

LINC Commission Meeting

February 16, 2016



We all smile in the same language.

ပဝဲကိးဂပနံကမ့်လာကို်တကို်ဃီလီ

Language
Karen

Ten families from Woodland Early Learning Community School had their photos taken for a display featuring the cultures, languages and diversity of their community.

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.



Tuesday, Feb. 16, 2016 | 4 – 6 pm
Kauffman Foundation
4801 Rockhill Rd.
Kansas City, Mo. 64110

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Announcements
- II. Approvals
 - a. **January minutes (motion)**
- III. Superintendent's Report
- IV. **LINC Commission Appointment (motion)**
- V. Kansas City Digital Developments (Update)
 - a. Aaron Deacon
- VI. Educational Policy Fellowship Program
 - a. Dr. Bob Bartman
- VII. LINC Data Developments
 - a. Oscar Tshibanda
- VIII. Update Reports
 - a. Summer Food (SEBT)
 - b. Free Community Tax Preparation
 - c. LINC and the Arts
 - d. We All Smile in the Same Language
- IX. Adjournment



THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – JAN. 25, 2016

The Local Investment Commission met at the Kauffman Foundation, 4801 Rockhill Rd., Kansas City, Mo. Co-chair **Bailus Tate** presided. Commissioners attending were:

Bert Berkley
Sharon Cheers
Jack Craft
Steve Dunn
Herb Freeman
Tom Gerke
Rob Givens
Anita Gorman

Tom Lewin
Rosemary Lowe
Mary Kay McPhee
Richard Morris
David Rock
David Ross
Marge Williams

A motion to approve the minutes of the Nov. 16, 2015, LINC Commission meetings was approved unanimously.

“LINC in Photos 2015,” a review of the year’s activities, was shown.

Deputy Director-Operations **Robin Gierer** presented a tribute to Landon Rowland, who died Dec. 28, including video excerpts of two of Rowland’s speeches: one to LINC site coordinators at Penn Valley Community College and one at LINC’s 20th anniversary celebration at Princess Gardens. Rowland will be honored this spring by first-graders at Gladstone Elementary who learned about him for this year’s Hero Project. Commissioners will be invited. **Sharon Cheers** shared sympathy cards for attendees to sign.

Tate introduced **Mark Flaherty**, general counsel to the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City, who reported on a lawsuit brought by HCF against HCA alleging that the latter has not fulfilled its promises regarding investments in hospitals and charity care since it purchased Health Midwest in 2003. In December 2015, a Jackson County Circuit Court judge issued a ruling saying HCA owed HCF \$434 million. LINC was involved in engaging the community in issues around the sale. Discussion followed.

Tate presented two names for approval to become LINC Commissioners.

A motion to approve the appointment of Frank White Jr. and Gary Stangler to the LINC Commission was approved unanimously.

Superintendents’ Report

- **John Ruddy** (Asst. Supt., Fort Osage School District) reported Indian Trails Elementary School will be the first school in the Midwest to begin using the Google Expeditions virtual reality platform, which will allow teachers to take their classes on immersive virtual journeys to places students couldn’t go in real life. Fort Osage High School won the state football title.
- **Ralph Teran** (Supt., Grandview School District) reported this week is School Board Member Appreciation Week and encouraged everyone to thank school board members.
- **Dennis Carpenter** (Supt., Hickman Mills School District) reported voters will be asked to approve a no tax-increase bond issue of \$19 million for classroom, athletic and other

enhancements in April. The district will relocate the STEAM program, currently at Burke Elementary, to Baptiste Educational Center. The district recently introduced the OK program, which partners with the Kansas City Police Department and the faith-based community to help black males 12 to 18 years old develop leadership and critical thinking skills.

- **Dred Scott** (Asst. Supt., Independence School District) reported the district is preparing for spring MAP tests and the school improvement mid-year review. Scott introduced Merideth Parrish, the districts' new Family Services director.
- **Allan Tunis** (Interim Supt., Kansas City Public Schools) reported the KCPS board has selected Dr. Mark Bedel to be the permanent superintendent. The district is introducing its master plan to provide additional resources to students, improve transportation, and close two schools. \$4 million in tax credits were approved for the redevelopment of vacant district schools.
- **Dan Clemens** (Asst. Supt., North Kansas City School District) reported the district expects 250 additional students next year. The district is collaborating with the city of Gladstone to house gifted students in one building. Crestview Elementary, which was converted to a year-round school last year, was found to be the highest performing school in the district.
- **Kevin Foster** (Executive Director, Genesis Promise Academy) reported on the first graduating class of the Parents Raising Safe Kids program in partnership with Children's Mercy Hospital. Genesis and other school districts will discuss the problem of student churn and how to retain students this Friday at the Lean Lab.
- **Bob Bartman** (Director, Education Policy Fellowship Program) reported the recent EPFP session focused on diversity and inclusion.

Steve Dunn reported the construction industry is facing a shortage of applicants for well-paid skilled labor positions; there is a need to develop effective ways to engage in vo-tech programs students who are not going to college; he recommended that LINC organize the community around the issue. Discussion followed.

Tate reported LINC has produced and distributed to the community its annual Black History posters and booklets. This year's materials highlight area African-American entrepreneurs.

LINC staff **Andrew Weisberg** reported LINC will again be involved in the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer for Children program in 2016. Through the partnership LINC has helped provide \$2.2 million in benefits for children in the Hickman Mills, Center and Kansas City school districts over the past five years.

The meeting was adjourned.

GC-4 School Board Selects District's Next Superintendent

The Grandview C-4 Board of Education has selected Mr. Kenny Rodriquez as the next Superintendent of the school district.

The school board voted unanimously to approve a three year contract that will start July 1 of this school year.

“We are pleased to have Mr. Rodriquez accept our offer of Superintendent. His leadership skills and ability to motivate is something we admire. He has an extensive background in districts with diverse populations and his passion for our district shows,” said Wayne Terpstra, BOE President.



Mr. Rodriquez is currently the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction for the Grandview C-4 School District. He has held the position for nearly two years. Previously, he was the Director of Secondary Schools for the Kansas City Public School District.

NKC Schools Selects Dr. Dan Clemens as New Superintendent

Clemens will begin new position July 1, 2016

The North Kansas City Schools Board of Education announces the appointment of Dr. Dan Clemens as superintendent. The selection was made at the Board's February 9 meeting after a nationwide search that began in the fall of 2015. Dr. Clemens will begin leading the district on July 1, 2016. Dr. Paul Kinder, interim superintendent will remain at the helm until that time.

"The NKCS Board of Education is excited to engage Dr. Clemens as our next superintendent. Our board was diligent in its work to find the best candidate for the job and we feel Dr. Clemens is the right person to continue the upward trajectory of academic success our school system has worked so hard to achieve," said Joe Jacobs, president of the NKCS Board of Education.

NKC Schools is the largest school district on the Missouri side of the Kansas City metropolitan area and the fourth largest in the state of Missouri. The district, which celebrated its centennial in 2013, is known for innovation in teaching and as a leader in the use of instructional technology. With 32 educational sites in its system, NKCS offers the only International Baccalaureate program in Kansas City's Northland, is a founding member of the Northland Center for Advanced Professional Studies (NCAPS) and is in the process of partnering with the City of Gladstone on the Northland Innovation Campus.

"I am honored to be chosen as the superintendent for NKCS. I look forward to working with the Board of Education, staff, students, parents and the community-at-large as we continue to excel in academics, improve our ACT scores, find the resources necessary to accommodate the growth in student population and make our community proud," said Dr. Clemens.

Dr. Clemens was an internal candidate for the position, currently serving NKCS as the Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services. He began his career in the St. Joseph School District before coming to NKCS as principal at Nashua Elementary, Crestview Elementary and Eastgate Middle School. Dr. Clemens was the 2009-10 Missouri Middle School Principal of the Year while at Eastgate. He serves on the board of Northland Neighborhoods, Inc., chairing its Legislative Affairs Committee, and is a member of Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City, the Northland Regional Chamber of Commerce and other civic organizations. He and his family reside in Kansas City's Northland.

The Kansas City Star – Feb. 11, 2016

Kansas City Public Schools officials offer master plan for district

Wendell Phillips, AC Prep schools will see big changes

Realignment plan has been in the making for two years

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

If there were a theme to the master plan that Kansas City Public Schools officials rolled out Wednesday night, it might be school within a school.

Among other things, the plan calls for moving the students, teachers and administrators who make up Wendell Phillips Elementary School into the building that is Crispus Attucks Elementary, a school that district officials for now are calling Phillips at Attucks.

The Phillips building would become a district-sponsored charter school — Kansas City Neighborhood Academy — backed by the Urban Neighborhood Initiative and the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce.

Also, the district's budget-neutral plan calls for the African-Centered Preparatory Academy, at 3500 E. Meyer Blvd., to function as a comprehensive neighborhood school.

Most of the 350 students currently at Southwest Early College Campus high school, which the district is closing, would move into the AC Prep building, formerly Southeast High School. Other Southwest students would move into Central, East or Northeast high schools. The AC Prep building would no longer bear that name.

But to save the African-centered education concept, district officials have decided to put the African-Centered Preparatory Academy on one floor of the neighborhood high school starting in the fall of 2016.

Students from an African-centered K-8 school, which is on that same campus, would feed into the single-floor African-Centered Academy.

This plan would allow students attending the African-Centered Academy to be a part of extracurricular activities such as athletics and clubs at the neighborhood school, said Vickie Murillo, chief academic and accountability officer. "We have a lot of parents and students who like that concept," Murillo said, explaining that small enrollment has meant extracurricular activities weren't feasible at the African-centered high school.

Board members peppered district officials with questions about putting one high school inside another. “It is like you were the owner of the house and now are being relocated to a room of the house,” board member Amy Hartsfield told district administrators.

The plan also would:

- Close Southwest Early College Campus and Satchel Paige Elementary School.
- Reconfigure school attendance boundaries.
- Reduce the distances students walk to school.
- Reduce the numbers of students per classroom phased in over two years.
- Implement college and career pathways for high schools.
- Phase in, over two years, year-round school for four of the lowest-performing elementary schools starting with Benjamin Banneker Elementary in June 2017.

But it was the fate of Wendell Phillips, at 1619 E. 24th Terrace, that seemed to have many parents in attendance upset. Phillips which gets a lot of support from community volunteers as tutors and mentors for students, is one of the district’s highest-performing schools.

“The worse part about this plan is that you just can’t transfer a culture like they have at Wendell Phillips,” said Gene Timmons, a Presbyterian minister whose wife volunteers at Phillips. “It has been honed over years. I can’t even imagine how you redevelop that.”

Lisa Barner, a parent of a first-grader at Phillips, said the district’s plan “makes no sense. ... Why would you break up something that doesn’t need fixing? There are plenty of things in the Kansas City school district that need fixing, but Wendell Phillips is not one of them.”

The district has been working on a master plan for its schools for more than two years with the objective of “developing stronger schools, stronger communities and successful students,” said Al Tunis, interim superintendent.

Since November, district officials have held 116 meetings with students, parents and community leaders to come up with the plan presented to the board Wednesday night.

The recommendations, including the proposed closures, consolidations and attendance boundary changes, will affect about 15 percent of the 14,000 students currently in the district. Boundary changes will affect 16 elementary schools, two middle schools and three high schools.

The school board will vote on the plan Feb. 24.

The Kansas City Star – Feb. 4, 2015

KC residents get first free Google Fiber under federal ConnectHome program

U.S. Housing Secretary Julian Castro announces the service at the West Bluff apartments

Program will add four more KC Housing Authority complexes soon and spread to 28 cities in all

Several KC agencies are collaborating to add computers and training to access the program

By Greg Hack - ghack@kcstar.com

A big national effort to narrow the digital divide took its first small step Wednesday in Kansas City.

U.S. Housing Secretary Julian Castro, at the West Bluff housing complex, announced that the 100 apartments there now have superfast Internet connections at no charge to residents.

They are the first of 1,300 area families in subsidized housing, and 275,000 nationwide, who will get free or reduced-cost access under the federal ConnectHome program.

“For far too many low-income families, and especially for low-income children, connecting to the Web remains just an aspiration,” he said at the announcement. “We’re helping to change that through ConnectHome.”

“We want to give every family in America access,” Castro said in an interview before the announcement.

The superfast gigabit service at West Bluff, courtesy of Google Fiber, offers residents a chance for the Internet benefits that most Americans take for granted. A coalition of local agencies and other businesses also is on board with ConnectHome to help residents get technology training and access to low-cost personal computers and other hardware.

For West Bluff resident Shaunte Mack, that will mean reliable Internet access for one of her sons as he does his high school homework. Her three preschool-age grandchildren will be able to use online games and lessons to practice their ABCs and other skills to be ready for kindergarten. And she will have a much easier way to find the work-at-home jobs she uses to support her family.

“I have access on my cellphone now, but I don’t know how to use the Internet fully,” she said. “I’m excited to learn and be able to do more.”

Another resident, Tamara Butler, addressed the group assembled for Castro’s and Google Fiber’s announcement. She said he was “so excited about having Google Fiber in my home,” especially for her son, Willie, and throughout the complex for the other children there. “If you can’t afford that in your home, kids can’t get the education that they need.”

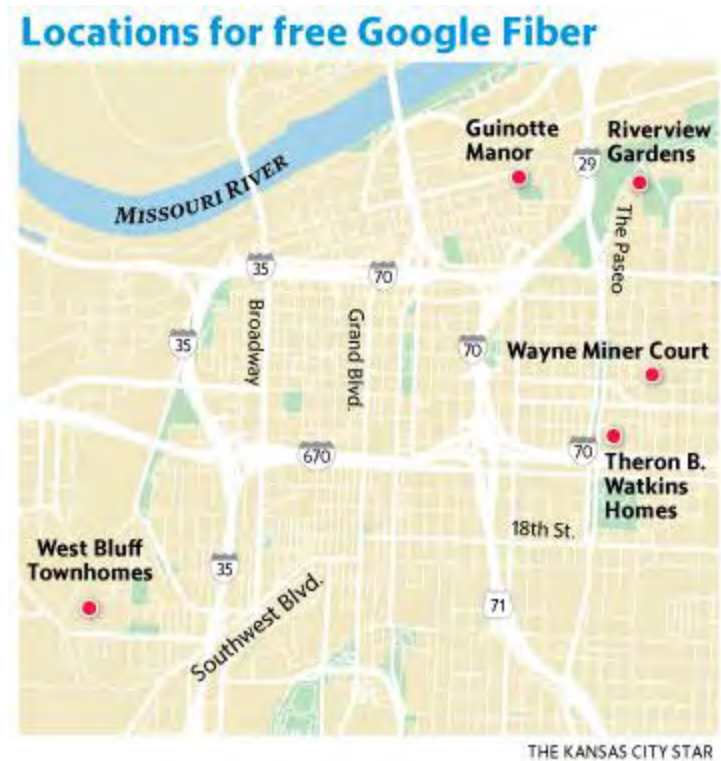
Butler and Mack also are part of the program’s Connected Neighbors, a group of residents who have agreed to talk about the free Internet access and promote it with their neighbors.

Another Connected Neighbor is Eugene Stegall Bey, who opens West Bluff’s community space most mornings for a program that provides juice and snacks and a safe place for children to wait for their school bus. As part of ConnectHome, a computer lab with eight PCs will be added to that space — a prospect that has Bey “very excited.”

“Excited” and “proud” seemed to be the words of the day for everyone involved and on hand for the celebration marking the start of service — excited for the residents, and proud of the people, agencies and businesses who worked together to make Kansas City the first community to make ConnectHome a reality.

“We’re so proud that we’re beginning this work in Kansas City,” said Erica Swanson, Google Fiber’s head of community impact programs. “We’re committed to bringing our very best service to the people who need it the most.

“And we’re proud of all our important partners, who are helping to make sure that residents are able to purchase discounted computers, have access to digital literacy classes, and are partnering with us in the outreach. We



can bring the connectivity, but we know residents need to have an affordable device and know how to use it.”

HUD Secretary Julián Castro is correct: Taking steps like the federal government and Google Fiber did on Wednesday should help low-income families in Kansas City get cheaper access to in-home Internet service.

The ConnectHome program, announced last July by Castro shortly after he took over at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, aims to bring affordable Internet access to public housing residents in 27 cities and the Choctaw Nation in Oklahoma. Those areas were chosen in part because they showed they would make the most of the program.

The Kansas City metro area, besides being the first to get Google Fiber’s superfast Internet service, has been in the vanguard of trying to get Internet service for low-income residents. The nonprofit Connect for Good program started in 2011, and its co-founder and first leader, Michael Liimatta, was chosen to be the manager of ConnectHome nationally.

His successor as executive director of Connect for Good, Tom Esselman, said the effort to launch ConnectHome in Kansas City had been “completely collaborative” and challenged dozens of area agencies and businesses “to put our best foot forward. And everyone did, with the one goal of figuring out how to make sure the residents are getting the most holistic benefits possible.”

“It’s too big of a problem for any one organization, and very few other cities at this stage are able to have the coordinated effort Kansas City has.”

At the Surplus Exchange, which helped round up the computers for West Bluff’s new lab, executive director Bob Akers said, “We’re so happy to be involved, to be in the middle of this by providing the gear.”

Residents of subsidized housing, he said, can get a complete PC with operating system software for \$55. Area businesses and government agencies upgrading their equipment had been great about sending their used PCs, Akers said, which his nonprofit agency wipes clean and refurbishes.

He said the ConnectHome effort also had brought agencies together and promised much more than Internet access. Part of that will be classes at the housing complexes, and other training and troubleshooting on regular visits by staff from Google Fiber, his agency and others.

“We’ve also been working with the Full Employment Council to find kids and bring them to Surplus Exchange for internships and training,” he said.

“And we want to ‘graduate’ some of them through to community college or other more advanced training, so they can be the IT staff eventually” at their communities.

“We’re so stoked about the whole effort and program.”

At the Housing Authority of Kansas City, executive director Edwin Lowndes also praised “the fantastic partnership that we’ve put together” and saw great things ahead.

“This is the beginning of what we can do to help the families that we serve know they are part of a total community,” he said. “Agencies, the private sector and government are all coming together to say we want to make sure that you and your children have the tools to succeed.”

In the next six months, the plan is for Google Fiber to connect residents of four more housing complexes under Lowndes’ agency: Guinotte Manor, Wayne Miner Court, Riverview Gardens and Theron B. Watkins Homes.

Across the state line, Google and the Kansas City, Kan., Housing Authority are working on which complexes will be getting the service.

Google Fiber said it will offer the same service eventually to public housing residents in all its cities. That currently means Provo, Utah, and Austin, Texas, besides the Kansas City area. Google Fiber also is coming to Salt Lake City, San Antonio, Nashville, Atlanta and Charlotte and Raleigh-Durham, N.C. And it’s scouting several other cities.

In the other ConnectHome cities, other Internet services will provide free or reduced-cost access. An estimated 75 percent of Americans whose annual household income is under \$30,000 have Internet connections, compared with 98 percent of those with annual incomes above \$75,000.

“The Internet is no longer a luxury, but something everyone needs to succeed,” Castro said. And with a year left in the Obama administration, “there’s an urgency to accomplish things that make life better for all Americans.”

“Our goal is to get communities hooked up to the Internet as thoughtfully and quickly as we can under ConnectHome,” he said. “We’re delighted to have the program on the ground and going in Kansas City.”

The Kansas City Star – Feb. 4, 2015

Google Fiber rollout put spotlight on KC's vision to provide access for all

Federal program ConnectHome will bring free or reduced cost Internet service to public housing

In initial Google Fiber rollout, the term digital divide became associated with Kansas City's racial divide

Now, our innovation to bridge digital divide is helping lead federal program

By Mary Sanchez - msanchez@kcstar.com

This is how Kansas City diligence went national.

Our targeted perseverance brought U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development [Julián Castro to the city](#) Wednesday.

Castro rolled out a federal initiative, providing free or reduced-cost Internet service to public housing residents. Kansas City is the program's first city, in collaboration with [Google Fiber](#).

A household's lack of Internet access is a modern civil rights issue. It's yet another way that poorer children are isolated from opportunity, trapped by the circumstances they were born into. Their parents can't email teachers, read grades online. Students might have access to a laptop through their school district, but with no Internet at home, studying too often stops when the school day ends.

No more for the residents of West Bluff. And within the next few months, residents of Guinotte Manor, Wayne Miner Court, Riverview Gardens and Theron B. Watkins Homes will receive the same offer. Eventually, public housing residents in 27 cities and the Choctaw Nation in Oklahoma will benefit from the federal program dubbed [ConnectHome](#).

The irony is this happy day is largely the result of how the initial Google Fiber rollout in Kansas City spotlighted the digital divide.

It all traces back to 2011, when Google Fiber announced that the two Kansas Cities would be first in the nation to have access to its ultrahigh-speed fiber.

Google Fiber established some of the first metrics on local Internet access: A quarter of homes in the two cities didn't have access.

That's a devastating statistic for children in those homes. And for their parents, considering that so many job applications are taken online. It's why there are lines and signup sheets to use the computers at public libraries. And why children without Internet access at home will sit in fast-food restaurants, using the access there to finish school work on their cellphones.

In the initial rollout, signups were managed around what Google called fiberhoods, neighborhoods basically. When enough people in a designated area or fiberhood enrolled, that whole area would be wired with the new service. It was partly a marketing decision, a way to roll out the new service with a limited-time expiration date, hoping to drive signups.

The prize was that with enough signups, Google would wire for free nearby schools, libraries, community centers and other public entities.

For middle- to upper-income Kansas City neighborhoods, the deals were sealed quickly. Google was offering the newest, latest thing. Cost wasn't a deterrent.

But for lower-income areas, homes where there wasn't already an Internet connection, the signups were far more sluggish. The number of vacant homes in some areas was a huge barrier, stalling the process.

Soon, the term digital divide became associated with Kansas City's racial divide. Neighborhoods east of Troost Avenue risked not getting the free service for their schools and libraries.

Google also discovered that it wasn't just cost, but a lack of familiarity with the value of the Internet that affected signups in lower-income areas.

So Kansas City reacted. The effort to enroll lower-income neighborhoods before the deadline worked like a well-oiled political campaign. Schools and teachers became heavily involved.

Volunteers went door-to-door, explaining the benefits of the service. People anonymously donated money to cover the then \$10 pre-registration fee. And on the final day for signups, volunteers huddled in a downtown office, robocalling people to urge signups.

One of the programs that grew out of that period was Kansas City's [Connecting for Good](#), a nonprofit begun in 2011. What the organization has been able to accomplish for lower-income neighborhoods is remarkable.

In one feat, they bought bandwidth wholesale and rigged up wi-fi hotspots around the Rosedale Ridge, a low-income housing complex in Kansas City, Kan. They provided residents there with digital literacy lessons and access

to refurbished computers. People eagerly accepted the help, excited for the possibilities.

Connecting for Good has bounced around town at several locations, but last fall settled into the newly renovated Linwood Presbyterian complex, located near the intersection of Linwood Boulevard and U.S. 71. There, the organization offers a public access computer lab and learning center.

The organization's core beliefs include "connectivity equals opportunity" and "education is the number one thing that lifts people from poverty."

No surprise that people noticed the work. A co-founder of Connecting for Good, Michael Liimatta, was chosen to lead the federal ConnectHome effort.

On Wednesday, Castro jokingly admitted that HUD had "poached" the Kansas City visionary. You're welcome, happy to help.

The Kansas City Star – Feb. 4, 2015

Kansas City takes the lead in closing the digital divide

HUD Secretary Julián Castro praises collaboration

Google Fiber provides free high-speed Internet service to public housing residents

On-site training, low-cost computer systems available to families

The Editorial Board

The digital divide separating low-income families from in-home Internet service got a little narrower Wednesday in Kansas City as [100 apartments in the West Bluff housing complex](#) began to connect to the high-speed Google Fiber network.

It's part of the Obama administration's [ConnectHome](#) initiative launched in July to give public housing residents free Internet access in 27 cities and the Choctaw Nation in Oklahoma.



Years of collaborative efforts in Kansas City to close the digital divide gave the city a leg up to join this demonstration project from the outset. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is partnering with Internet

service providers, nonprofits and private organizations to give families broadband access, training and computers.

“It’s fair to say this is a grand slam,” HUD Secretary Julián Castro told The Star’s editorial board. The private sector is picking up the majority of the cost.

[Dennis Kish](#), Google Fiber vice president, said the free connection will be indefinite for these public housing residents, adding that it was a worthwhile investment in people and in this community.

West Bluff has about 260 residents, more than half of them children. It is the first of five Housing Authority of Kansas City communities with a total of 1,800 residents to be connected over the next few months.

In addition to HUD and Google Fiber, the [Connecting for Good](#) organization will provide on-site Internet training for West Bluff residents. Through [Surplus Exchange](#), an equipment recycler, families can buy a refurbished personal computer for \$55.

Internet access no longer is a luxury. Having the ability to access the Internet in today’s society is as essential as the telephone has been for years, said Edwin Lowndes, executive director of the Housing Authority.

It’s how students complete schoolwork and apply for college. It’s how adults apply for jobs, health care and just about everything else.

Internet access is a way out of poverty, yet fewer than half of the poorest families in the U.S. have an Internet connection at home, and 70 percent of the students in Kansas City Public Schools lack that service.

A Digital Inclusion Summit in 2014 brought many groups together in Kansas City to attack the problem. Another will do the same in May, where successes can be counted and new challenges confronted.



A White House Conversation on Child Hunger in America **Wednesday, January 27, 2016**

1:00 PM Opening Remarks

Secretary Thomas Vilsack, U.S. Department of Agriculture

1:20 PM Panel: Research Evidence on Child Hunger in America and the Role of SNAP

- *Moderator:* Dr. Shiriki Kumanyika, Emeritus Professor of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine
- Dr. Hilary Hoynes, Professor of Public Policy and Economics, Haas Distinguished Chair in Economic Disparities, Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California Berkeley
- Dr. Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, Faculty Fellow, Institute for Policy Research; Associate Professor, Human Development and Social Policy, Northwestern University School of Education and Social Policy
- Dr. Adam Drewnowski, Professor of Epidemiology, Director, Nutritional Sciences Program, School of Public Health, University of Washington
- Dr. Hilary Seligman, Associate Professor, University of California San Francisco School of Medicine; Lead Scientist and Senior Medical Advisor, Feeding America
- Dr. Parke Wilde, Associate Professor, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University

2:45 PM Break

3:00 PM Panel: Practitioner and Beneficiary Perspectives on SNAP, Hunger, and Children's Life Outcomes

- *Moderator:* Representative Jim McGovern (MA)
- Dr. Sandra Hassink, Immediate Past President of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Dawn Pierce, former SNAP recipient, Boise, ID
- Clint Mitchell, Principal, Bel Air Elementary School, Prince William County, VA
- Carlos Rodriguez, Executive Director, Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, Neptune, NJ
- Les Johnson, Vice President of Grant Management Services, Area Resources for Community and Human Services, St. Louis, MO

4:15 PM Closing remarks

Cecilia Muñoz, Assistant to the President and Director of Domestic Policy Council



FY17 Summer EBT Proposal Fact Sheet

Ensuring adequate food for children through Summer EBT

The President's FY 2017 Budget seeks to ensure all children have consistent and adequate access to nutritious food year round by proposing a permanent, nationwide expansion of the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children (Summer EBT) program. This program will provide families with children eligible for free and reduced price school meals access to additional food benefits during the summer.

Background

Combating Food Insecurity

Children need consistent access to nutritious meals to support their physical health, and their social, emotional, and cognitive development. Child nutrition programs can improve the lives of children at risk of food insecurity by meeting their immediate nutrition needs and providing them the nourishment they need to learn and grow over the long term. Unfortunately, food insecurity remains a persistent problem during the summer months when school is out of session and many children are not receiving school meals. The Summer EBT program helps bridge the gap between the end of one school year and the beginning of the next.

Summer Food Gap and Summer EBT Pilots

Since its inception, the National School Lunch Program has been a consistent source of nutritious food for America's school children, giving them the energy they need to focus on their studies and alleviating the stress of worrying about getting enough to eat during the school day. During the academic year, free and reduced price school meals help ensure nearly 22 million low-income children have consistent access to nutritious food. However, only a fraction of those children receive meals during the summer months, leaving a wide gap between the number of children at risk of food insecurity and the number of children who receive meals. As a result, low-income children are at higher risk of food insecurity and poor nutrition during the months when school is out of session.

Since summer 2011, USDA has supported a demonstration project to test the impact of providing low-income households with children with additional resources to buy food during the summer months when their children do not have access to school-based meal programs. Rigorous evaluations of these USDA pilots have found that providing additional food benefits on debit cards to low-income families with school-aged children during the summer months can significantly reduce food insecurity and improve nutrition. Specifically, the pilots prevented very low food security among children, the most severe form of food insecurity, by one third. This means that one-third of the children who would have otherwise experienced food insecurity did not. Studies also showed that these additional resources enabled families to eat significantly more fruits and vegetables and whole grains – key building blocks to better health. For more information about the demonstration projects please see:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/ops/summer-electronic-benefit-transfer-children-sebtc>

Nationwide Summer EBT

The President's FY 2017 Budget builds on these efforts and strong evidence, investing \$12 billion over 10 years to stand up a permanent, universal Summer EBT program.

Under the President's proposal:

- School-aged children eligible for free and reduced price meals through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) would be eligible to receive Summer EBT benefits. Households with eligible children would receive a \$45 monthly benefit per child during the summer months, which could be redeemed for food purchases at grocery stores. The monthly benefit would be annually adjusted for inflation going forward.
- Almost one million low-income children would receive Summer EBT benefits in the summer of 2017, increasing to nearly 20 million children when all States begin offering the program by 2026. Summer EBT would be phased in over ten years with approximately 10 percent of States participating in 2017, a quarter of States participating by 2021, and all States participating by 2026. Summer EBT would supplement continued efforts to expand access to traditional summer meal programs through intensive technical assistance to targeted States.

Program impact

Nationwide expansion of Summer EBT would result in hundreds of thousands of children being spared from food insecurity over the next decade. It is expected to most benefit low-income children in populations that have difficulty accessing existing summer meal programs and that have historically shown low participation in summer meals. This includes children who are particularly at risk of hunger in the summer months due to living in rural and tribal areas, communities in which transportation options are limited, and communities that face barriers to access due to parental concern about crime or adverse weather during the summer months.

Nutritious meals provide children with the fuel they need to learn and grow today, which can increase their academic achievement and improve their lives over the course of a lifetime. Summer EBT is an investment in our future that will support children in reaching their full potential.

SEBTC Project Summary 2011 - 2015

Kansas City SNAP Hybrid Model

\$2,174,347

Total Program Funds Redeemed

2011

\$346,161

90%
funds redeemed

2012

\$831,646

92%
funds redeemed

2013

\$569,679

92%
funds redeemed

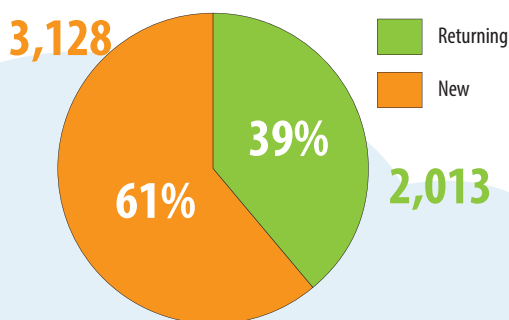
2015

\$426,861

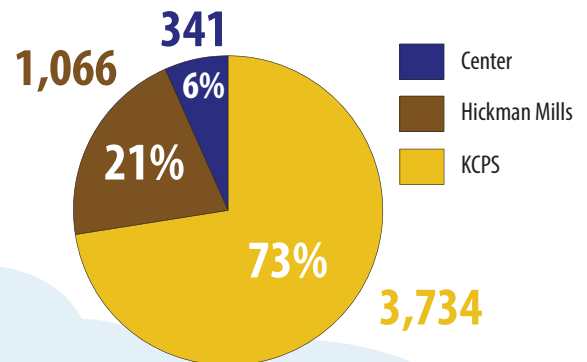
93%
funds redeemed

* There was no SEBTC program in 2014

Participants in 2015



Participants per District in 2015



Total Children Served 2011-2013

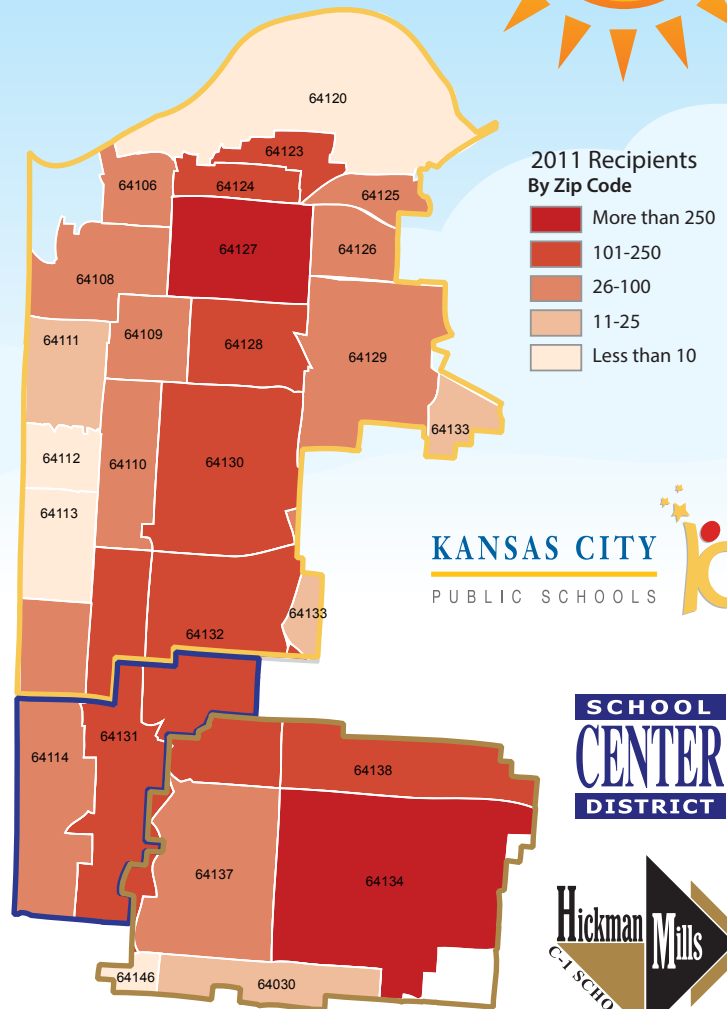
6,145



1,779 for 1 summer
2,973 for 2 summers
1,393 for 3 summers

Selected for SEBTC Benefits

	Households	Children
2011	1,477	2,538
2012	3,041	5,364
2013	2,262	4,001
2015	3,468	5,141



2011-12

2012-13

Combined District Enrollment

25,247 **26,267**

Free/Reduced Lunch

85% **84%**



The White House

[Office of the Press Secretary](#)

For Immediate Release

January 27, 2016

FACT SHEET: Obama Administration Announces Major Investments in Preventing Child Hunger

Today, the White House will host a conversation about child hunger in America, with experts and direct service providers discussing how hunger continues to harm children across the country. Participants will discuss the role of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other core nutrition programs in ensuring American children have the fuel they need to thrive. The conversation will include SNAP recipients, academics, direct service providers, advocates, faith leaders, and federal, state, and local officials and will focus on the critical role of SNAP in reducing food insecurity and poverty, and the high-cost consequences when benefits are not enough to sustain a family to the end of the month. The agenda for today's event is available [HERE](#).

The Obama Administration is dedicated to ensuring American children and families have the support they need to build a better future, especially when weathering life's ups and downs, such as loss of a job, illness, or work that pays less than a livable wage. SNAP and other nutrition programs, like school meals, make a real and measurable difference in the lives of children and their families and provide a stronger future for the entire country. Building on its commitment to expanding access to opportunity for all, today the Obama Administration will announce additional actions to ensure American children have the food they need to grow, learn, and succeed.

NEW FEDERAL ACTIONS

Ensuring all low-income children have year-round access to the food they need to learn and grow.

The President's FY2017 Budget will invest \$12 billion over ten years to reduce child hunger during the summer through a permanent [Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children \(Summer EBT\) program](#) to provide supplemental food benefits during the summer months for all families with children eligible for free and reduced price school meals. During the academic year, school meals help ensure consistent and adequate access to nutritious food for the nearly 22 million low-income children who receive free and reduced price school meals. However, only a fraction of these children receive free and reduced price meals when school is out of session. As a result, low-income children are at higher risk of food insecurity and poor nutrition during the summer. Summer

EBT, which provides benefits on an electronic debit card that can only be used for food at the grocery store, fills the food budget gap in the summer; rigorous evaluations of USDA pilots of Summer EBT programs have found that they can significantly reduce food insecurity among children and improve their diet.

Allowing States to use Medicaid data to automatically link low-income children to school meals.

USDA will announce a new initiative to increase access to school meals for low-income children through a project that will allow interested State agencies that administer the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to use Medicaid data to certify students for free and reduced priced lunches. This will link eligible children to nutritious school meals with less paperwork for the State, schools and families alike. Interested states are invited to submit applications and USDA expects to approve approximately five States to begin the demonstrations during the upcoming school year (2016-2017), with additional states implementing the pilot in the subsequent years. USDA is committed to helping 20 States take up this pilot and begin implementing direct certification using Medicaid data over the next three school years.

BUILDING ON RESEARCH DEMONSTRATING SNAP'S CRITICAL ROLE IN HELPING CHILDREN SUCCEED

In 2014, nearly one in seven American households experienced food insecurity, meaning that one or more household members did not have a consistent source of adequate nutritious food. Moreover, 40 percent of all food-insecure households—and nearly 6 percent of US households overall—were considered to have very low food security. This means that, in nearly seven million households, at least one person in the household missed meals and experienced disruptions in food intake due to insufficient resources for food.

[A report released last month](#) by the White House Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) found that SNAP, the largest federal food and nutrition program, plays an essential role in reducing poverty and food insecurity, and significantly improves the health and wellbeing of low-income families. In 2014 SNAP lifted at least 4.7 million Americans out of poverty, including 2.1 million children, and today helps families across the nation to put food on the table while they work to improve their economic situation. Research shows that among households who receive SNAP, food insecurity rates are up to 30 percent lower than they otherwise would be. But in spite of SNAP's success, hunger remains a stubborn problem, in part because for many benefits are inadequate to provide enough healthful food to children and families living on a tight budget.

New research cited in the CEA report has linked diminished food budgets at the end of each month to significant consequences, including:

- A drop-off in caloric intake among SNAP recipients, with estimates of this decline ranging from 10 to 25 percent over the course of the month;

- A 27 percent increase in the rate of hospital admissions due to low blood sugar for low-income adults between the first and last week of the month;
- An 11 percent increase in the rate of disciplinary actions among school children in SNAP households between the first and last week of the month;
- Diminished student performance on standardized tests, with performance improving only gradually again after the next month's benefits are received.

Today's event builds on this commitment to high quality research and will feature perspectives from leading food security and nutrition researchers on the critical role of SNAP in reducing food insecurity and poverty, as well as in improving long-run health, education, and economic outcomes. The panel members, and resources to learn more about their work, are provided below. These resources are provided for informational purposes only and their inclusion does not indicate endorsement by, or the official views of, the U.S. Government:

- *Dr. Hilary Hoynes*, Professor of Public Policy and Economics, Haas Distinguished Chair in Economic Disparities, Goldman School of Public Policy, University of California Berkeley: Dr. Hoynes has reviewed the role that SNAP plays in reducing poverty and food insecurity in the U.S. and examined the degree to which the program helps to buffer the impact of recessions and stagnating wages. More information on Dr. Hoynes' research is available [HERE](#).
- *Dr. Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach*, Faculty Fellow, Institute for Policy Research Associate Professor, Human Development and Social Policy, Northwestern University School of Education and Social Policy, Chicago, IL; Director of the Hamilton Project at the Brookings Institution: Dr. Schanzenbach, along with her coauthor, Hilary Hoynes, has studied the extent to which SNAP acts as an investment in children's long term outcomes and its payoff for both recipients and taxpayers. More information on Dr. Schanzenbach's research is available [HERE](#).
- *Dr. Adam Drewnowski*, Director, Nutritional Sciences Program, School of Public Health, University of Washington, Seattle, WA: Dr. Drewnowski has written about the relationship between diet quality and food cost, including whether inadequate food budgets pose a significant barrier to the adoption of nutrient-adequate diets. More information on Dr. Drewnowski's research is available [HERE](#).
- *Dr. Hilary Seligman*, Associate Professor, University of California San Francisco School of Medicine, San Francisco, CA; Lead Scientist, Feeding America: Dr. Seligman has summarized research on the connections between food insecurity and health, highlighting some of the medical costs that result from insufficient food budgets. More information on Dr. Seligman's research is available [HERE](#).

- *Dr. Parke Wilde*, Associate Professor, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, Medford, MA. Dr. Wilde has reviewed recent research on initiatives that enhance SNAP and other benefits to improve recipient households' success in achieving a high-quality diet, including USDA's Summer EBT demonstration and the Healthy Incentives Pilot. More information on Dr. Wilde's research is available [HERE](#).

The event will also feature local and national leaders who see hunger's effects first hand—in doctors' offices, classrooms, and communities: *Dr. Sandra Hassink*, Immediate Past President of the American Academy of Pediatrics; *Dawn Pierce*, mother, licensed practical nurse, and a former SNAP recipient from Boise, Idaho; *Clint Mitchell*, Principal at Bel Air Elementary School in Virginia; *Carlos Rodriguez*, executive director of the Food Bank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties in New Jersey; and *Les Johnson* with Area Resources for Community and Human Services, which participated in the Summer EBT for Children pilots in Missouri.

Today's announcements build on ongoing efforts to ensure all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Over the past seven years, the Obama Administration has put in place an historic set of policies to expand opportunity for all Americans. The President, working with Congress, acted to prevent millions from falling into poverty, particularly through the Recovery Act. The Administration championed expansions of the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit for working families, which reduce the extent or severity of poverty for more than 16 million people – including about 8 million children – each year. Through the Affordable Care Act, almost 18 million people have gained health insurance and, for the first time on record, more than 90 percent of Americans have health insurance. Family homelessness has been reduced by 19 percent since 2010. And unemployment has been cut in half, to 5 percent.

The Administration has also developed several initiatives to improve food security and nutrition for vulnerable children. Through the Community Eligibility Provision, schools in high-poverty areas are now able to offer free breakfast and lunch to all students with significantly less administrative burden. And revisions to the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) added a cash benefit to allow participants to purchase fruits and vegetables, a change that substantially increased the value of the package.

States and counties are essential in connecting kids to federal nutrition programs. Today, the Administration is highlighting the efforts of State and local leaders that are spearheading aggressive efforts to tackle child hunger. For example, states including Florida, Michigan, Montana, Virginia, and Washington have publicly prioritized combatting childhood hunger, with a particular focus on expanding access to school breakfast programs and adoption of community eligibility:

- In the 2011-2012 school year, Michigan became one the first states to adopt the community eligibility option, paving the way for other states to learn from

their efforts. For the 2010-2011 school year, Michigan directly certified 72 percent of children in households receiving SNAP benefits who were eligible for direct certification. Over the next few years, Michigan substantially increased its direct certification rate, reaching 87 percent in the 2013-2014 school year.

- Montana's efforts, led by the Governor and First Lady, have made it the state with the highest take up of community eligibility in the nation, with nearly all eligible schools' participation.
- Also with leadership from the First Lady, Virginia is using an \$8.8 million demonstration award from USDA to work toward the end child hunger in the Commonwealth, with a strong focus on expanding participation in the school breakfast program.
- California is proposing investing new State resources to improving the operations of their nutrition programs with a goal of connecting 400,000 eligible children to nutrition programs over the next two years.
- Colorado has created a streamlined online portal for a wide array of nutrition programs as a strategy to consolidate and simplify the application process, thus improving access for busy working families.

Other landmark accomplishments by the Obama Administration to create opportunity for America's children include the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act, which updated school nutrition standards for the first time in fifteen years; reforms to K-12 education including the Every Student Succeeds Act; expanding access to high quality early education through investments and quality improvements in Head Start, preschool, and child care; and championing both universal pre-K and access to free community college.

VILLAGE PARTNERS

Productive Partnerships in Honduras and KC's Westside | *Relationship / Collaboration / Multiplication*

January 2016 Trip

We have just returned from the village of Matagua, where 11 Jewell students and 6 UNAH CURLA students partnered with the people of Matagua. Read more about our latest visit on the next page.

Donate @ Jewell

Jewell's office of Advancement has provided a site that allows a simple, Tax-Free way to contribute to our efforts to purchase a truck for our director in Honduras. Consider sharing this link and this story with others. With your help and your personal endorsement, we can make this effort "go viral." It's an easy way to be a Village Partner! LINK: <https://www.jewellalumni.com/vpp-donation>

May Trip Planned

On May 17th, 2016, 13 students will travel to Honduras for our 15th Village partners trip, and our 6th to Matagua. Nursing students make up roughly half of this group, so work will be done to evaluate whether the family gardens are indeed improving the diet and the health of the community.

Urban Impact Partners

This past semester was exceptional as we continued our partnership with Primitivo Garcia Grade School in Kansas City's westside. Our partnership with LINC and Turn the Page KC provides an opportunity for students at Garcia to read with a Jewell student. Because many of the students at Garcia are immigrants, many of their parents are unable to read to them in English. Jewell students invested over 270 hours reading with Garcia students. The LINC coordinator for Garcia, Sarah Weber, is constantly asked by Garcia students about their reading partners next arrival.

This semester we will continue our work on Monday afternoons. If you would like to become a reading partner with us, contact us at vp@william.jewell.edu.



Kauffman Innovation Grant

This semester Jewell students will collaborate to begin an "Aquaponics Project" at Primitivo Garcia Grade School through the generosity of this grant. Biology, physics, nonprofit leadership and business majors will work together to build a pilot aquaponics laboratory this spring. Our interdisciplinary endeavors will include teacher training, learning module preparation, strategic planning for the laboratory and marketing strategies to acquire funding to sustain this project. This provides a unique opportunity for Jewell students to learn to apply what they are learning in the classroom while contributing to the Kansas City community.



Education Policy Fellowship Program

The Education Policy Fellowship Program brings together a diverse cohort of professionals from education, government, military, human services, business, and community organizations.

You are invited to apply if you have:

- A commitment to personal and professional development on behalf of children and youth
- A track record of making things happen — inside and across agencies/organizations
- A full-time professional position and substantive work experience
- A bachelor's degree or its equivalent
- The endorsement and financial support of your employing organization

What is my commitment if I am accepted as an EPFP Fellow?

- Attend and participate in all leadership forums and a national policy seminar
- Share your experience and knowledge with other Fellows through presentations, class discussion, and class projects.

How will my organization benefit from my participation in the EPFP?

Employers gain:

- Access to a professional development program with a proven track record
- Better informed, more skillful employees
- Employees who are ready to assume more leadership responsibilities
- Expanded networks that enhance the organization's ability to access key leaders and decision makers who shape policy on behalf of children and education.

What is my employer's commitment in supporting my participation?

- Provide release time for your participation in the Kansas City seminars and the national seminar
- Pay a tuition fee of \$2,500 plus all travel-related costs for the Kansas City and national seminars



Education Policy Fellowship Program

2015-16 Educational Policy Fellowship Program

Sean Akridge

Local Investment Commission
Site Supervisor

Natalie Allen

Mo. Children's Division
Crossover Youth Initiative Coordinator

Patricia Amick

Metropolitan Community College
Assoc. Vice Chancellor of Financial Services and
Administrative Systems

Matthew Bonnot

U.S. Army General Command and General Staff College
Assistant Professor - Dept. of Command & Leadership

Keith Brown

Genesis School
Director of Parent and Community Involvement

David Buchmann

Local Investment Commission
Communications

Jennifer Collier

Kansas City Public Schools
Director of Human Capital Management

Jeanette Cowherd

Park Hill School District
Interim Superintendent

Rob Gardner

Platte County School District
Asst. Superintendent Personnel and Operations

Dale Herl

Independence School District
Superintendent

David Horn

Local Investment Commission
Director of Information Services

Bryce Johnson

Blue Springs School District
Principal

Mindy Johnson

Metropolitan Community College-Penn Valley
Associate Dean of Student Development

Drew Lane

Shawnee Mission School District
Executive Director of Information and Communication
Technologies

Sharon Nibbelink

Center School District
Superintendent

David Schwarzenbach

Kearney School District
High School Principal

T.J. Spalty

Mo. Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education
Director Missouri School Improvement Program

Sabrina Tillman Winfrey

Hickman Mills School District
Principal

Earl Williams

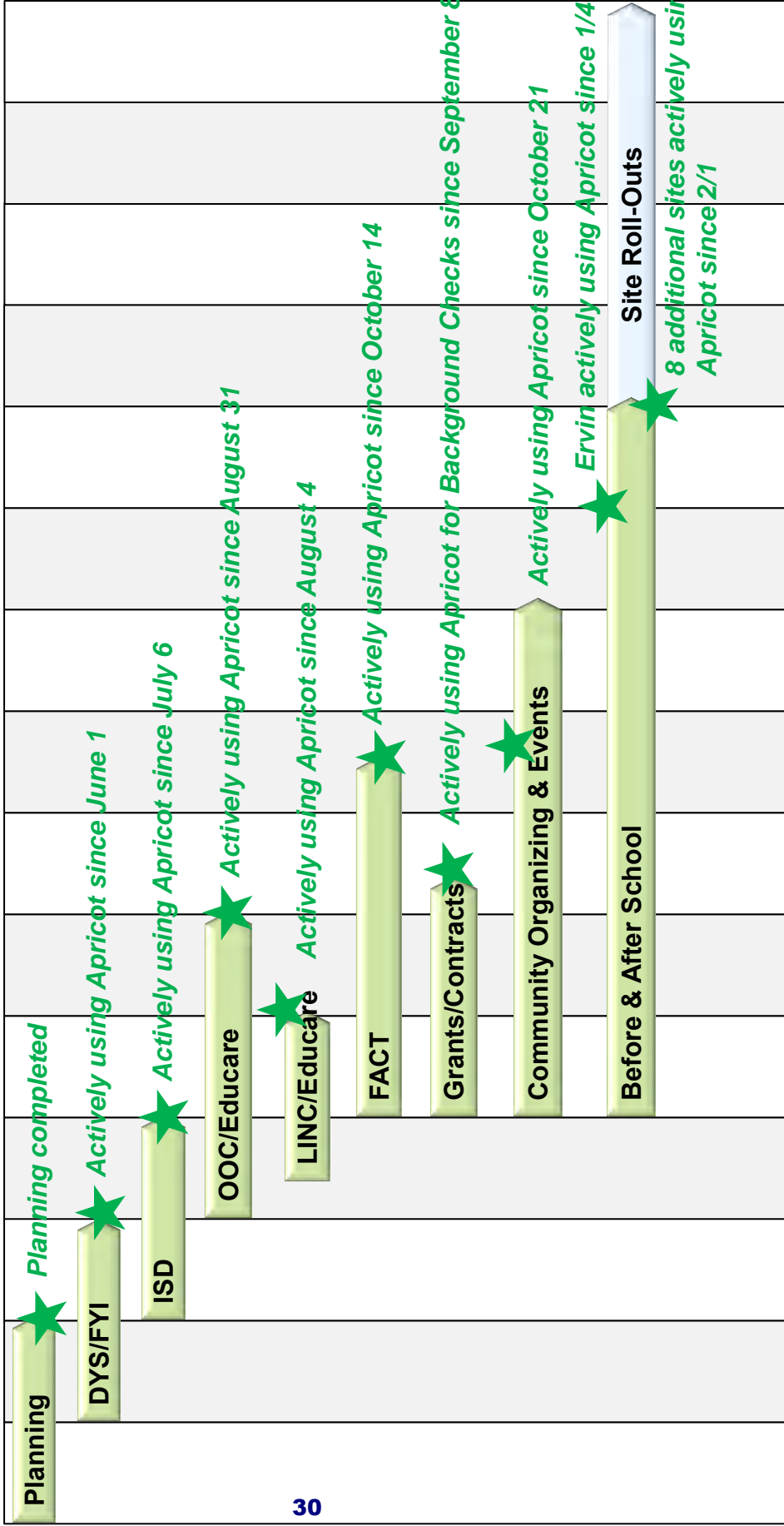
Kansas City Public School District
Principal

Project Timeline

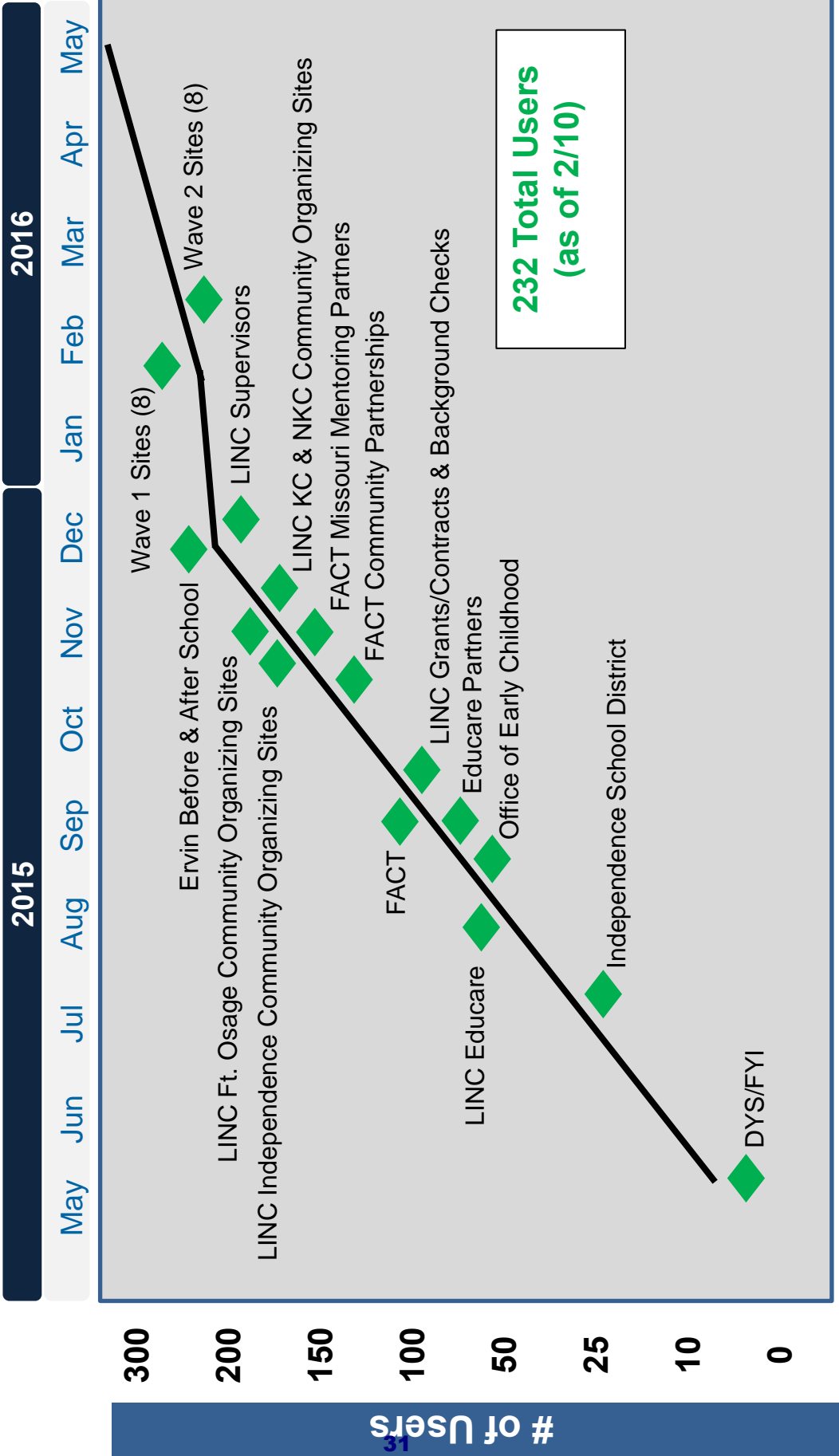
2015

2016

Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May



Apricot Users & Training Sessions



The Kansas City Star – Feb. 9, 2016

Tax incentive critics emboldened after collapse of BNIM office project

Developers say BNIM case may slow city's momentum

Legislation filed in Missouri could raise development barrier higher

But others say it's time to apply tax incentives elsewhere

By Diane Stafford and Lynn Horsley

Fasten your seat belts: The path for Kansas City redevelopment projects to get public subsidies is going to get bumpier.

Exactly which projects could be stopped cold is unknown. But it's clear after the [collapse last week](#) of the BNIM office project — which sought property tax abatement to redevelop a building in the Crossroads Arts District — that abatement critics are emboldened.

Some existing proposals for the Crossroads, downtown, Crown Center and especially the Country Club Plaza already face stiff opposition to their abatement and incentive requests. Opponents argue that those neighborhoods are vibrant enough that they do not need development incentives.

Other critics want public subsidies channeled to redevelopment east of Troost. Still others oppose plans because of the heft of the incentives.

Abatement challengers, including school, library and county taxing jurisdictions, have already displayed strong disagreement with a plan that seeks about \$52 million in property tax abatement, sales tax assistance and other tax exemptions to convert the vacant former Federal Reserve Bank building to a hotel at 925 Grand Blvd.

That \$148.5 million redevelopment plan was narrowly approved in December from the Tax Increment Financing Commission and has yet to get the City Council's approval. Commissioners representing the Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City Public Schools and Jackson County gave it an emphatic thumbs down.

Meanwhile, real estate developers and their attorneys are making a strong pitch to keep a welcome mat down for major redevelopment projects and their investors.

"But for the appropriate use of taxing incentives, we're going to lose important development in our city," warned Roxsen Koch, a development attorney who represents multiple real estate projects.

Koch is among those worried about a ripple effect from BNIM's decision to abandon a move to a vacant building at 1640 Baltimore Ave. owned by Crossroads redeveloper Shirley Helzberg. The company said it was forced to look elsewhere in the area because

of delays caused by a group of petitioners who called for a public vote on the project's development tax incentives.

"This isn't good," said Spencer Thomson, a development lawyer. "There's definitely a shift to more opposition, more scrutiny, more throwing up obstacles. How will the petitioners feel when BNIM goes to Overland Park or somewhere outside Kansas City?"

The petition leaders, including Kansas City school board candidate Jennifer Wolfsie and other parents and social justice activists, objected to a \$5.2 million tax-increment financing agreement that would have redirected school property taxes to help cover the \$13.2 million redevelopment.

Phil Glynn, vice president of economic development with Travois, a Crossroads-based housing development firm, said the failure of BNIM's TIF project is a wake-up call.

"If you want a deal to go through smoothly, you need to do a deal that's giving the community something it doesn't already have and in a part of the city that actually does suffer from blight," said Glynn, who served on the TIF Commission until Mayor Sly James removed him for voting against the BNIM financing.

Glynn said Kansas City needs to get serious about defining real blight and using taxpayer money to address crime, job growth and urban core redevelopment.

But, while Glynn and others believe Crossroads redevelopment should be able to thrive without public subsidy, the development community disagrees.

"The bottom line is whether there's enough revenue upside to attract a developer to any location," said David Macoubrie, executive director of the Planned Industrial Expansion Authority, one of the local entities where board members have authority to approve tax abatements.

"There are still a lot of surface parking lots, a lot of vacant buildings in the Crossroads and downtown," Macoubrie said. "I hear them saying, 'When do we declare (development) victory?' Well, I don't think we're there yet."

Developer Jon Copaken agreed that incentives still are needed downtown and in the Crossroads.

"We dug a hole for ourselves through 30 years of neglect, a generation of looking outside the urban core," Copaken said. "Now we have a high interest level and demand for this area, and a lot of good things are happening. You don't want a process or mentality where you're going to lose the momentum."

The 'but for' test

Local concerns about stopping momentum were heightened by the filing last week of HJR 91 in Missouri, a proposal that would amend the state constitution by stating in part:

“Counties and other political subdivisions are hereby prohibited from authorizing any redevelopment plan, as defined by law, without the approval of the majority of the qualified voters of that county.”

Sponsor Rep. Andrew Koenig, a Republican representing the St. Louis area, said he thinks the proposal could be a tough sell in the legislature but that it would succeed if put to a public vote statewide.

“I think it’s wrong for the public to subsidize private development,” Koenig said. “It pulls money out of the school districts and the cities. And many of these projects don’t create jobs. They just shuffle them around.”

Development attorney Thomson takes a different view of broad public opinion about development incentives.

“There’s a small contingent out there that simply doesn’t believe in TIF. They think it’s a corporate giveaway, and don’t believe the ‘but for’ test is legitimate,” Thomson said. “They think TIF projects would go through without incentives, but that’s just not the case. Developers will not put themselves at great financial risk without a reasonable expectation of return on investment. And our city does a good ‘but for’ test.”

The “but for” test is a required third-party analysis that determines expected rates of return with or without incentives. The studies are used to help the city and its tax abatement commissions decide if the proposal merits public incentives to proceed.

At the same time, Thomson said he understands the taxing districts’ complaints.

“Districts that get their money from property taxes are being treated unequally by the state’s TIF laws compared to districts that get their money from sales taxes,” he said. “The fight ought to be addressing the structure of the state statute.”

The laws

Missouri law allows property tax abatement on the added value of projects — the expected assessment above their existing pre-development property taxes — of up to 100 percent of real estate taxes. That compares to a 50 percent cap on sales tax redirection for development projects. The length of available abatement varies by agency, with 10 to 23 years the usual range.

That statutory difference partly explains why the city of Kansas City, which receives revenue from sales taxes, usually appears to be a stronger supporter of development projects that seek property tax abatement than school and library districts that rely on property tax money. The county, which receives both property and sales tax income, often falls in the middle in reaction to incentive plans.

Chester Neumann, a retired assistant superintendent with the Grandview School District who was on the TIF Commission in the late 1990s, said the TIF process has been a “slow-moving train wreck” that should have been addressed long ago.

Instead, he said, a “highly deserving project” fell apart over the past failures to work out fair returns for the taxing jurisdictions.

Kevin Masters, who represents Kansas City Public Schools on the TIF Commission, agreed. He said there needs to be a way to benefit the taxing jurisdictions when negotiating large public subsidies. (Some of that benefit already is being negotiated when developers agree to make PILOTS, or payments in lieu of taxes, to the taxing districts.)

Michael Grimaldi, spokesman for Mayor Sly James, said the mayor has proposed several ideas to address those concerns.

“Those ideas have been met with ultimatums that don't take into account issues like the Border War (with Kansas) and the increased costs associated with doing business in an urban area,” Grimaldi said. “The Mayor will continue to work to find the right balance that addresses concerns about incentives without risking jobs and investment.”

Cindy Circo, a former city councilwoman who now chairs the Tax Increment Financing Commission, said she'll watch to see whether any existing redevelopment proposals pull out because they don't want to deal with prolonged fights.

“I see things like the BNIM project as a long-term investment,” Circo said. “If we don't invest now, we end up hurting the district when projects don't get done.”

Diane Stafford: [816-234-4359](tel:816-234-4359), [@kcstarstafford](https://twitter.com/kcstarstafford)

Lynn Horsley: [816-226-2058](tel:816-226-2058), [@LynnHorsley](https://twitter.com/LynnHorsley)

The Kansas City Star – Feb. 9, 2016

Campaign to raise tobacco tax in Missouri caught in anti-abortion snag

A pair of rival tobacco tax increases are gathering signatures to go on the November ballot

One proposal would fund early childhood education, while other would go towards road and bridge repair

A lawsuit aimed at one measure stokes concerns that it opens the door for public money to abortion providers

By Jason Hancock

JEFFERSON CITY -- Supporters of a constitutional amendment to increase Missouri's tobacco tax to pay for early childhood education have run into an unusual problem.

As they tote their clipboards around the state collecting petition signatures to put the question on the November ballot, some people are refusing to sign because they say the measure secretly funds abortion.

"This is completely untrue," said Linda Rallo, executive director of [Raise Your Hands for Kids](#), the group pushing the tax proposal.

She later added: "Our proposal is about the health and education of children and smoking cessation — that's it."

Even though Rallo has gotten the state's largest anti-abortion group — Missouri Right to Life — to sign off on her proposal, she continues to fend off false accusations that it's some sort of clandestine attempt to steer tax money to abortion providers.

And as concerns on one side of the abortion debate are soothed, they've emerged anew on the other side, with groups supporting stem cell research publicly questioning the proposal.

How did a debate over preschool and quitting smoking get so embroiled in the culture wars?

Rallo places the blame on a group that has historically fought off attempts to increase the state's lowest-in-the-nation cigarette tax: the [Missouri Petroleum Marketers & Convenience Store Association](#).

"Our hope is that once the word gets out about their (ballot measure), they'll be unable to collect the signatures needed to get on the ballot," said Ron Leone, executive director of the association, which represents gas station and convenience store owners.

The back and forth marks the opening salvo of a battle that promises to rage into the fall, when Missouri voters may have the choice between two rival tobacco tax increases when they go to the polls.

And how the debate evolved opens a window into the high-stakes fight to get an issue on the ballot in Missouri.

Grand compromise

It seemed like peace was at hand.

Three times in the last 15 years, efforts to raise the cigarette tax ran into a buzz saw of opposition from convenience store owners and discount cigarette companies. All three times Missouri voters rejected the tax hike by razor-thin margins.

But last fall, the opposition decided it might be time for a truce.

Leone's group had a proposal of its own, which would incrementally increase Missouri's 17-cent per pack tobacco tax by 23 cents. The new revenue from the increase would be put toward road repairs.

Rallo's group wanted to amend the state's constitution to raise the tax 60 cents per pack and use the new money to pay for early childhood education and preventative health programs.

So Leone faced a choice. Should his organization mount an expensive campaign to put its proposal on the ballot or save its money to fight off the Raise Your Hands for Kids proposal?

He sought a third option.

"We finally wanted to take control of our fate and stop being on defense," Leone said.

He approached the rival campaign with an offer. The convenience store owners would abandon their proposal and instead help get the early childhood measure on the ballot.

In exchange, Leone's group demanded that the tax increase be lower than originally envisioned — 40 cents instead of 60 cents — and contain a rollback provision that would undo the tax increase if another tobacco tax hike was placed on the ballot in the future.

"We'd like some protection for the foreseeable future," Leone said. "If we support a tax increase, we want to decrease the likelihood that someone will come along a year from now with another tobacco tax increase to pile on top of it."

But the détente wasn't meant to be.

Rallo said the main reason a compromise couldn't be struck was the rollback provision, which detractors have dubbed a "poison pill." The tax increase would disappear if another tobacco tax hike gets on the ballot, whether it is ultimately approved by voters or not.

That makes the funding stream for early childhood education completely unstable, Rallo said. She also questioned whether the provision is even constitutional, and if it isn't, whether it could cause the entire proposal to be tossed out by a court down the road.

"The take-it-or-leave-it offer wasn't ever going to work because of the poison pill," Rallo said. "It was just too extreme."

Abortion politics

With a truce out of the question, the only thing left to do was fight.

Chuck Hatfield, a veteran Jefferson City lawyer who helped draft Leone's ballot measure, sued to try to keep the early childhood constitutional amendment off the November ballot.

Hatfield made several arguments challenging the legality of the proposal, but one piece struck a chord with some anti-abortion activists.

The proposal specifically says none of the tobacco tax revenue can go to any "abortion clinic, abortion clinic operator, or outpatient health care facility that provides abortion services," and then adds one more clause: "Unless such services are limited to medical emergencies."

Abortion foes latched on to those last eight words.

"It doesn't define what an emergency is," Hatfield said. "When you're dealing with the constitution, words matter, because it's not easy to fix if you get it wrong."

Edward Greim, a Kansas City lawyer representing Raise Your Hands for Kids, says the idea that the proposal is somehow a method for funding abortions "is absurd" and a "politically motivated rumor."

Abortions don't fall into the permissible uses of the money from a proposed tax hike, he said. To make sure that's the case, he said the measure also includes provisions specifically barring use by abortion providers.

"These efforts to mislead the public are not just politics as usual," Greim said in a memo defending the proposal. "They come with a real cost to the entire pro-life movement."

The state's largest anti-abortion group agrees with Greim.

"We've had a team of lawyers looking at every detail of the language," said Susan Klein, legislative liaison for Missouri Right to Life. "Our lawyers have come to the conclusion that we have pro-life protections that we need in this initiative, and the funds collected through this tax will not go to abortions, human cloning or embryonic stem cell research."

Mike Hoey, executive director of the [Missouri Catholic Conference](#), said he has read the proposal. "I don't see a problem with it," he said. "The protections appear to be there. It looked pretty good to me."

That didn't stop the accusation first raised in Hatfield's lawsuit from spreading like wildfire after Republican state Rep. [Joe Don McGaugh](#) of Carrollton [posted on his](#)

[Facebook page](#) that Raise Your Hands for Kids was trying to “funnel money towards liberal causes, including the possibility of adding language for public funds to be used for abortions in Missouri’s Constitution.”

The post was shared 60 times, including by a handful of Republican lawmakers and local Republican organizations.

Rallo responded to McGaugh with a statement saying that “we can agree or not agree on the merits of a reasonable and modest cigarette tax increase, but let’s all agree that misinformation has no place in helping voters make rational and informed decisions about our state’s public policies.”

Stem cells

While the concerns of anti-abortion activists were being stoked, advocates of stem cell research started to grumble.

[The Stowers Institute for Medical Research](#) privately has raised concerns about the early childhood proposal, but directed The Star’s request for comment to the stem cell advocacy group [Missouri Cures Education Foundation](#).

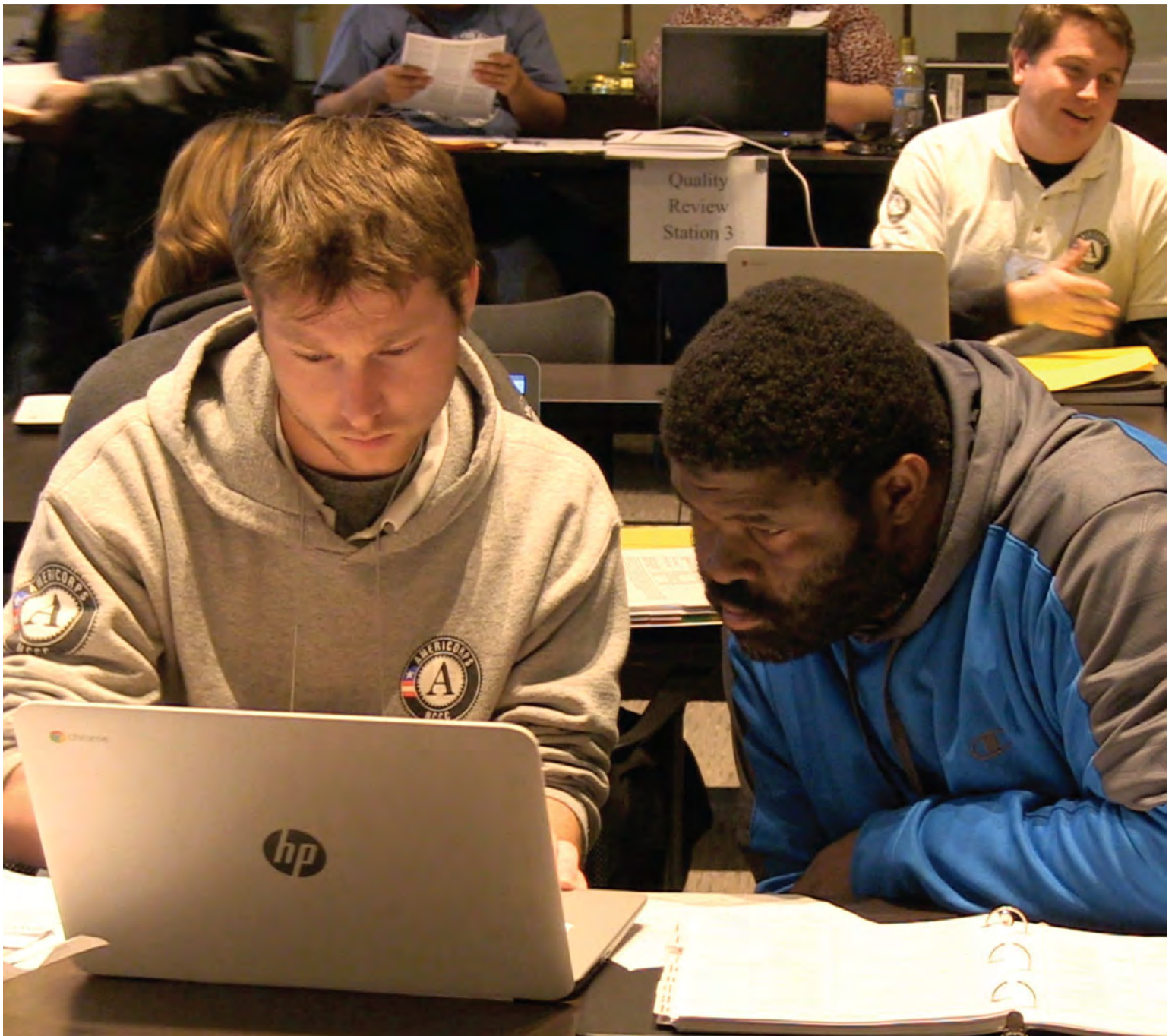
Missouri Cures Chairman Donn Rubin said a [2006 constitutional amendment](#) protects stem cell research in Missouri. By including prohibitions on tobacco tax revenue from going to things like embryonic stem cell research and human cloning in the Missouri Constitution, Rubin said the early childhood proposal calls into question those protections.

“The Missouri Constitution is crystal clear in terms of protecting stem cell research,” Rubin said. “To add something to the constitution that muddies those protections would be dangerous.”

Rallo said the early childhood measure isn’t “some kind of Trojan horse.”

“There’s no underhanded or secret agenda,” Rallo said. “We’re trying to do something positive for Missouri, and our opponents are willing to twist things and spread lies to hurt us.”

Jason Hancock: [573-634-3565](tel:573-634-3565), [@J Hancock](#)



An Americorps VISTA volunteer helps a client file their taxes for free at the 2016 Community Tax Day sponsored by The United Way of Greater Kansas City and Next Step KC. Learn about more tax filing and volunteer opportunities at NextStepKC.org



Partnering to build strong families – one financial step at a time.



Missouri

Belvidere Elementary 15010 White Avenue, Grandview 2/11 & 2/18	Thur: 4p-8p
CSL Independence 404 N. Noland Rd., Independence 2/1/16 - 4/14/16 - PLEASE CALL FOR APPT - 816-254-4100	Mon: 10a-2p Thur.: 3p-7p
First Baptist Church 2205 Iron St., North Kansas City 2/6/16 - 4/9/16	Sat: 8:30a-2p
Full Employment Council 1740 Paseo Boulevard, Kansas City ***DROP-OFF ONLY- Returns prepared remotely (closed 3/28-4/1)	M,T,W,F: 9a-noon 2/1 - 4/18/2016
Guadalupe Centers, Inc. 1015 Avenida Cesar Chavez, KCMO 2/10/16-4/11/16	Wed. 5-8p
MCC-Longview Business Bldg, Rooms 202 & 204 500 SW Longview Rd, Lee's Summit 2/6/16 - 4/9/16	Sat: 9a - 2p
MCC -Maple Woods 2601 NE Barry Rd, Kansas City, Computing/Business Bldg, Rm 105	Wed: 4:30-7:30p 2/3, 2/10, 2/17, 2/24, 4/6, 4/13
MCC-Penn Valley Humanities Bldg, Room 103B 3201 Southwest Trfwy., Kansas City	Tue: 5-7p (Will close at 8p) 2/2 - 4/12 (closed 3/8)
Metro Lutheran Ministries 3031 Holmes, Kansas City 2/17/16 - 4/18/16	By appointment for Internal clients only
Operation Breakthrough 3039 Troost Ave., Kansas City 1/25/16 -2/12/16	MWF, 3:30-5:30p - (Internal clients only)
Prosperity Center 5401 Troost, Kansas City 2/6/16 - 4/9/16 - By appt only Call 816-501-4239	Sat: 8a - Noon (General public) Closed: 2/13, 2/28, 3/12
UMKC Bloch School 5110 Cherry Street, Kansas City Room 5 2/12/16 - 4/15/16	Fri & Sat: 10a - 4p By appointment only - Call United Way 2-1-1 or (816) 474-5112 (Closed 4/1-4/2, spring break)

Kansas

Catholic Charities/El Centro 2220 Central Ave., KCKS <i>Servicio disponible en español</i> 2/4/16 - 4/14/16	Thur: 5p-8:30p Sat: 8:30a-2p
El Centro K-State 11811 S. Sunset Dr., Olathe <i>Servicio disponible en español</i> 2/3/16-4/14/16	Wed: 12 - 4:30p Thur: 12 - 4:30p Sat: 8:30a - 12:30p
KCK Community College 7250 State Ave., Room 3236, Flint Kansas City, KS 2/3/16-4/13/16 (Closed March 16 & 19, afternoon only, all Saturdays in Feb, March 5 & 12)	Wed: 5-8p Sat: 9-12 & 1p - 4p
Jo.Co. Community College 12345 College Blvd, Room GEB 2/17, 2/20, 2/24, 3/2, 3/9, 4/2, & 4/9	Wed.: 6:30 - 9p Sat.: 9a - 2p

Next Step KC VITA

Free Tax Preparation

Available to most taxpayers earning \$54,000 or less! Contact United Way 211 (or 816-474-5112) for more information about eligibility, wait times, temporary locations and weather-related site closures

What to bring to tax preparation

- A Social Security card or Individual Taxpayer Identification # (ITIN) for each family member
- Valid picture ID (driver's license, state ID, passport, matrícula consular, etc.) for all taxpayers
- W-2 forms for all jobs worked in 2015
- All 1099 forms for other income, if any
- Child care provider name, address, and tax ID
- Any other tax-related documents received
- Form 1098 or other education-related documents
- Bank account information for direct deposit
- A copy of last year's tax return (if available)
- All adults on return need to be present to sign.
- 1095-A form from the health insurance marketplace (Obamacare) if you received insurance through the marketplace

Questions? Call United Way 2-1-1

for more information.
Dial 2-1-1 or 816-474-5112



Partnering to build strong families – one financial step at a time.



United Way of Greater Kansas City
unitedwaykc.org

Girls Only & Boys Only Chess Tournament



Saturday, Mar. 5 Check-in: 8-9 a.m.

Pre-register your student at kclinc.org/chess by Wed. Mar. 2 at noon. Any player who is not pre-registered and not checked in by 9 a.m. will not be able to play in the first round!

Bingham Middle School

1716 S. Speck Rd., Independence, Missouri 64057

Divisions:

K-3rd, K-6th, and K-12th
All K.C. area K-12 players are welcome to participate. All players must know how the pieces move and how to make a checkmate.

Awards:

Top seven players in each division will receive trophies.
Each player will receive a medal.

Schedule:

First round begins at 9:30 a.m.,
last round ends by 4:30 p.m.

Players who pre-register and are on time will participate in all five rounds.

Lunch:

A **FREE** lunch will be provided to players and families.

Sat. Mar. 5 - Girls Only, Boys Only Tournament, Bingham Middle School 1716 S. Speck Rd., Independence, MO 64057
Sat. Apr. 9 - K-12 Tournament, North Kansas City High School 620 E. 23rd Ave., NKC MO 64116
Sat. May 14 - End of Year Tournament, Hickman Mills Freshman Center 9010 Old Santa Fe Road, KCMO 64138

LINC Chess

816-650-7525 | kclinc.org/chess
[facebook.com/LINCchess](https://www.facebook.com/LINCchess)

