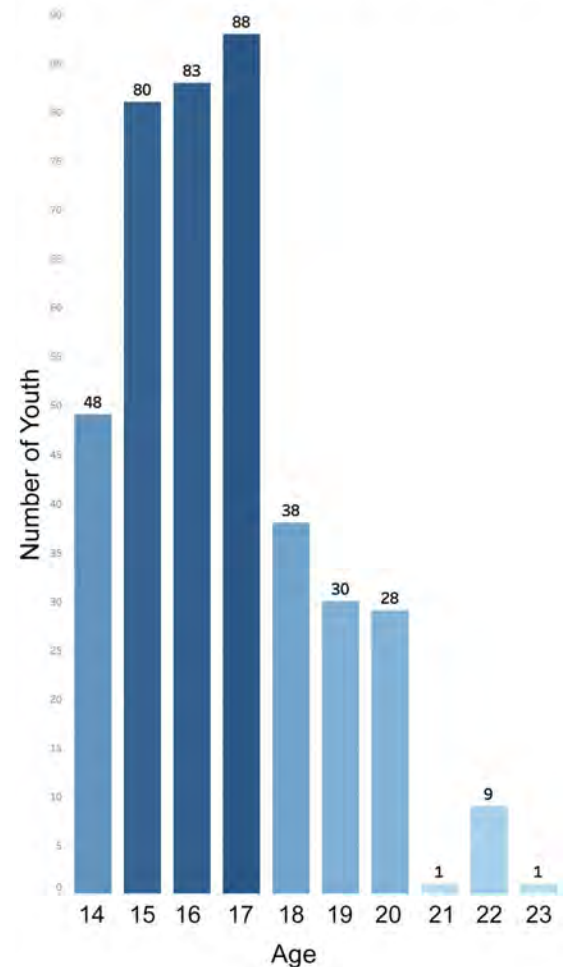
Some of the supportive services LINC can provide are:

- Emergency food
- School and work clothing assistance
- School extra-curricular activities
- Start-up kits for apartments or dorms
- Utility and rent assistance for those living independently
- Driver's education
- Emergency auto repairs and payments
- Legal assistance
- Assistance with obtaining state identification and social security cards
- Youth leadership opportunities

Foster Youth Initiative Service Regions



Ages of Youth in LINC Foster Youth Initiative



In addition to supportive services, LINC provides Life Skills Classes which include training and activities with topics on:

- Planning and reaching goals
- Communication skills
- Success in work and school
- Legal rights and responsibilities
- Skills for getting and keeping a job
- Managing money
- Taking care of your health

## Youth Future Career Program

This new federal program provides resources to foster youth and focuses on education, career preparation and progression.

The program provides many supportive services and adds many milestone-based incentives for achievement in academics, vocational training and employment.

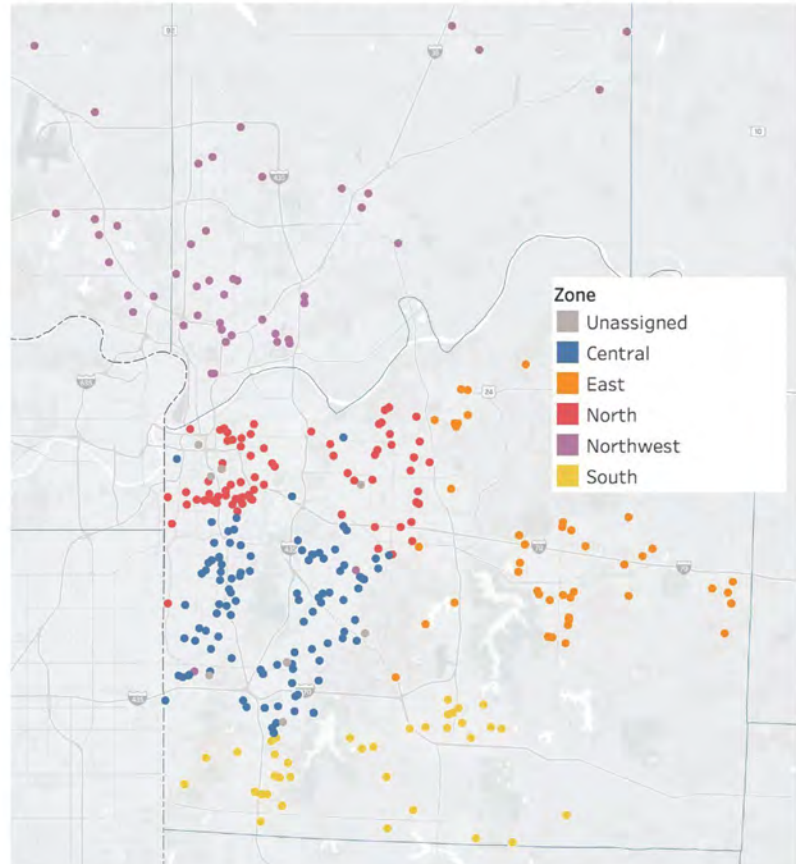
In addition to the three counties serviced by LINC's Foster Youth Initiative, the Youth Future Career Program offers support to foster youth in Ray and Cass counties.

## DYS Community Mentoring Program

In response to state and community needs, LINC also provides youth mentoring and supervision services for court-involved youth who are transitioning from residential care and returning home to their community. LINC Advocates work closely with the youth to prepare them for the workforce or to complete their education. Support services include helping the youth access community resources, counseling services, and connect with organizations that promote positive youth development and recreational activities.

LINC's DYS mentoring program currently serves 24 youth in Jackson, Clay and Platte counties.

Active Cases of Foster Care Youth with LINC Youth Services



# Lead Bank Young Adult Checking Account



## ► About the Account

No minimum deposit required  
when opening your account

No daily minimum balance

No monthly maintenance fees

No overdrafts

Unlimited transactions and check writing

Receive your debit card the same day  
you open your account at a branch

### Additional Benefits:

- No ATM fees for ATMs that are part of the MoneyPass® Network
- Free enrollment in Lead Bank's Personal Digital Banking
- No Zelle® transaction fees, so you can easily transfer money to friends and family
- Free mobile deposit
- Ability to register your Lead Bank debit card with Apple Pay, Samsung Pay or Google Pay and start enjoying the security and convenience of a Digital Wallet

## ► How to Open Your Lead Bank Young Adult Checking Account

### Step 1: Gather the information needed to open your checking account.

#### What to bring with you:

1. Completed Missouri Department of Social Services Consent Form
2. Your social security number. (It's okay if you do not have your social security card.)
3. Your current address (or we can mail your bank information to 3100 Broadway Suite 1100 KCMO 64111 and LINC will distribute your mail to you, which may be preferred).

### Step 2: Open your bank account with Lead Bank!

Bring the three pieces of information listed in step 1 to one of our branches or email us at [clientsupport@lead.bank](mailto:clientsupport@lead.bank) to open your account.

#### Locations:

##### Lee's Summit

9019 State Route 7  
Lee's Summit, MO 64064

##### Crossroads

1801 Main Street  
Kansas City, MO 64108

#### Hours:

##### Monday – Friday

Lobby: 8am - 5pm  
Drive-thru: 8am - 6pm

##### Saturday

Lobby: 8am - noon  
Drive-thru: 8am - noon





# LINC advocates help aging foster children, former juvenile offenders bloom as adults

September 16, 2019

By Joe Robertson, LINC writer

He'd crossed so many rivers of pain, foster teen Dillon Spradley wasn't sure what he needed when LINC youth advocate Devon Robinson first appeared in the doorway of his guardian's apartment.

If need be, "Miss Robinson" says about those face-to-face moments with older foster youth, "I can be grandma. I can be the crazy aunt . . . I want to get them talking to me."

Who would she be now?

Her eyes fell on Spradley, then a 14-year-old who'd been separated from his mother upon her arrest when he was 12, who then fled his Kansas City Northland shelter and walked alone for a day on the shoulder of Interstate 35 in a wandering despair.

Spradley, now 21, remembers who he was then — too shy, expelled from school, unconfident, aimless.

His eyes went to Robinson's notable hair, and Robinson knew it.

"I," she declared grandly, "am your afro caseworker!"

The 14-year-old laughed: "What?"

There are so many small details in what LINC's team of six youth advocates do to help hundreds of Missouri teens who are transitioning from foster care or from the state's juvenile justice system into adulthood and independence.

And they are important details, like school supplies, tuition aid, life skills training, budgeting, driver's education, job searching, help with utilities, housing . . .

But just as important is being precisely the person a teen needs in a moment in time.

That's what Mark Hash, a LINC youth advocate, hoped to be when he rushed to a hospital rehabilitation wing after one of the court-involved teens on his caseload was crippled by a gunshot through his spine.

The boy was a quiet teenager who never opened up much about his thoughts or fears, Hash recalled. But he saw his advocate appear at his hospital bedside — and the teen said, "Hold my hand."

LINC has been managing the transitions of teens aging out of foster care since 2007 and for teens from the juvenile justice system since 2011, and now helps some 680 youths during a year — many of whom have endured trauma and felt lost to the world.

Some results are tangible. In 2019 the program had 211 youths in school, 94 were employed and 63 received high school diplomas or equivalent degrees.

Other benefits are harder to measure, but help change lives, Hash said.

"We validate" the journeys the teens have traveled, Hash said. "Some of these kids haven't had someone in their corner. It helps that they know someone sees what's going on."



Dillon Spradley

The resilience of a child latches onto the comforting idea of a mentor, he said.

The “integrity of being present,” Hash said, “is more powerful than we know.”

## **National alarm**

States began looking for better ways to help teens in the 1990s when concern grew nationwide that social services were struggling to prepare troubled youth for adulthood, said Steve Winburn, head of LINC’s youth transitions programming.

Federal legislation, named after longtime youth advocate U.S. Sen. John H. Chafee of Rhode Island, boosted the resources provided to the states.

Social service agencies were combatting alarming statistics. The 20,000 youths nationwide leaving foster care each year were at high risk of mental illness, including post traumatic stress disorder. They were unlikely to complete their education and showed high rates of unemployment, homelessness and dependence on public assistance.

LINC had partnered with Missouri’s Children’s Division on several initiatives over the years, and when the state in 2007 put out a bid for help in running the transitions programming, LINC took on the work.

The LINC advocates stepped in as allies to support the important work of the state caseworkers, Winburn said, helping them better serve so many children in need.

“We started with one kid,” Winburn said, “and grew from there.”

What kind of help does the transition program offer teens?

Spradley knows. He learned first-hand when Robinson plied him with a checklist of things they were going to tackle together.

It was daunting. He had some motivation difficulties at the start, he said.

*Get a state ID, a driver’s learning permit, start driving lessons, prep for job searching, get a bank account, start saving, get a driver’s license . . .*

Just their first project — *get school right* — was too much at first for a kid without a motivating force in his life.

“But Miss Robinson,” Spradley said, invoking the image of his tutor with a snap of his fingers and a firm taskmaster’s point, “she was that figure.”

## **Will I live through the night?**

Spradley keeps some of the pain of his past to himself, but he was very close to his mother and an older brother and sister. And all of them were separated, after several days on the run, when police found them and arrested his mother when he was 12.

He wasn’t sure what he was doing when he fled the youth shelter where police took him that day. He had another relative’s house in mind, somewhere back near downtown. He had a water bottle but no food as he walked for hours southbound alongside the rushing interstate highway.

“I didn’t know if I would live through the night,” he said.

The relative turned him in and — though Spradley considered fleeing again — his long road to recovery began at the shelter, then in a good foster home. He was able to reunite with his mother when he was 16, but she died of cancer that year.

Robinson helped him through it, he said. “She was there for me the entire time I was grieving. She said, ‘You can call me, it doesn’t matter what time it is.’ ”

For Robinson, the youth advocacy work “is a ministry to me.”

She got into it after age 40, knowing from years as a single mother what a helping hand can mean to a family.

“I’ve had so much help,” she said. “How could I not help?”

She finished her college degree at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and took on work as a substitute teacher at

an alternative middle school in Kansas City Public Schools.

Some people were concerned, saying, “You’re working with the *bad kids*?” she said.

“But I loved the kids,” she said. “They’re just kids. That’s when I got hooked.”

She knew her checklist was a lot for Spradley to take in. He didn’t even know yet that she was also planning eventually to push him to give college a try.

“Our job is to help them be successful,” she said. “Get them to stretch. They may not think they can do college, but why not try? Let’s try. I will help you.”

## **Can’t watch the news**

The work comes with emotional risks.

The youths from juvenile court that Hash helps often have to figure out how to deal with difficult home and neighborhood situations that led them into trouble in the first place.

The youth advocates are trying to help them transition from the structured life in the Division of Youth Services.

Their advocates teach them life skills and help them find safe housing, but the youths often re-encounter people tangled in substance abuse or other risky behaviors.

“Sometimes there have been generations of poor choices,” Hash said. “That can be hard to run alongside.”

The office that Hash shares with other youth advocates displays a pair of small memorials to two teenagers who were lost to Kansas City’s gun violence.

Robinson is pained by a teenage girl she helped who was killed.

“You do get attached to kids,” she said. “You get to the point you don’t want to watch the news.”

Spradley went from being a young teen who didn’t know if he would survive the night to a college student eyeing a degree in engineering. He’s going to Metropolitan Community Colleges-Penn Valley, with plans to continue at UMKC.

“I never thought I’d go to college,” he said. “I didn’t like school.”

But the LINC programming helped him find his confidence. He became president of the Kansas City area Youth Advisory Board and joined the state board. He was part of the crowd on Youth Advocacy Day at the Capitol in Jefferson City in 2017, meeting legislators and their staffs.

All these things finally seemed real to him in the spring of 2018 when he walked across the stage in East High School’s graduation ceremony at the UMKC Swinney Recreation Center.

He wished his mother could see him — feeling joy he had thought wasn’t possible.

“The day I got my diploma,” he said, “I knew no matter how hard life was, or how hard I made it seem, now that I was doing this, I can do anything if I commit to it and accomplish it.”

## **Keeping the light on**

At some point, every one of the advocates’ cases gets discharged, Winburn said. The teenagers grow into their 20s and they age out of the program.

But like good parents, the advocates are still there, a phone call away, text or email, always happy to receive a visitor.

The LINC advocates can’t spend any more program dollars on their graduates, Winburn said, but they can pass on tips — a good car mechanic who will give them a deal, a great place to get furniture, or just some good advice.

They’re on their own, just like Winburn’s own children are on their own, he said.

“But they still call.”

# Magical Family Summit delights families, shines on Hickman Mills' community partnerships

March 10, 2022



*"I really like this school," says Lauryn, 6, pictured above with her brother, Jayden, 7, playing with sock puppets at one of the Kid Zone activities at the Hickman Mills Family Summit at Smith-Hale Middle School March 5, 2022.*

Being 6 years old, Lauryn had a lot to absorb trying to sort out just what was going on here at the annual Hickman Mills Family Summit.

Considering the goodies she'd loaded in her bag at the colorful vendors' booths, the music and dancing in the gym, the drum lines, the games and sock puppets she'd made upstairs in the Kid Zone — this, she was convinced, was a world of magical classrooms.

Said Lauryn: *"I really like this school."*

Her mother, Deja Kendrick, with her other child, 7-year-old Jayden, laughed at the child's joy — which was the icing on the cake on what she described as an enriching family experience at the March 5 event at Smith-Hale Middle School.

"I like it that it brings the community together and that families can come out and enjoy and learn more about the things that are out there for them," Kendrick said. "And my kids are having fun, so it's great."



*Children dance during a Kansas City Young Audiences show at the Hickman Mills Family Summit March 5.*

In all, some 75 partner organizations brought resources, information, services and entertainment back to the Family Summit, returning fully in-person after having to go virtual a year ago.

In March 2020, the summit was one of the last major community events in the area before the pandemic swept across the nation. This year, LINC and the Hickman Mills School District could go wide-open again in rounding up a vast event.

"We're happy to be partnering with LINC for our Summit Day," Hickman Mills Superintendent Yaw Obeng said. "You can see all the community has come out."

Behind him, in the main gym, colored table cloths, banners and balloons invited the circulating families and neighbors to check out health services, a job fair, social service providers, family entertainment opportunities — with LINC’s usual array of raffle prizes on display while a deejay pumped the air with raucous beats.

“This is what a community is about,” Obeng said. “In building collaboration with our district, it leads to parent engagement, vendors engagement, and, eventually, student success.”



*LINC’s Sean Akridge, left, and Hickman Mills Superintendent Yaw Obeng, right, greet a raffle drawing winner.*

For first-time visitors, like vendor Valencia Murphy, the Summit was a delightful surprise.

Murphy, a supervisor with the Nellie Shoats/Lucille Douglas Youth Council, took a moment away from the group’s booth to tour the rows of other vendors with two of the girls in the program, Taraji, 11, and Sarai, 9.

“I’m very excited,” she said. “I enjoy all the vendors, the information you receive, the different types of people that are here — I wasn’t planning on it being this way.”

Many of the programs for youth were familiar to families that are in LINC’s before- and after-school programs in the district, as many of their favorites filled the Kid Zone.

Urban TEC, Mad Science, NickiFit, Kansas City Young Audiences with StoneLion Puppet Theater, Smith-Hale’s Wild Eagles drum line and drill team entertained families with the help of LINC’s blue-shirted staff.



*Monique Miller leaves with her prize from LINC’s collection of raffle prizes at the Hickman Mills Family Summit.*

“We're excited for the chance to be back together,” LINC Caring Communities Administrator Sean Akridge said. “It's been two years this week since we were together in person. It's great to be a partner with the school district.”

The day ended with Obeng and Akridge calling out the winning numbers for the raffle for more than two dozen prizes provided by LINC, including kitchen gifts, tool sets, Chiefs lounge chairs and gift cards.

Hickman Mills parent Monique Miller came away with a Ninja Foodi air fryer and accompanying cook book, which she and her daughter carted out at the end of what was an all-around rewarding day.

“We got our Covid shots,” she said. “We got lunch. We went to a whole lot of booths. Everybody was nice.”

That would have been fun enough, but the list had a topper:

“And a Ninja Foodi,” she said. “I can't wait to cook food in it.”

*By Joe Robertson/LINC Writer*



# NKC Schools' bond/levy issues highlight April 5 election with area school board races

March 08, 2022



One of several proposed bond issue projects North Kansas City Schools would like to build is a second transportation hub in the north side of the district in addition to the south hub pictured here. Photo from NKCSchools.

For the second time in two years, the growing North Kansas City School District is asking voters to approve no-tax-increase ballot measures.

NKC's \$140 million bond issue and 20-cent levy transfer highlight election day April 5 along with a host of important school board races across most of LINC's partner districts.

With its enrollment now around 21,000 students, North Kansas City stands as the second largest district in the state, second only to Springfield's 23,000.

Steady growth — now and projected for coming years — is increasing the demands on district facilities, programs and staffing, district leadership says.

The proposed bond issue and levy transfer are needed, the district says, to keep pace and carry out the long-range plan the community approved in 2019.

Voters overwhelmingly approved a \$155 million bond issue in June 2020 that opened or renovated several facilities, including the new early education center, several elementary schools and stadium and library renovations at the high schools, among other projects.

The 2020 bond issue, like the proposed bond issue in the April 5 election, did not increase the tax bills for district property owners. Instead, both bond issues allow the district to pay off debt further down the road at the current tax rate.

The same goes for the proposed levy transfer. If approved, the district would transfer a 20-cent portion of its debt service levy to its operating levy, That would give the district more funds for daily needs, like salaries and education program supports, while raising the overall levy or property owners' tax bills.

If approved, the district plans to use the boosted revenue for several projects and needs, including new buildings for Crestview and Nashua elementary schools, additions and renovations at other schools, a second transportation hub to improve bus service, increasing staffing and the ability to meet higher operating costs.

The bond issue, by statute, requires a super majority of four-sevenths — or 57.14% — to pass. The levy transfer needs a simple majority. Learn more at North Kansas City Schools' information page [here](#).

## School board elections

Voters in most area school districts will be deciding school board races. One exception is the **Kansas City Public Schools** which holds elections every other year, the next one coming in 2023.

**Hickman Mills** voters will be choosing from a slate of four candidates for two seats with three-year terms. Incumbent Cecil E. Wattree is running for re-election with challengers Terri T. Barr-Moore, Beth Ann Boerger and John Charles Carmichael. Incumbent Tramise Carter is not running for re-election.

**Grandview** will have a pair of board elections. In one race, incumbents Dawn Foy and Helen Ransom are seeking re-election with one challenger — Joshua Hill — vying for two seats with three-year terms. The other race will determine a board member to

fill out the final year of an uncompleted term. Stacy Wright, who was appointed to fill the vacant seat last year, is running against challenger Keith David Shaw.

**Center** voters will choose two names from a slate of three candidates. Incumbent Ronald D. Fritz is challenged by Ira Boydston IV and Gayla Smith. Incumbent Beverly Cunningham is not running for re-election.

**Fort Osage** has six candidates vying for two seats, also with three-year terms. Incumbents Tim Brown and Sharon A. Dankenbring are challenged by Kyle A. Leeds, Dustin Schnakenberg, Jennifer C. Rogers and Kress Cambers.

**North Kansas City** features a crowded race, with eight candidates seeking two seats. Incumbents Terry Ward and Frances Yang are challenged by Josiah Bechthold, Laura Wagner, Duane Bartsch, Andrew Corrao, Daniel Wartick and Susan Hines.

The deadline for registering to vote for Missouri's April 5 election is March 9.



# APRIL 5, 2022 ZERO TAX INCREASE LEVY TRANSFER & BOND

**BUILDING  
A BETTER  
FUTURE**

North Kansas City Schools is home to 21,000 students and counting! As we grow, new facilities and upgrades are needed throughout the district. Additional support for staff will ensure we can continue serving as Champions for All Students. To make these proposed improvements a reality, NKC Schools asks voters to consider a **zero tax increase levy transfer and \$140 million bond issue** on the April 5, 2022 ballot.



## growth

Now the second-largest school district in Missouri, NKC Schools is projected to grow by more than 1,500 students in the next five years. New and expanded schools are needed to accommodate rapid growth and welcome new students.

**CHAPEL HILL  
ADDITION**

**RISING HILL  
ADDITION**

**NEW NASHUA  
ELEMENTARY**



## renewal

Replacing and renovating older schools across the district will ensure all students have the best opportunities to learn in world-class environments. Comprehensive updates will bring new, modern learning spaces and critical safety and systems improvements.

**NEW CRESTVIEW  
ELEMENTARY**

**SOLUTIONS FOR  
LAKEWOOD &  
WINNWOOD**

**UPGRADES AT CLARDY,  
MEADOWBROOK,  
LINDEN WEST &  
OAKWOOD MANOR**



## support

As more students and families join NKC Schools, additional staff and services are required to meet greater needs. Inflation has also driven the district's operating cost up. NKC Schools is committed to creating learning environments in which students can reach their maximum potential.

**NORTHERN  
TRANSPORTATION HUB**

**ACCOUNT FOR  
INCREASED OPERATING  
COSTS**

**HIRING ADDITIONAL  
STAFF TO  
ADDRESS GROWTH**



# APRIL 5 ZERO TAX INCREASE LEVY TRANSFER & BOND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



## NEW CRESTVIEW ELEMENTARY

A brand-new Crestview would replace an aging facility in need of repairs. The new school would also be able to better accommodate and provide for Crestview's growing student population.



## CHAPEL HILL ADDITION UPGRADES TO LINDEN WEST, MEADOWBROOK, CLARDY & OAKWOOD MANOR

New and renovated spaces throughout the Oak Park feeder pattern will upgrade outdated learning environments to better serve more new students each year.



## NEW NASHUA ELEMENTARY RISING HILL ADDITION

A new Nashua Elementary would provide room to grow, replacing the current, older school. Planned expansion of Rising Hill would account for tremendous growth in the area and provide space for all students to learn.



## SOLUTIONS FOR LAKEWOOD & WINNWOOD

Lakewood and Winnwood are two of our oldest elementary facilities. Bond funding would support each school community in planning and creating upgraded learning spaces to best meet their needs.



## NORTHERN TRANSPORTATION HUB

The 84 square miles of NKC Schools are currently supported by a singular transportation center located in the south. Expansion is needed to better serve neighborhoods district-wide. An additional hub would increase efficiency, conserve energy and save money with every trip.

## HIRING STAFF & MANAGING INFLATION

As we welcome more new students each year, additional staff are needed to serve our growing community. The proposed levy transfer would free existing funds to hire more staff and account for increased operating costs.

## HOW WILL THE LEVY TRANSFER WORK?

While bond funds must be dedicated to building, **levies are for learning**. The proposed zero tax increase levy transfer would move 20 cents currently allocated for paying off debt to the operating budget. Wise fiscal management ensures our debt can still be paid. The proposed transfer would allow NKC Schools to address growth and operate soundly with **zero tax increase and no change to the overall levy**.



# Fort Osage State of the District, 2022: 'Going above and beyond'

March 01, 2022



This student's joy in art shows some of the "tremendous celebrations of student success" that Fort Osage Superintendent Jason Snodgrass praised in his annual State of the District address Feb. 28. Photo from Fort Osage School District video.

Thanks to students, staff and the community "going above and beyond," the Fort Osage School District has overcome many challenges to stay on course for a "wonderful" 2022, Superintendent Jason Snodgrass said in his [annual State of the District address](#).

Real-world learning initiatives, activities and clubs and voter-supported construction and renovations all remain on track, Snodgrass said, spurring "tremendous celebrations of student success."



Foundation work is under way for the new transportation and maintenance center and district offices. Photo from Fort Osage video.

The work hasn't been easy through two years of the pandemic, he said, but "regardless of the obstacles, the entire school community rallied together to engage students in their learning."

Everyone had to take on new responsibilities and new tasks, filling in wherever needed, he said.

## **Bond issue and levy transfer projects**

Work is under way to carry out projects voters approved in a [bond and levy election in April 2021](#), Snodgrass said.

The work includes kitchen renovations and upgrades and driveway and parking lot improvements throughout the district.

The pandemic caused some delays in building materials, but the foundation work is under way in the construction of a new transportation and maintenance center and district offices, he said. The building, under construction east of Prairie Fire Upper Elementary School on U.S. 24 is on track for completion in December, 2022.

In the summer of 2023, the high school will have a new gym and expanded band room.

The district in the past year has completed several energy efficiency projects such as installing LED lighting, and will be installing solar panels at several schools this spring.



Students get a taste of real-world learning.

## **Real-world learning**

The district opened Campus Grounds, a student run coffee shop on U.S. 24 that is providing learning opportunities in business, management, marketing and problem-solving, Snodgrass said. Elsewhere, throughout the district, schools in partnership with businesses and organizations teamed with teachers to provide may other opportunities to embed real-world learning in lessons and career exploration.

“I’m proud of our students striving to achieve their best in the classroom and beyond,” he said.

To watch the State of the District video, go to [fortosage.net/StateoftheDistrict](https://fortosage.net/StateoftheDistrict).

The student-run Campus Grounds coffee shop opened in 2021.



# Missouri A+ Scholarship Program

*You may be able to earn two years of free college tuition.*



Photo by Allison Shelley/The Verbatim Agency for EDUimages

## What is the Missouri A+ Scholarship program?

Students at participating A+ high schools can earn two years tuition-free at state community colleges, state vocational and technical schools and certain private two-year vocational and technical schools.

## Is my high school an A+ program school?

Most KC-area Missouri high schools are in the A+ program, including all of the high schools in LINC partner districts – Kansas City Public Schools, Hickman Mills, Grandview, Center, North Kansas City and Fort Osage. [Here is a complete list.](#)

## How do I get started?

Talk to your high school guidance counselor and get enrolled in your school's A+ program.

## How do I earn A+ tuition for college?

- Missouri law requires U.S. citizenship or permanent residency.
- Attend an A+ high school at least two years before graduation.
- Graduate with a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher.
- Have a high school attendance record of 95% or higher
- Complete at least 50 hours of community service tutoring or mentoring. (Ask your high school counselor to set you up.)
- Have a record of good citizenship without unlawful use of drugs or alcohol.
- Score proficient or advanced on the end-of-course exam in Algebra I or a higher level math course. Or score 17 or higher on the ACT Math test. You can also meet the math requirement with an ACT score of 16 with a GPA of 2.8 or higher, or an ACT score of 15 and a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

## **What are my college or other school choices that accept A+ tuition scholarships?**

Most two-year community colleges throughout Missouri, including the Metropolitan Community College system in the Kansas City area, and state vocational and technical schools like the adult programs at Herndon Career Center in Raytown. [Here is a complete list.](#)

## **Do I need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)?**

Yes. Students seeking A+ scholarships must make a reasonable effort to secure any federal financial aid first before using Missouri's A+ funds by completing the FAFSA. For instance, any federal Pell Grant scholarship funds would be applied before drawing on A+ funds.

## **How do I receive the A+ scholarship funds at my college?**

There is no paper application. If you meet the requirements in high school, your transcript will be stamped with A+ certification. Check with your chosen college if they require any more documentation. The college will request tuition reimbursement from the state to be paid to the college.

## **How do I stay eligible for A+ funds when I'm in college?**

- Be enrolled as a full-time student (exceptions possible for students with disabilities).
- Complete 12 semester hours each term (six hours during summer terms).
- Be actively seeking a degree.
- Maintain a GPA of 2.0 or higher.
- Do not create a criminal record.

## **How long can I receive A+ funds?**

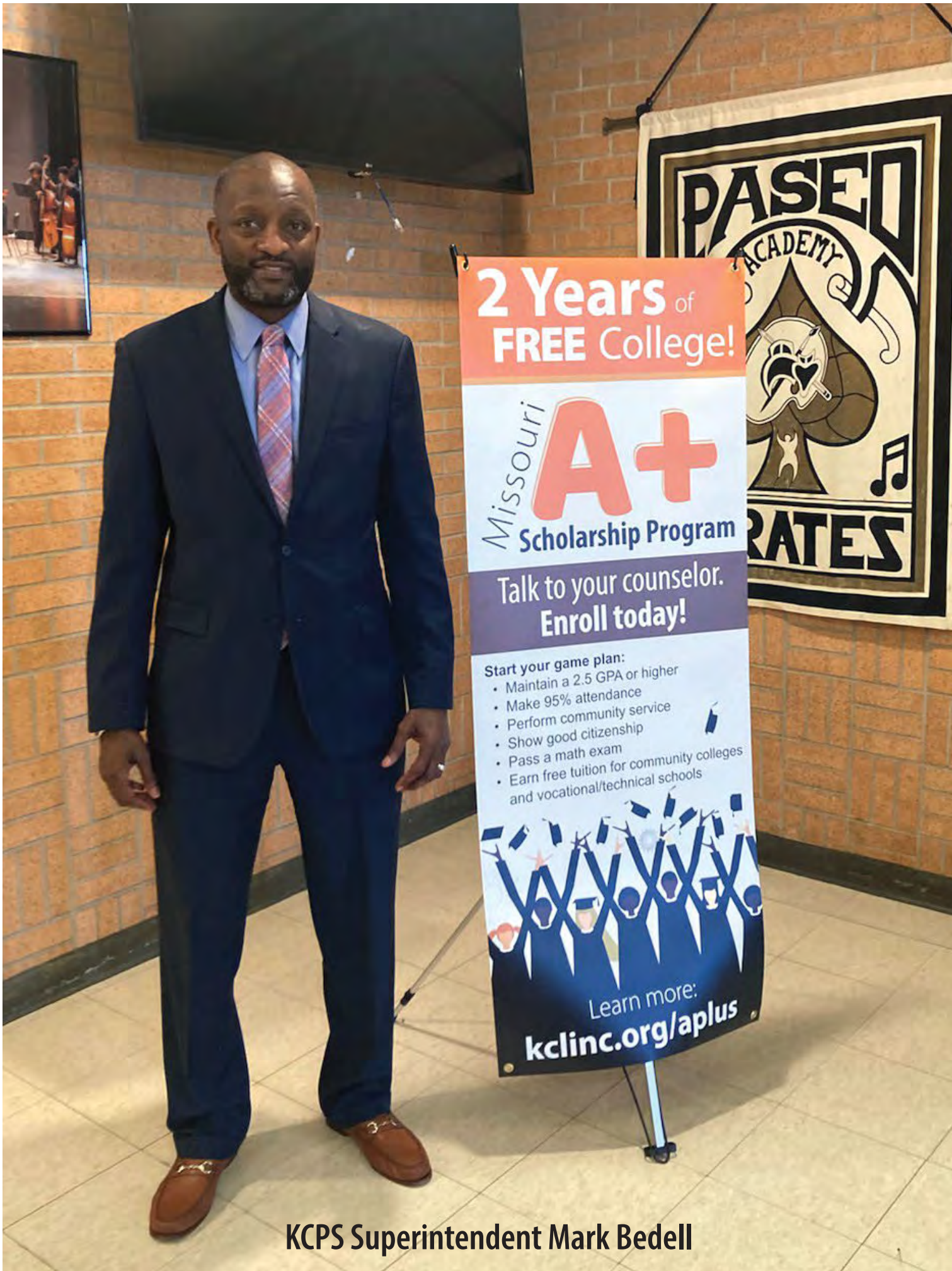
Your eligibility expires once any of the following events occurs:

- You complete requirements for an associate's degree
- You complete 105% of the hours required to earn the degree
- Or four years pass since your high school graduation.

## **For more information:**

**Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development**

[A+ Scholarship Program webpage](#)



**2 Years** of  
**FREE** College!

Missouri **A+**  
Scholarship Program

Talk to your counselor.  
**Enroll today!**

- Start your game plan:**
- Maintain a 2.5 GPA or higher
  - Make 95% attendance
  - Perform community service
  - Show good citizenship
  - Pass a math exam
  - Earn free tuition for community colleges and vocational/technical schools



Learn more:  
**[kclinc.org/aplus](http://kclinc.org/aplus)**



**KCPS Superintendent Mark Bedell**



LINC Chess held its first in-person tournament in over two years. Over 100 youth participated in the March 5 event at William Chrisman High School in Independence.

The next tournament is scheduled for Saturday, May 7 at Smith-Hale Middle School in the Hickman Mills School District.

**More information:**

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