

# LINC Commission Meeting

May 19, 2014



(Above) LINC and Turn the Page KC staff are preparing over 25,000 free books for each elementary school student in the Center, Fort Osage, Grandview, Hickman Mills, Kansas City, and North Kansas City School districts. The books were supplied by FirstBook, which provides access to new books for children in need.



# 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, May 19, 2014 | 4 – 6 pm  
Kauffman Foundation  
4801 Rockhill Rd.  
Kansas City, Mo. 64110

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## **Agenda**

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- I. Welcome and Announcements**
- II. Approvals**
  - a. April minutes (motion)**
- III. Superintendent's Report**
- IV. LINC Data Update**
  - Oscar Tshibanda
- V. LINC Summer Plans**
- VI. Other Reports**
  - a. LINC book distribution**
  - b. Cinco de Mayo Independence**
  - c. Other**
- VII. Adjournment**



## THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – APRIL 21, 2014

The Local Investment Commission met at the Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Rd., Kansas City, Mo. Chairman **Landon Rowland** presided. Commissioners attending were:

Bert Berkley  
Sharon Cheers  
Jack Craft  
Aaron Deacon  
Steve Dunn  
SuEllen Fried  
Tom Gerke  
Rob Givens

Anita Gorman  
Bart Hakan  
Dick Hibschan  
Tom Lewin  
Rosemary Lowe  
Sandy Mayer  
David Ross  
Bailus Tate

*A motion to approve the March 17, 2014, LINC Commission meeting minutes was passed unanimously.*

**Bill Rogers** introduced **Don Reimal**, whose tenure as mayor of Independence ends today. Rogers reported on Reimal's early involvement with LINC and his achievements in bringing much-needed services to western Independence including increasing the number of health clinics and senior housing centers, establishing three community development corporations, and securing neighborhood improvement funding. Reimal urged LINC to continue its work.

**Nick Haines** of KCPT invited Commissioners to attend the "Make or Break" forum on the future of the Kansas City Public Schools. The forum starts at 6:30 p.m. this evening at the Kansas City Plaza Library.

### Superintendents' Report

- **Mark Enderle** (Superintendent, Fort Osage School District) reported the first day of spring testing begins tomorrow. The district is expanding the distribution of portable computing devices to students: this year each seventh-grader received a Chromebook; next year eighth- and ninth-graders will also get one.
- **Kevin Foster** (Director of Education, Genesis Promise Academy) reported spring testing begins tomorrow. All new students and those performing below grade level will be required to attend summer school. Volunteers are welcome to help build a new playground on May 30. LINC is supporting parent engagement through organizing a May 9 "Pancakes for Moms" event, which follows a "Donuts for Dads" event last month.
- **Trinity Davis** (Director of Curriculum, Kansas City Public Schools) reported the district this summer is offering an extended-year school program for students needing additional instruction to meet grade level.
- **Terry Ward** (School Board Member, North Kansas City School District) reported spring testing began today. Bond and levy issues on the April ballot were approved by voters and will help the district address the rising student population. The district is moving forward with a plan to extend the school calendar at two schools. The district and the city of Gladstone have partnered to develop a new 200,000-square-foot innovation campus to provide space for businesses and educational programs; North Kansas City and five other school districts will be involved.
- **Gayden Carruth** (Executive Director, Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City)

reported the organization is monitoring state legislation pertaining to education including the school transfer law, education budget, and state income tax.

- **Bob Bartman** (Superintendent, Center School District) reported one-third of district students will attend summer school. There is expected to be a gap between the beginning of the school year and a decision in the lawsuit around student transfers in the Kansas City area. The gap may pose difficulties for the students whose families have applied for a transfer from KCPS to neighboring school districts.

**David Ross** presented the FY15 LINC budget which the LINC Finance Committee has approved and recommended be approved by the Commission.

*A motion to approve the FY15 LINC budget was passed unanimously.*

**Robin Gierer**, LINC Chief Operating Officer, reported LINC is planning to offer a summer school program at the request of Kansas City Public Schools. LINC is planning to use certified teachers to deliver academic instruction in reading and math. LINC is working with KCPS Director of Curriculum to develop curriculum and staff training around the program.

**Brent Schondelmeyer**, LINC Communications Director, reported on the following initiatives:

- **First Book.** LINC is working with each of its partner school districts to distribute 25,000 books – one for each elementary school student. The high-quality books are provided at low cost by First Book. This is the third year LINC has organized a book distribution.
- **Hero project.** LINC supported an effort at Gladstone Elementary School to recognize Crosby Kemper III as a “school hero.” A video of the effort was shown.
- **Cinco de Mayo.** LINC is organizing the second annual community-wide Cinco de Mayo celebration in Independence. The May 4 event reflects the growing Hispanic population in the city.
- **Chess.** LINC hosted a chess tournament on April 5 at North Kansas City high school. A video of the event was shown. The next chess tournament will be held on May 3 at Hickman Mills Junior High.

**Rob Givens** reported on KC Communities for All Ages, an effort involving multiple partners to develop infrastructure to support the ability of older adults to live in their homes and communities throughout their lifetime. Volunteer opportunities are available.

**Aaron Deacon** reported on the most recent pre-registration drive for Google Fiber gigabit internet service. Seventy-four of 76 eligible neighborhoods qualified. Discussion followed.

**SuEllen Fried** reported that in addition to chess, debate can help students improve academically. The DEBATE-Kansas City urban debate league provides support to student debate activities.

The meeting was adjourned.

Thursday, May 15, 2014

## Missouri legislature passes student transfer bill with private school option

By JASON HANCOCK

The Star's Jefferson City correspondent

Legislation opening the door for students in failing school district to receive public funds to attend nonreligious private schools won final approval Thursday in the Missouri House.

But Gov. Jay Nixon has [signaled he may veto it over the private school provisions](#) and the bill fell 20 votes short of a veto-proof majority in the House.

Under current law, unaccredited districts must pay tuition and transportation costs for students who wish to attend school in a neighboring district. The concern is that a flood of transfers could ultimately bankrupt failing urban districts and lead to overcrowded suburban classrooms.

The legislation was designed to address that situation.

"If we don't do something, the effects could be devastating to the Kansas City school district and the surrounding districts that I represent," said Rep. Sheila Solon, a Blue Springs Republican.

Kansas City Public Schools have been unaccredited since 2012, although Superintendent Steve Green has been projecting that the district will perform well enough on state tests to earn at least provisional accreditation this fall. If that happens, the transfer law would not apply to the Kansas City district.

The legislation passed Thursday lets students who attend an unaccredited school transfer to an accredited school within the district. If there are no spots available, students could transfer to a neighboring district or a charter school.

In Jackson County, St. Louis and St. Louis County, students would have one more option: If local voters approve, they could transfer to a nonreligious private school located in the district and use local tax revenue to pay tuition.

If a district remains unaccredited for three years, the private school option goes into effect automatically regardless of the local vote.

Several lawmakers expressed concern about sending public funds to private schools, fearing it the bill could open the floodgates to a much wider voucher program in the future.

"Public schools should be publicly funded and private schools should be privately funded. Period," said Rep. Jeff Grisamore, a Lee's Summit Republican.

Taxes imposed for public education should be spent on public education, said Rep. Tommie Pierson, a St. Louis Democrat.

“Taxpayers demand it,” he said.

Rep. Jay Barnes, a Jefferson City Republican, implored lawmakers to support the bill even if they had some trepidation with the private school option.

“There is one issue in this bill the other side of the aisle hates,” he said, “and it’s only about 5 percent of this bill.”

The bill may not be perfect, said Rep. Kevin Engler, a southeast Missouri Republican. But action is needed, he said, before the situation gets worse.

“What’s happening now isn’t working,” he said.

The bill also addresses tuition rates districts that accept transfers can charge unaccredited districts and allows them to set class sizes and student-teacher ratios.

Rep. Vicki Englund, a St. Louis Democrat, urged the governor to sign the bill. But if he does veto it, Englund said, “call us back into special session immediately to address this issue.”

Kit Crancer, state director of StudentsFirst Missouri, praised the legislative action and urged the governor to sign the bill.

“Today’s vote,” he said, “means students in unaccredited districts have the opportunity to receive a better education close to home.”

May 13, 2014

## **Public money for private schools a no-go for Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon**

By JOE ROBERTSON and JASON HANCOCK  
The Kansas City Star

Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon made it clear Tuesday that he will yield no ground that would allow any public-school funding to go to private schools.

Lawmakers in the final days of the 2014 session are wrangling with a complex bill to fix a problematic student transfer law that is bankrupting unaccredited school districts.

Several lawmakers want to make potential transfers from unaccredited public schools to nonreligious private schools part of the deal. But that's no deal for Nixon.

"That's where I must draw the line," he said in a Tuesday news conference. "I'm calling on conferees to remove this provision and get a responsible transfer fix to my desk."

Current law allows students in unaccredited districts to transfer to nearby accredited districts with the tuition and transportation costs borne by the unaccredited districts. The state's education department is seeking a fix that would ease the tuition burden while giving the receiving districts the ability to limit the impact on class sizes.

The lawmakers leading the effort to include at least a small measure of private-school choice were not backing off Tuesday.

"This changes absolutely nothing," said Sen. Maria Chappelle-Nadal, a St. Louis County Democrat. "He's going to be sent a bill. There's no bill without a private-school option."

Two St. Louis area unaccredited districts are already in financial distress. Normandy received an emergency \$2 million appropriation to stave off bankruptcy this school year, and Riverview Gardens is in danger of bankruptcy within a year without a fix.

Kansas City Public Schools is unaccredited, but only 23 students have requested transfers, compared to some 2,000 combined in the St. Louis districts.

Kansas City Superintendent Steve Green has been projecting that the district will perform well enough again on state performance tests to earn at least provisional accreditation this fall. If that happens, it would stop transfers in the Kansas City area.

Although leaders of the unaccredited districts have been urging lawmakers to lessen the tuition costs, they have opposed any private-school options.

Normandy has closed an elementary school and laid off some 100 staffers this school year, while still needing further relief.



“We’re looking for a tuition fix,” Normandy district spokeswoman Daphne Dorsey said. “But the private-school option is not something we would support.”

Promoters of the private-school option drastically pared the proposal in recent weeks. The choices would be limited to nonreligious private schools in Jackson County, the city of St. Louis and St. Louis County.

The private schools would have to comply with state law regarding school safety regulations and state performance testing of any transferred students. And local funding could go to private schools only after a vote by local residents.

Sen. David Pearce, the chairman of the Senate Education Committee who has usually opposed private-school options, supported the bill, saying it showed collaboration by strongly divided factions to come to what he thinks is a reasonable fix of the law.

The Warrensburg Republican said he thinks Nixon is stepping in late with his hard line against the bill.

House Majority Floor Leader John Diehl said the governor is attempting to “sabotage” the bill.

“The governor is sending a clear signal that he is not interested in fixing the school transfer issue this year,” said Diehl, a St. Louis County Republican in a prepared statement. “Many months, countless hours and hundreds of pages have been put into this issue without any input from the governor.”

But some lawmakers have opposed even the pared-down private-school option, saying it sets a bad precedent. Nixon expressed the same alarm.

“Such a step ... would destabilize the strong foundation on which public education has stood for generations and open the floodgates for more radical voucher schemes down the road,” Nixon said.

“If you have a problem to solve, solve that problem. Don’t cause others.”

*To reach Joe Robertson, call 816-234-4789 or send email to [jrobertson@kcstar.com](mailto:jrobertson@kcstar.com). To reach Jason Hancock, call 573-634-3565 or send email to [jhancock@kcstar.com](mailto:jhancock@kcstar.com).*

Thursday, May 15, 2014

# Segregation sticks around 60 years after Brown decision

Topeka became the epicenter 60 years ago of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that dramatically shook the nation from its long practice of legal segregation.

The Brown v. Topeka Board of Education ruling that ended legally segregated schools was just the start. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 followed from the momentum of the civil rights movement to change the nation.

A day ahead of the anniversary of the court ruling, first lady Michelle Obama will be in Topeka on Friday to speak about the landmark ruling. The occasion should spark a new public commitment to finally integrate America.

A lot of work is left to do.

A recent Economic Policy Institute report notes that school segregation remains a major problem: African American children “are segregated mostly because their schools are located in segregated neighborhoods.”

Changing demographics complicates matters more. Latinos today surpass African-Americans as the country’s No. 1 minority.

And the majority of Latinos, like black people, are stuck in a “profound segregation by race, poverty and language status,” a Civil Rights Project examination of southern California schools found. The same could be said about public schools that Hispanic children attend here or in any other urban center.

That should only mean that the celebration of the Brown decision should mark a redoubling of efforts toward integration and the use of all civic, social, religious, entrepreneurial and government tools to make it possible.

The social isolation and concentrated poverty borne from segregation will only worsen conditions for people of color and the country as a whole if the status quo continues unchecked.

# The Civil Rights Project

## Proyecto Derechos Civiles



\*\*\* NEWS RELEASE \*\*\*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **UCLA Report Finds Changing U.S. Demographics Transform School Segregation Landscape 60 Years After *Brown v Board of Education***

*Segregation Increases after Desegregation Plans Terminated by Supreme Court*

LOS ANGELES--Marking the 60th anniversary of the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision *Brown v Board of Education*, the UCLA's Civil Rights Project/*Proyecto Derechos Civiles* (CRP) assessed the nation's progress in addressing school segregation in its new report released today, **[Brown at 60: Great Progress, a Long Retreat and an Uncertain Future](#)**, and found that the vast transformation of the nation's school population since the civil rights era includes an almost 30% drop in white students and close to quintupling of Latino students.

*Brown at 60* shows that the nation's two largest regions, the South and West, now have a majority of what were called "minority" students. Whites are only the second largest group in the West. The South, always the home of most black students, now has more Latinos than blacks and is a profoundly tri-racial region.

The *Brown* decision in 1954 challenged the legitimacy of the entire "separate but equal" educational system of the South, and initiated strides toward racial and social equality in schools across the nation. Desegregation progress was very substantial for Southern blacks, in particular, says the report, and occurred from the mid-1960s to the late 1980s.

The authors state that, contrary to many claims, the South has not gone back to the level of segregation before *Brown*. It has, however, lost all of the additional progress made after 1967, but is still the *least* segregated region for black students.

Since the 1990s, the Supreme Court has fundamentally changed desegregation law, states the report, and many major desegregation plans have ended. CRP's statistical analysis shows that segregation increased substantially after desegregation plans were terminated in many large districts including Charlotte, NC; Pinellas County, FL; and Henrico County, VA.

“*Brown* was a major accomplishment and we should rightfully be proud. But a real celebration should also involve thinking seriously about why the country has turned away from the goal of *Brown* and accepted deepening polarization and inequality in our schools,” said Gary Orfield, co-author of the study and co-director of the Civil Rights Project. “It is time to stop celebrating a version of history that ignores our last quarter century of retreat and begin to make new history by finding ways to apply the vision of *Brown* in a transformed, multiracial society in another century.”

This new research affirms that the growth of segregation coincides with the demographic surge in the Latino population. Segregation has been most dramatic for Latino students, particularly in the West, where there was substantial integration in the 1960s but segregation has soared since.

The report stresses that segregation occurs simultaneously across race and poverty. The report details a half-century of desegregation research showing the major costs of segregation, particularly for students of color and poor students, and, conversely, the variety of benefits offered by schools with student enrollment of all races.

**Among the key findings of the research are:**

- Black and Latino students are an increasingly large percentage of suburban enrollment, particularly in larger metropolitan areas, and are moving to schools with relatively few white students.
- Segregation for blacks is the highest in the Northeast, a region with extremely high district fragmentation.
- Latinos are now significantly more segregated than blacks in *suburban* America.
- Black and Latino students tend to be in schools with a substantial majority of poor children, while white and Asian students typically attend middle class schools.
- Segregation is by far the most serious in the central cities of the largest metropolitan areas; the states of New York, Illinois and California are the top three worst for isolating black students.
- California is the state in which Latino students are most segregated.

The report concludes with recommendations about how the nation might pursue making the promise of *Brown* a reality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century--providing equal opportunity to all students regardless of race or economic background.

“Desegregation is not a panacea and it is not feasible in some situations,” said co-author Erica Frankenberg, assistant professor at Pennsylvania State University. “Where it is possible--and it still is possible in many areas--desegregation properly implemented can

make a very real contribution to equalizing educational opportunities and preparing young Americans to live, work and govern together in our extremely diverse society.”

***Brown at 60*** is being released from New York University’s Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, where Orfield delivers the keynote address, on Friday, May 16, 2014, for [Brown 60 and Beyond](#).

The report includes various tables showing segregation state-by-state and can be found [here](#).

**About the Civil Rights Project at UCLA**

Founded in 1996 by former Harvard professors [Gary Orfield](#) and Christopher Edley, Jr., The Civil Rights Project/*Proyecto Derechos Civiles* is now co-directed by Orfield and [Patricia Gándara](#), professors at UCLA. Its mission is to create a new generation of research in social science and law on the critical issues of civil rights and equal opportunity for racial and ethnic groups in the United States. It has monitored the success of American schools in equalizing opportunity and has been the authoritative source of segregation statistics. CRP has commissioned more than 500 [studies](#), published more than 15 [books](#) and issued numerous reports from authors at universities and research centers across the country. The U.S. Supreme Court, in its 2003 *Grutter v. Bollinger* decision upholding affirmative action, and in Justice Breyer’s dissent (joined by three other Justices) to its 2007 *Parents Involved* decision, cited the Civil Rights Project’s research.

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## *Executive Summary*

*Six decades of “separate but equal” as the law of the land have now been followed by six decades of “separate is inherently unequal” as our basic law. The Brown decision set large changes and political conflicts in motion and those struggles continue today.*

New national statistics show a vast transformation of the nation’s school population since the civil rights era. Particularly dramatic have been an almost 30% drop in white students and close to quintupling of Latino students. The nation’s two largest regions now have a majority of what were called “minorities” and whites are only the second largest group in the West. The South, always the home of most black students, now has more Latinos than blacks and is a profoundly tri-racial region.

Desegregation progress was very substantial for blacks, and occurred in the South from the mid-1960s to the late 1980s. Contrary to many claims, the South has not gone back to the level of segregation before *Brown*. It has lost all of the additional progress made after 1967 but is still the least segregated region for black students.

The growth of segregation has been most dramatic for Latino students, particularly in the West, where there was substantial integration in the 1960s, and segregation has soared. A clear pattern is developing of black and Latino students sharing the same schools; it deserves serious attention from educators and policymakers.

Segregation is typically segregation by both race and poverty. Black and Latino students tend to be in schools with a substantial majority of poor children, but white and Asian students are typically in middle-class schools.

Segregation is by far the most serious in the central cities of the largest metropolitan areas, but it is also severe in central cities of all sizes and suburbs of the largest metro areas, which are now half nonwhite. Latinos are significantly more segregated than blacks in suburban America.

The Supreme Court has fundamentally changed desegregation law, and many major court orders have been dropped. Our statistical analysis shows that segregation increased substantially after the plans were terminated in many large districts.

A half century of research shows that many forms of unequal opportunity are linked to segregation. Further, research also finds that desegregated education has substantial benefits for educational and later life outcomes for students from all backgrounds (see research summary and sources in Appendix A).

We conclude with recommendations about how we might pursue making the promise of *Brown* a reality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Desegregation is not a panacea and it is not feasible in some situations.

***Brown at 60: Great Progress, a Long Retreat and an Uncertain Future***

Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles, May 2014

Where it is possible-- and it still is possible in many areas-- desegregation properly implemented can make a very real contribution to equalizing educational opportunities and preparing young Americans for the extremely diverse society in which they will live and work and govern together.

Thursday, May 15, 2014

## **Liberty family to join White House event honoring Mid-Continent Public Library**

By BRIAN BURNES  
The Kansas City Star

In October, Alicia Moore of Liberty wrote a letter describing how much she admired her local library.

She had no idea the letter would take her all the way to the White House.

Today, the entire Moore family will join two Mid-Continent Public Library officials in Washington as first lady Michelle Obama awards the library district a national medal.

“I can’t believe Mid-Continent chose us to be there,” said Moore, who will attend with husband Michael and their children, Katie and Jackson, whom mom home-schools using the library system’s resources. “I feel like the lucky person who got the golden ticket.”

The White House ceremony for the 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. today. It will be streamed at [www.whitehouse.gov/live](http://www.whitehouse.gov/live).

The Moores’ journey to Washington began when they chose to make a branch of the Mid-Continent system their own.

When moving to the Kansas City area in 2011 after having long home-schooled their children, the Moores looked for a good library with the same urgency they looked for a home. Even when so much instructional material can be found online, they believed a library represented a bedrock source of community where their children could find like-minded peers, expert feedback from library staff members and, yes, books.

The family’s “home” branch is the Liberty branch at 1000 Kent St., and it was clear on a recent afternoon that the two children treat it as such.

Jackson, 9, perched in a chair his own size, his face fixed on a computer screen. His sister Katie, 11, sat on the floor, her back against a bookshelf and volumes scattered about her.

As Moore had explained in a nominating letter to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, which is presenting today’s awards at the White House, she felt it important that her children own the personal enrichment process, accessing library resources in a direct, hands-on way. She achieved this in a most literal way last semester when she introduced what she called the “Caldecott Challenge.”

That involved her family and four others reading all 76 books that had received the Caldecott Medal, an annual honor given by the American Library Association to an American illustrated book for children.



The task involved heavy lifting. After a branch librarian pulled all the books, each family took bags filled with about 15 and then — after all those volumes had been read — rotated that bag to the next family while picking up a new one.

Several parents, Moore said, enjoyed the upper-body workout.

Once the challenge was completed, her kids posted impressions of their favorite books on the Mid-Continent website's Homeschool Blog.



Jackson's favorite illustration in "The Invention of Hugo Cabret," he wrote, "was the picture of the giant train clock on the wall. If you look closely, you can see Hugo's eye peeking through the number five."

Katie liked "The Girl Who Loved Wild Horses," adding that her favorite picture "was at the end of the story where two horses were drawn into the sunset."

The Moores have no quarrel with traditional schools. Moore served for two years as a speech pathologist for Columbia (Mo.) Public Schools.

Home-schooling, she said, represented flexibility. Moore's husband, a clinical psychologist, sometimes stayed on the road for months, helping to lead training sessions at hospitals.

"He was going to be gone, and I would be working full-time with the kids in day care," Moore said. "I told him, 'Our children may never see their parents.' "

So they started home-schooling Katie and Jackson. She resolved to stick with it, including after her husband accepted an administrator's position at the Kansas City VA Medical Center.

There may be close to 2,000 home-schooling families across the Mid-Continent system, said Shari Ellison, youth services manager.

More than 1,700 home-schooled children and teenagers participated in the system's summer reading program last year. From July 2012 through April 30, the Mid-Continent system had offered close to 600 programs for about 5,000 home-schooled children.

The Moores have made a point of seeking out all 30 of the system's branches, traveling the Mid-Continent trail through Clay, Platte and Jackson counties, and signing up for programs in many of them.

"We don't put ourselves in the role of educators; it is the parents' job to do that," said Ellison. But parents, she said, routinely seek out books and other materials to supplement their own instruction.

The Mid-Continent system is one of five libraries being honored today. The system received six tickets to the White House event.

Four went to the Moore family.

"When we thought about their home-schooling experience, it made perfect sense," said Steve Potter, library director.

To Katie and Jackson, their trip to Washington this week represents one more of the several field trips they have taken to cities where their father has been assigned, sometimes for weeks at a time.

During their last visit to Washington, both admired the singing fish displayed at the Crystal City Metro subway gift shop in suburban Virginia, just across the Potomac River in the nation's capital. This week, they will be staying in the same nearby hotel.

For the record, Moore said, her children have visited many Washington cultural institutions, among them all the Smithsonian museums.

"But what they talk about is the singing fish," Moore said.

More information

The White House ceremony for the 2014 National Medal for Museum and Library Service is scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. today. It will be streamed at [WhiteHouse.gov/live](http://WhiteHouse.gov/live).

The Kansas City Public Library and the Johnson County Library also have won the National Medal, in 2008 and 2005, respectively. Both offer school children live access to tutors through their websites, [KCLibrary.org](http://KCLibrary.org) and [JocoLibrary.org](http://JocoLibrary.org).

*To reach Brian Burnes, call 816-234-4120 or send email to [bburnes@kcstar.com](mailto:bburnes@kcstar.com).*

# Library system honored at White House

By Brent Schondelmeyer  
Special to The Examiner

May 13, 2014

When but a young boy – now many years ago – many afternoons were spent at the family business.

My father was a veterinarian who opened a solo practice in the 1960s on Noland Road, taking care of all creatures great and small.

My father's patients and their owners often became our family friends. This is how I met James Leathers. His two salt-and-pepper Schnauzers were frequently left in our care as Leathers traveled for business. In due time, I learned he ran a library.

He loved his dogs.

And he dearly loved the library.

These memories were recently triggered by an event.

This past Thursday, First Lady Michelle Obama welcomed about 125 people “to the little museum that we like to call the White House” to recognize five libraries and five museums with a National Medal for extraordinary service to the nation.

One of those recognized in the East Wing ceremony was the Mid-Continent Public Library – the system that Leathers spent two decades building.

Many kind things were said.

Many photographs were taken.

Personal social media accounts lit up with posts and comments – mine included as I had the privilege to attend.

There were the thoughtful comments, crafted by a speechwriter, delivered by an articulate speaker who truly cares. It was impressive, evocative; an occasion not to forget.

But more touching to me were the many notes I read earlier in the week posted on the wall of the North Independence Branch.

The handwritten notes – from library patrons young and old – shared how “lives change @your library.”



*Alicia Moore, representing the community, and MCPL Library Director and CEO Steve Potter pose for photos with first lady Michelle Obama in accepting the National Medal for extraordinary service to the nation in a ceremony at the White House on May 8.*

Here are a few:

*“The library in Independence has been part of my life since I was 10. It introduced me to worlds beyond my own. Now I am 78 and have returned to Independence after being away for 55 years. The library is still an integral part of my life.”*

And this from a 7-year old.

*“(The) Library makes a better place because you can pick your own books.”*

And this perspective from an adult.

*“Through the years, libraries have offered me a chance to read as many books as I wish; watch and attend movies; research homework assignments; homeschool my children; attend lectures, workshops and entertainment; and learn new crafts. And all at no cost. It is a fantastic resource available to all regardless of means.”*

Across the 30-plus MCPL branches, others shared thoughts about their local library.

Leathers built the foundation of the major public library system – now one of the 25 largest in the United States – by consolidating libraries in Clay, Jackson, and Platte counties. It was a remarkable achievement.

This consolidated library system – officially created in 1965 – serves all who reside in a diverse mix of urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods covering 1,349 square miles – nearly as large as Rhode Island.

The library district serves 775,000 patrons – more than the entire populations of four states (Wyoming, Vermont, North Dakota and Alaska) and the District of Columbia.

The recognition was not for being big, but for being innovative and serving the community in unique ways.

MCPL has grown with its communities and with the times.

It serves small communities like Lone Jack and Buckner. It has strategically opened new service outlets in growing areas – check out Woodneath Library Center in Clay County – and it has established service in several community centers.

“The primary purpose of libraries in the 21st century is to build access through community and collaboration,” said Steven Potter, director and CEO of Mid-Continent Public Library, on whose board I serve.

MCPL was recognized for expanding learning opportunities for young children, responding to summer reading loss by students, supporting home school families with resources, connecting with community groups (veterans in particular), and providing significant information and resources.

The library’s expenditure on materials, as a percent of total budget, is the highest in the nation. Its investment in digital resources and new electronic formats – a service showing exponential growth – is also nationally recognized.

Libraries are vital, alive, and significant civic and cultural institutions for communities – what some consider “the people’s palace.”

Mid-Continent Public Library system next year turns 50 years old – an occasion for a fitting community celebration. Plans are in development. We want to celebrate our history, but focus on our future and what we can and need to be doing.

Receiving the National Medal, while truly thrilling, came with this challenge and frank assessment from the First Lady.

*“I want to challenge you to reach even higher for those kids in your communities who you might not see so often – the kids who only make it to your buildings on a class field trip, the kids who don’t know how to get a library card, the kids whose neighborhoods don’t offer a lot of positive learning environments.”*

*“And these kids exist in every single one of our communities. And I know many of you are already touching these kids, but it is up to us to reach higher for them and to give them the opportunities they need to fulfill their boundless potential.”*

And that is a challenge.

How do we create a local place or virtual space where all are welcomed, respected, served, and afforded an opportunity to access the world?

The Washington, D.C., trip was shared with the Moores – a family of four who chose Liberty when relocating to the area. They wanted to be near a great library to home school their two children, clever 11-year-old daughter Katie and intrepid 9-year-old Jackson.

The children watched anxiously with their father Michael as their mother Alicia (representing the community) joined Potter to receive the award in a ceremony broadcast live from the White House.

Earlier that morning I had asked Jackson about his mother’s role in impending events.

“We are about to go into the White House,” he said. “And my mom is going to get an award for the library, and we are going to take it back to Liberty to the library. And we are going to have a little snack and have a fun time in the White House.”

And we did.

But delivery of the award was entrusted to a reliable carrier rather an overhead airline bin.

It should arrive at the Independence headquarters this week. A staff member will sign the shipping receipt. We will accept the package and equally the responsibility and challenge to do more.

*Brent Schondelmeyer lives in Independence and currently serves as president of the Mid-Continent Public Library board.*

Wed, Apr. 30, 2014

## **Court agreement adds \$77 million to HCA obligations in Health Midwest deal**

By DIANE STAFFORD  
The Kansas City Star

Another \$77 million has been added to a previous \$162 million judgment against Hospital Corp. of America related to its 2003 purchase of the former Health Midwest hospitals in the Kansas City area.

HCA, in its \$1.13 billion purchase of Research Medical Center, Menorah Medical Center, Overland Park Regional Medical Center and other former Health Midwest institutions in the region, had promised to spend \$450 million above the purchase price on improvements to the hospitals.

The deal included capital spending obligations from 2003 to 2008 to upgrade the hospitals, which had been nonprofit entities. At the time, the deal was ranked as the nation's largest transfer of nonprofit hospital assets to a for-profit company.

In 2009 the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City sued HCA, alleging the corporation had failed to meet its obligations to spend the promised amounts.

A three-week, non-jury trial was held in 2011, and in January 2013, Jackson County Circuit Court Judge John Torrence ruled that HCA had fallen \$162 million short of its promised spending.

HCA had argued that it had spent more than required, given its \$343 million in new construction of Centerpoint and Lee's Summit medical centers. But the 2013 order ruled that HCA could take credit only for money spent to upgrade the existing facilities bought from Health Midwest.

The judge in 2013 also appointed a special master, a certified public accountant, to review accounting procedures to determine HCA's actual spending, saying financial records weren't clear.

That review determined that \$77 million should be added to the HCA shortfall, bringing the total to \$239 million. On Tuesday, lawyers representing HCA and the foundation agreed on the total shortfall in a stipulation signed by the lawyers and Torrence.

According to the stipulation, HCA and other parties to the lawsuit maintain the right to appeal. None of the shortfall amount has been paid. Meanwhile, the shortfall amount is accruing interest at 9 percent a year, according to the agreement.

Tom Kokoruda, one of three attorneys at Polsinelli on a team representing HCA, referred questions to HCA, which said the stipulation doesn't change the company's position that it "met and exceeded" its obligations to the Kansas City area.

The parties "have agreed, for purposes of this stage of the litigation, that there has been a shortfall, based on criteria established in a Kansas City judge's ruling last year. We intend to

appeal that ruling,” said a statement provided by Ashlee Peterson, vice president of marketing and public relations for HCA MidAmerica Division.

Paul Seyferth, one of four attorneys at Seyferth, Blumenthal & Harris who represented the health care foundation, said the stipulation “speaks for itself.”

The health care foundation pursued the case as one of two nonprofit foundations created to receive the proceeds from the HCA sale because the former Health Midwest hospitals were nonprofit institutions. The Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City was created on the Missouri side of the state line, and the Reach Healthcare Foundation was set up on the Kansas side.

The foundations use the money from the sale to make grants to health and social service nonprofits in the metropolitan area that provide “safety net” services to uninsured and underinsured people.

The Reach foundation did not participate in the litigation.

The 2003 sale also involved an HCA commitment to provide at least \$65.3 million a year in uncompensated charity care. Litigation on the question of a shortfall in charity care spending is set for court consideration in July.

In his ruling last year, Torrence said it was impossible to tell whether the charitable commitments had been met.

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# 2014 Summer Programs

District	Location	Before & After Summer School	All Day Summer Camp	
Center	Boone Elem.	X		
Fort Osage	Blue Hills Elem.		X	
Grandview	Butcher-Greene Elem.	X		
Hickman Mills	Truman Elem.		X	
	Burke Elem.	X		
	Ingels Elem.			
	Santa Fe Elem.			
	Symington Elem.			
Kansas City, Mo.	Gladstone Elem.	X		
	Paige Elem.			
	ACCPA		X	
	Attucks Elem.			
	Border Star Montessori			
	Garfield Elem.			
	Holliday Montessori			
	Melcher Elem.			
	Pitcher Elem.			
	Trailwoods Elem.			
North Kansas City	Topping Elem.	X		X
Charter	Tolbert Academy	X		

