LINC Commission Meeting October 22, 2018

LIGHTS NAFTERSCHOOL at LINC Caring Communities

Join us as we celebrate our students & community, and focus on the importance of afterschool programs.

Thu., Oct. 25



kclinc.org/lightson



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, Oct. 22, 2018 | 4 – 6 pm Kauffman Foundation 4801 Rockhill Rd. Kansas City, Mo. 64110

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Announcements
- II. Approvals
 - a. Approval September minutes (motion)
- **III.** Superintendent Reports
- IV. Chronic Absenteeism Summit (Nov. 5)
 - a. Jim MacDonald, United Way of Greater KC
- V. Early Childhood Report
 - a. Community Initiatives

Jovanna Rohs, Dir. of Early Learning and Head Start Mid-America Regional Council

- b. Educare
- VI. LINC Out of School Time
 - a. District Updates (2018-19)
 - b. Lights On After School
- VII. Report Out
 - a. Site Coordinator Recognition (Thursday, Sept. 17)
 - b. LINC Open House (Monday, Dec. 17)
- VIII. Adjournment



THE LOCAL INVESTMENT COMMISSION – SEPT. 17, 2018

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

Sharon Cheers Herb Freeman
Tom Davis Tom Lewin
David Disney Rosemary Lowe
Mark Flaherty Ken Powell
SuEllen Fried

Minutes of the June 25, 2018, LINC Commission meeting were approved.

LINC staff **David Buchmann** requested that Commissioners complete and submit a Conflict of Interest form as required by Commission by-laws.

Superintendent Reports

- Dan Clemens, Superintendent (North Kansas City Schools), reported over 20,000 students are
 enrolled this fall including several high school juniors and seniors who are earning an associate's
 degree along with their diploma. North Kansas City Schools board treasurer Terry Ward has been
 named the 2018 Paul Morris Community Service Award recipient by the Missouri School Board
 Association for his commitment to serving schools and the community.
- Sharon Nibbelink, Superintendent (Center School District), reported the district is participating in Breakfast in the Classroom, a Purdue University research study to see if serving middle school students more protein in the morning improves their focus and attention throughout the day. A video of news coverage of the initiative was shown. Colonial Presbyterian Church will host Home Fest, a Sept. 30 event to raise money to provide the Center district with resources to address student homelessness.
- Anissa Gastin, Asst. Superintendent (Fort Osage School District), reported five out of six bondfinanced projects have been completed. The district has started an "Every Minute Matters" attendance incentive initiative.
- Janet Miles-Bartee, LINC Caring Communities Administrator, presented a report on behalf of **Dr. Kenny Rodrequez** (Superintendent): enrollment is up slightly from this time last year. The district won a community education award from the South Kansas City Alliance. Enrollment is growing in the LINC middle school program at Smith-Hale.
- **Yolanda Cargile,** Superintendent (Hickman Mills School District), thanked LINC for its help in producing a back to school video for the district. The video was shown. The district has launched a "Go Beyond the Dream" initiative to engage staff with students. The Superintendent's Post-Entry Plan provides a working document for focusing efforts on serving the district's students. Ruskin High School will host a college fair on Sept. 21.
- **Kevin Foster**, Executive Director (Genesis School), reported the school has been partnering with organizations to provide community resources around reading. The recent school book fair provided \$2,300 of books to students. Parents are reading to kids during school through the Literacy KC initiative.
- **Bob Bartman**, Coordinator (Education Policy Fellowship Program), reported the new cohort of EPFP fellows begins tomorrow with a retreat in Jefferson City. This year's participants include

staff from the Shawnee Mission and Blue Valley school districts, as well as from an architecture firm.

LINC Human Resources Director **Trent DeVreugd** gave a presentation on the LINC workforce including employee demographics and an overview of employee benefits.

Tom Lewin reported on the LINC Finance Committee's search for a vendor to oversee the employee 401K plan. The Committee's goals in choosing a vendor were to increase education, increase employee participation, decrease annual plan costs, increase knowledge of products, and remove liability from LINC. After interviewing several vendors, the Committee recommended 2West.

A motion to approve creation of a retirement/saving plan committee for Greater KC LINC as described in the Sept. 17, 2018 resolution was passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the charter of the retirement/saving plan committee for Greater KC LINC as described in the Sept. 17, 2018 charter document was passed unanimously.

LINC Deputy Director-Community Outreach **Brent Schondelmeyer** reported that LINC will be working with Onward to provide an employee saving program which employees can access for loans up to \$1,000. All LINC full-time and part-time staff will be eligible for the program.

Schondelmeyer reported that Social Solutions, which owns the Apricot data system used by LINC, will receive an investment of \$59 million from the Ballmer Group.

LINC Chess Coordinator **Ken Lingelbach** gave a presentation on LINC Chess, which has programs at 47 schools. Recently Chess became available to all Fort Osage School District students, K-12, through the Chess programs which are offered at all district elementary schools. Discussion followed.

Schondelmeyer reported on the 2018 Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer for Children program in Missouri this year. LINC served more than 5,000 children in this year's SEBT program and helped to deliver over \$400,000 in food benefits.

Schondelmeyer reported on the No Kid Hungry Bake Sale sponsored by the American Society of Baking. LINC helped to organize a community bake sale at Border Star Montessori. A video of the event was shown. **Kurt Van Amberg** of ASB thanked LINC for helping to promote the event and for holding a carnival at Border Star, and reported on his organization's efforts to inform students about career opportunities in the baking industry. **Shelly Taylor-Doran**, LINC Border Star Caring Communities site coordinator, reported the event was positive and well attended.

LINC Caring Communities Administrator **Janet Miles-Bartee** invited Commissioners to attend the LINC Site Coordinator Appreciation Luncheon on Sept. 27 at Southeast Community Center.

LINC staff **Renee Asher** gave a presentation on the recent LINC office remodeling and invited Commissioners to an open house at the office on Oct. 19.

Sharon Cheers announced that Election Day will be held on Nov. 6 and urged everyone to vote.

The meeting was adjourned.

12 KC public schools students have been killed or shot this year. Where's the outrage?

BY THE KANSAS CITY STAR EDITORIAL BOARD

October 15, 2018 05:30 AM

Five former Kansas City Public Schools students and recent graduates have been shot and killed in 2018. All were minorities. At least seven other current students have been injured by gunfire since August.

Their stories should shock and outrage this city. Instead, the response has been silence.

<u>Antonio Jones</u> was a straight-A student. The 18-year-old was <u>shot and killed</u> in July, two months after he graduated from Central Academy of Excellence. Just last week, 18-year-old <u>Zyhame Jones</u> was found shot to death in the middle of <u>Sheffield Park</u> on the city's northeast side. He was four credits shy of graduating from high school.

In Kansas City, the violent deaths of teenagers are now met with a quiet resignation. But imagine that 12 Shawnee Mission School District students had been shot this year. What would the reaction be if this had happened in Overland Park or Blue Springs or Lee's Summit?

Why haven't these shootings spurred a community-wide commitment to reduce violent crime and protect Kansas City students?

Kansas City Public Schools Superintendent Mark Bedell said he couldn't recall the loss of so many students in a calendar year — even in the much larger urban districts where he's worked.

Bedell was an administrator in <u>Baltimore County Public Schools</u>, which have about 113,280 students, and in the <u>Houston Independent School District</u>, which has about 214,175 students.

Kansas City Public Schools' student population is about 15,570.

"How does that happen?" Bedell asked.

Poverty, economic disparity and a sense of hopelessness are contributing factors, Bedell said.

Still, "the amount of murders with a district this size in comparison to those districts is shocking," he said. "I was a high school principal for three years in Houston in a pretty rough community, and I didn't have a single kid in my school murdered. We constantly have to get our grief counselors inside our schools here. It's sad."

Bedell is working to address the issue by expanding the district's <u>Success Mentoring Program</u>. That alone won't solve the problem, though. Civic organizations, corporate leaders, elected officials and the philanthropic community must team up to develop innovative approaches to combat the violence that has disproportionally affected minority youth in Kansas City.

Bedell hopes the mentoring program will help. But at least <u>600 students</u> are waiting to be paired with a mentor. About 60 percent of those waiting are minority male students. Men of color are needed.

The bloodshed must stop, Bedell said. But district leaders can only do so much to curb the violence — particularly once students leave school and return to their neighborhoods.

"An unstable community only enhances violence," he said.

Violence changes the culture of Kansas City schools. The district offers trauma support and grief counseling. But is that enough?

Annette Lantz-Simmons of the Center for Conflict Resolution doesn't think so. The center's employees teach conflict resolution skills in two of the district's four high schools and in both middle schools. Staff worked in two other high schools in the district last year. The classes are just a small part of the equation. But Lantz-Simmons would like the grant community to be more heavily involved.

The goal should be to take the training to each school in the district. But that requires more funding.

"We have pushed to get some of the city's biggest donors to pool their money together," she said. "It needs to be a district-wide cultural shift."

Lantz-Simmons is right. Reducing violence must be our collective priority, and that requires resources and a commitment from an array of local leaders.

Kansas City can't effectively educate students if we can't ensure their safety.

Delayed release of test scores makes KC Superintendent Mark Bedell's job even tougher

BY THE KANSAS CITY STAR EDITORIAL BOARD

October 16, 2018 07:05 PM

Kansas City School Superintendent Mark Bedell is frustrated, and who can blame him?

In a perfect world, he would have received his students' math and English test scores from last spring months ago — maybe even in June, long before a new school year began. That way, Kansas City administrators and teachers could adjust their curriculum to address any shortcomings that the tests revealed.

In a perfect world, those adjustments would be made so that when students take the tests again this spring, they would be better prepared, and their scores would reflect that.

All of that would help Bedell and his team move forward toward that ever-elusive goal of full accreditation for Kansas City Public Schools, a goal that some years seems to be at hand and in other years remains a distant target.

But education administration in Missouri is nowhere close to a perfect world. In fact, it's a world where the goalposts are constantly moving, where tests are revised almost annually, making it impossible for leaders who are under pressure like Bedell to truly know if they're making the academic progress they need to make.

The results of those tests that students took in April? Bedell <u>may not see them until</u> <u>December</u> or even early next year. That would be the latest release of those scores in recent memory, education leaders said.

And that gives Bedell and his team precious little time to adjust their curriculum before students take the tests again this spring.

"It's pretty simple," Bedell said. "Data is very critical because it helps inform your practice. It informs you if your curriculum is working ... what initiatives you should continue with and which ones you should move away from to get the highest amount of student academic achievement."

Now, said Bedell, "I'm going to be another year in the hole."

The delay this time is related to yet another new set of standardized tests. The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education brought in additional experts to help determine what scores should merit proficiency, a process known as setting "cut scores."

It's easy to blame the education department for all these travails. But much of the blame could also be placed on the General Assembly. In 2014, lawmakers needlessly <u>wiped out</u> the Common Core standards that were intended to measure student performance across states.

That resulted in a need for new educational standards in Missouri. That meant more working groups of parents and educators developing new standards, and that led to new tests and new results for administrators like Bedell. State officials have revised the standardized tests four times in the past five years. Comparing one year's scores with a previous year is now impossible because superintendents are comparing apples to oranges.

In an urban district such as Kansas City Public Schools, where as many as 40 percent of students change schools each year, the delay in data is especially problematic.

Ultimately, all this adds to the already heavy load for the district, which desperately wants to rejoin the club of fully accredited school districts. The lesson here: Mark Bedell and district teachers and administrators can only do so much. Delays in the delivery of test scores don't serve them well.

Leaders of unaccredited urban school districts need all the help they can get.

UMKC ends sponsorship of eight KC charter schools, changes focus

By Mará Rose Williams

October 05, 2018 10:35 AM

After nearly two decades of sponsoring Kansas City charter schools, the University of Missouri-Kansas City is stepping away to take on a different role.

The university will shift its focus from one of oversight and accountability for eight charter schools to concentrate instead on education research.

"By relinquishing its sponsorship role, UMKC can focus on doing what it is designed to do best," said Justin Perry, dean of the UMKC School of Education, which specializes in urban education.

UMKC will continue to work with charter schools and as well as Kansas City Public School District schools, offering such help as professional development, dual credit programs for high schools, and better preparing students for jobs and college.

UMKC took on the role of sponsor in 1999, when charters were established in Missouri — a role that was outside its traditional scope, said UMKC Chancellor C. Mauli Agrawal. But it did so "in order to bring new education options to Kansas City students," he said.

UMKC will officially relinquish its sponsorships May 31 for these eight charters schools: University Academy, Pathway Academy, Genesis School, Lee A. Tolbert Community Academy, Frontier Schools, Brookside Charter, Allen Village School and Academy for Integrated Arts. They have already started looking for new sponsors, with UMKC's help.

The transition will have "zero impact on the school parents and students," said Doug Thaman, executive director of the Missouri Charter Public School Association, a charter advocacy group.

"Students will see no change at all," he said, because the sponsor's role is to evaluate the school's academic and financial performance each year and to make sure the charter school is in compliance with state law.

UMKC officials said the university 's decision to no longer sponsor charters has nothing to do with the academic standing of the schools.

Sponsors can decide to end their sponsorship if the school's performance is consistently poor. Last year, the University of Central Missouri <u>severed ties</u> with Benjamin Banneker charter after the school showed a two-year drop in test scores. <u>The school closed</u> this summer.

Thaman said he supports the university decision: "They believe it will allow them to deepen their partnerships with the schools. I believe that the more we are able to have partners that can conduct research, it will only strengthen the work we do. I think the research sums up what a university is fashioned to do."

It will be up to the school boards for each charter to decide on new sponsors, but the Missouri Public Charter Commission has been suggested. The commission was established by Missouri lawmakers in 2012 after some universities questioned whether oversight and accountability were the best use of their resources.

Thaman said University Academy has already decided to use the commission as its new sponsor, but the other seven schools are still in discussions with other possible sponsors.

University of Missouri and the Kansas City Public School District also sponsor charters in Kansas City.

Read more here: https://www.kansascity.com/news/local/article219516335.html#storylink=cpy

Strengthening the Regional Early Learning System in Greater Kansas City

Sustained and strategic public and private investment in the early learning system of Greater Kansas City has resulted in a stronger workforce, improved program quality, increased access to programs, and initiatives to enhance community collaboration. While the region's current early learning system has many strengths, the challenges of system

COLLECTIVE VISION:

Every child in the Greater
Kansas City region enters school
healthy and ready to succeed in
kindergarten and beyond.

fragmentation and underfunding remain. This document lays out key strategies for strengthening the system to achieve our community vision — that every child in the region will enter school healthy and ready to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. The Mid-America Regional Council and its early learning partners developed this strategy plan through extensive research and with community participation. This strategic plan will assist in the coordination and collaboration of early learning initiatives across partners and strategic investments.

Children, prenatal to age 5, and their families are the highest priority in the regional early learning system. The system encompasses nine counties in the Kansas City metropolitan area: Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami and Wyandotte in Kansas; and Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray in Missouri.

The success of the regional early learning system is a shared responsibility that relies on families, service providers, school districts, colleges and universities, faith communities, businesses and policy makers. Working together, all of these partners can maximize the impact of strategies based on the principles and fundamentals below.

Principles that guide the system:

- Reach <u>all</u> children and families as early as possible, serving children and families with the
 greatest need first.
- Reflect and respect the strengths, needs, values, languages, cultures and communities of children and families.
- Value parents and family members as decision makers and leaders.
- Measure outcomes whenever possible to inform both practices and the overall system.
- Develop programs, services and supports using evidence-based and promising practices.

Fundamental building blocks of the system:

- Strong partnerships
- Sufficient investments
- Sound policy
- Robust public engagement
- Shared accountability
- Effective leadership

KEY COMPONENTS: QUALITY, ACCESS, and SUSTAINABILITY

Quality early learning programs are a critical component of the regional system.

QUALITY programs have:

- Families engaged in meaningful ways that enhance and strengthen their protective factors (resilience, social connections, support, knowledge of child development, and social/emotional competence of children).
- Effectively implemented curricula that is developmentally appropriate and addresses the domains of approaches to learning, social and emotional development, language and literacy development, cognitive development, and physical development.
- Assessments that consider all areas of a child's developmental progress and inform instructional planning.
- Well-prepared teachers/home visitors who provide engaging experiences and interactions that support learning.
- Ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers/home visitors, including coaching and mentoring.
- Recognition and response to the needs of children with varying abilities, cultures and languages.
- Low teacher-child ratios, engaging classroom environments, and sufficient learning time for young children.
- Programs assessments conducted to measure both structure and process.

High-quality early learning programs must also be accessible to the children and families who need them.

ACCESS is defined as:

- People who need the service know about it, know where it is, can afford it, and can get to it.
- Services are available and convenient.
- Services are respectful and inclusive of family culture, eliminating barriers for dual-language families.
- Services meet the needs of children of all abilities.
- The people who need it actually use it.
- There is enough capacity to meet the community need.¹

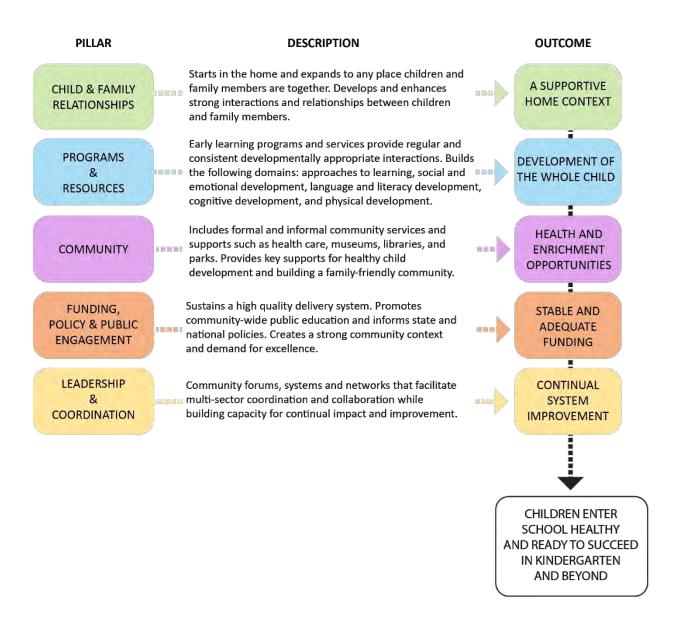
The early learning system needs structural and policy changes, as well as variety of funding sources to be **SUSTAINABLE**:

- Coordination and efficiency among early learning programs and agencies that serve young children and their families.
- Policy and legislative changes that support quality and access.
- Public and private funding support at the local, state, and federal levels.
 - o Examples of private support include business, philanthropy, and parent fees.
- An expanded public funding stream dedicated to early learning.

¹ Adapted from Kent County Michigan

FIVE PILLARS OF THE EARLY LEARNING SYSTEM

A robust early learning system relies on strong families, skilled teachers, supportive communities, sustained and sufficient funding, and collaborative leadership. The five pillars described below interact to enhance the development of young children and provide support for the adults in their lives. The first three focus on child development and interactions with children and families. The last two focus on aspects that drive the implementation and coordination of the early learning system.



STRATEGIES

Child and Family		
1	Effective home visiting programs	
2	Robust information and referral networks with coordinated support services for children and families	
3	Family friendly workplace policies and practices	

Earl	Early Learning Programs and Resources		
4	Regional quality indicator system		
5	Regional implementation of the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) Institute		
6	Regional early learning workforce pathway		
7	Collaborative interagency approach to professional development		
8	Child-centered transition process from early learning to K-12		
9	Improved compensation for the early learning workforce		

Con	Community	
10	Early learning and development opportunities integrated in community settings	
11	Health and wellness fields integrated with early learning	

Fun	Funding, Policy, and Public Engagement		
12	Expanded public and private early learning funding models		
13	Strong early learning advocacy network		
14	Consistent messaging of the role of early years in children's development		

Lea	Leadership and Coordination		
15	Shared and coordinated measurement, data collection, evaluation and reporting system		
16	Multi-sector coordination of early learning initiatives		
17	Linkage with broader community efforts that impact family stability		

ISSUE:

VOTE: Approve contract with the Local Investment Commission to advance the Educare Child Care Enhancement Program

BACKGROUND:

MARC's MCEL provides leadership to the development and implementation of a community-driven, outcomes-based plan for a comprehensive early learning system.

LINC wishes to contract with MCEL to administer and provide oversight for the Educare Program. Educare is a twenty-year old state funded initiative that provides resources, technical assistance and training opportunities to child care providers with an emphasis on licensed exempt, registered and family home providers in Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties in Missouri. The purpose of the project is to promote school readiness by establishing linkages in policy, program and practice that will ensure all children receive a solid foundation for success in school and life. Services and supports offered to area child care providers include:

- Professional development opportunities for child care providers
- Individualized home visits for family child care providers
- Customized center-based training
- Supporting coordination of existing community resources to optimize funding
- Linking child care providers and families to schools and community resources
- Increasing consumer awareness of the important role quality child care has in the development of children

This project complements the current mission and work of MARC's Early Learning Department. The majority of the funding from this agreement will be passed through to direct service agencies. A portion of the funds will be used to support existing MCEL staff time in the management and oversight of the project subcontracts and to support data entry and coordination of program supports.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS:

Funding from this contract was not included in the 2018 budget.

REVENUES				
Amount	\$400,000			
Source	Missouri Department of Social Services			
PROJECTED EXPENSES				
Personnel (salaries, fringe, rent)	\$80,000			
Contractual	\$318,000			
Pass-Through	\$ 0			
Other (supplies, printing, etc.)	\$2,000			

Sly James' pre-K tax plan faces more skepticism — from most KC mayoral candidates

BY BILL TURQUE

Mayor Sly James' proposal to <u>fund universal pre-K in Kansas City</u> with a sales tax increase is drawing scant support from the nine candidates vying to succeed him in 2019.

Only two, Councilwoman Jolie Justus and Crossroads businessman Phil Glynn, told an audience at Visitation Parish in Midtown Monday evening that they were prepared to vote for the plan in its current form.

The other seven — Mayor Pro Tem Scott Wagner, Councilmen Scott Taylor, Jermaine Reed and Quinton Lucas, Councilwoman Alissia Canady, construction attorney Steve Miller and community activist Rita Berry — said they believed in the importance of early childhood education but that the use of sales tax dollars and the opposition of the city's school superintendents posed serious problems.

"This to me is the classic square peg in a round hole," said Wagner, who favored pressing state lawmakers for the money.

Glynn agreed that the plan wasn't perfect, but said too many children of color are falling behind their white peers to wait any longer.

"Yes, it is a square peg in a round hole," said Glynn. "But it's an opportunity to do what we've failed to do for so long in this community, which is to make our children a real priority. And start investing in them today."

Only an estimated 35 percent of the city's 4- and 5-year-olds are in high-quality pre-K programs. Most research shows that good early childhood education can improve the long-term prospects of children, positioning them for better-paying jobs and less trouble with the law.

James announced over the summer that he would ask voters in November to approve a 3/8-cent sales tax increase to generate about \$30 million a year over the next decade for expanded access to pre-K. Public, charter and private schools and eligible private providers would all be involved.

Much of the initial funding would go to increasing the size and quality of pre-K programs. Eligible families would receive tuition discounts based on household income and the quality of the program.

The plan drew <u>vehement objections</u> from superintendents of the 15 public school districts that serve the city's 4- and 5-year-olds. They asserted that the funding of private and parochial schools amounted to a voucher system that would divert money from public classrooms. They also pushed back at the make-up of the state-mandated governing board that would include just one school district representative among its five members.

In August, James heeded calls to <u>postpone a November vote</u> to allow for negotiations with superintendents. Those conversations continue with no sign of progress. The measure is now scheduled for the April ballot.

"The mayor continues to talk with superintendents and is still holding meetings, the next one coming up next week," James' communications director, Laura Swinford, said in an email Tuesday.

Most of the candidates said Monday evening that the plan was untenable without signoff from the superintendents.

"I have deferred to our school districts, respecting the autonomy that they have," said Taylor, who sat on the Center School District board.

Lucas called the proposal "a wonderful cause," but said he wasn't convinced that it was designed to help the very poorest of the city's children.

A grocery divide: Why do so many stores east of Troost lack healthy food?

BY AARON RANDLE

arandle@kcstar.com

Denise Brunston lives miles east of Troost Avenue, but when she goes grocery shopping she heads west. Far west.

Past the stores that are more convenient to her home and over to the Cosentino's Price Chopper in Brookside.

"It's just a part of life," says Brunston, a chemist who is black. "If you want the best of something, you've got to go where the white people are. This includes groceries."

From the moment shoppers enter that store, like others west of Troost, they are greeted with a vibrant smorgasbord of colorful, fresh produce.

But on Brunston's side of town, just inside the double doors at the Blue Parkway Sun Fresh Market, tiers of assorted Lay's potato chips beckon. Across the aisle, boxes of Kool-Aid and gallon jugs of Best Choice fruit punch tower 6 feet high over a few displays of healthier options.

Customers must walk back 100 feet before they encounter the produce section.

"This is our normal," Brunston says. "It's frustrating. What does that mean for us, for our kids when our own stores push those kinds of foods?"

In a review of grocery stores east and west of Troost — the city's historic racial dividing line — The Star found similar disparities in variety and quality.

Metro area staples Price Chopper, Hy-Vee and Hen House don't have any locations in Kansas City east of Troost and north of 95th Street. Most other grocers deciding to locate there tend to stock less variety, cheaper quality and less nutritious food than those west of Troost.

A few years ago, the East Side was plagued with food deserts — areas where residents did not have access to fresh produce and other healthy options. Those deserts are disappearing, experts say, as more stores move in. Food inequality, however, and the socio-health problems that go with it, continue to thrive.

Some in the business say the discrepancy is all about supply and demand. But others say these stores' approach runs counter to national trends showing that an agreeable atmosphere and better food quality are also sound business moves. And the new Lipari

Bros. Sun Freshoff Linwood Boulevard, an outlier on the otherwise deprived East Side, seems to be proving those trends correct.

What do customers want?

For a study in contrasts between the typical East Side grocery store and the west, head into Marsh's Sun Fresh Market in Westport, with its floral shop, sushi bar, pharmacy and ample supply of services and amenities.

Buying fresh fish? Talk to the fish manager, a jovial, bouncy man who says he's "been in the fishing business for decades" and is ready to answer questions about the fresh salmon, shrimp, scallops or any other of the half dozen sea species he has on ice.

There is no such manager at Blue Parkway, and if there were, you could only talk about the buffalo and catfish, the only fresh fish offered. Want salmon or shrimp? Frozen section is down the aisle.

At the Sun Fresh in Westport, local brands like Shatto Milk Co. and The Roasterie aren't just present, they're bountiful.



Shatto has more than a dozen types of milk, with flavors including coffee, almond and cotton candy. In addition to prepackaged Roasterie coffee on the shelves, a kiosk at the end of an aisle allows customers to fill bags with whole beans from a dispenser.

Neither Shatto nor The Roasterie is available in East Side grocery stores.

Kim Nagel, the store director at the Blue Parkway Sun Fresh, 4209 E. 50th Terrace, says that while stocking certain foods may sound good, there's more to maintaining a successful grocery store.

"You can pick apart any store that you want to on what they have or don't have, but it's about if people request these things or not," Nagel says. "We're going to give our customers what they want. Not just what looks good."

Nagel says supply and demand and the demographics of the community have to be taken into consideration.

"For our location, we are very good," he says. "You have to understand, we have a different demographic than Westport."

He mentions how he tried to stock more no-salt products. "Those items are very slow-moving. And if people aren't buying it, it just sits on the shelves and goes to waste."

It's why, Nagel says, he showcases unhealthy foods. "Those items have to be high volume. If it's going on a display, I have to be able to sell cases of an item a week, not just a couple of packages."

Bob Smith, the Westport Sun Fresh store director who has been in the grocery business for decades, says part of the reason his store can offer such a variety is the location and clientele.

"This store is the most diverse operation I've ever been associated with," Smith says.

"We've got folks from wealthy areas like Fairway and Brookside shopping here, and also folks that are destitute and have a lot less money. ... Every operation is influenced by the households it serves. You've got to have the customer base bringing in the volume and the profitability if you want to be able to offer a greater variety."

One East Side grocery store has found that the customer base may want more than anyone expected.

'The store everyone wants to come to'

When Brunston first walked into the East Side's new Lipari Bros. Sun Fresh Market in the redeveloped Linwood Shopping Center this summer, she was startled.

"The first thing I saw was a salad bar," Brunston says. "I was surprised. To be honest, it almost felt out of place."

Beyond the salad bar, cheery, bright lighting was shining over displays neatly stocked with options rarely seen on the East Side — ripening mangoes and striped plantains, juniper-colored bunches of loose leaf spinach, poblano peppers and tomatillos.

On the left, a refrigerator stocked fresh herbs, pre-packaged salads and even the trendy, millennial-favored health drink, kombucha.

The long-awaited grocery store, at 3110 Prospect Ave., was billed by developers, city council members and community activists as the answer to the East Side's decades-long food desert plight. In a way, it stands as a symbol of Kansas City's commitment to East Side revitalization and equity.

The Linwood Sun Fresh is the first store east of Troost to offer certain amenities that could previously only be found on the west side. It's the first to offer fresh fish outside of catfish or buffalo. Shoppers can now purchase fresh, on-the-ice shrimp, salmon, tuna steaks, crab legs and more.

These new flourishes all happened, co-owner John Lipari says, because of the community.

"When we were planning the store, my wife and I, we'd go out and we had community meetings. We'd go and sit with people and listen to the things they wanted," Lipari says. "And they told us, 'We'd like to have a seafood section, a flower section. We'd like to have somewhere to be able to sit and have our breakfast.' So I told them, 'Well, we're going to have it.'"

In the months since the store opened in June, Lipari says he's found his customers to be even more health-conscious than expected. "I've got an organic produce department now," he says. "I didn't have that before."

Organic items can be expensive at times, and the options don't always fly off the shelves, but Lipari says that as long as customers show enough of an interest, the supply

will stay.

"I want to make this the store that everyone wants to come to. If enough people come to me and ask for it, I'm going to try and get it."

But the store might be a long drive or bus ride for customers who live farther south. Like Brunston, many East Side shoppers searching for quality head to Brookside.



'It's frustrating'

Living on The Paseo, 26-year-old Sean Dennie says his most convenient grocery store is the Metro Thriftway at the Brywood Centre strip mall on East 63rd Street.

Yet when it's time to go shopping, Dennie drives to the Brookside Price Chopper.

A bachelor, Dennie says he pretty much keeps his dinner menu simple. "A lot of chicken and potatoes," he says with a laugh. In theory, the Thriftway should be the one-stop shop he needs.

"That Thriftway stinks," Dennie says as he picks up a sack of potatoes from the vegetable bin in Brookside.

The tiled floors at the Thriftway are dingy. The grouting running along the bottom of the cooling stations housing meats and produce is worn.

"You walk in there and, you just," Dennie pauses. "You don't see this," he says, motioning to the Price Chopper aisles around him.

The director of the Metro Thriftway refused to give his name and declined to comment.

Marlana Dickerson, another East Side resident shopping in Brookside with her young daughter, said she'd like to stay east of Troost to get basic things like fresh fish, "but there isn't any," she says.

"It's frustrating," says Janay Reliford-Davis, another East Sider shopping at the Price Chopper, "having to travel out of your way and go elsewhere to go to a decent store and get good food."

Other than the Sun Fresh stores, nearly every other grocery store on the East Side is a discount store, such as a Save-a-Lot or Aldi.

"I like the idea that they're there," Brunston says of the discount stores. "It's affordable food for people that need it. But I don't want to buy things that are wrapped in plastic" she says, in reference to Aldi's produce selection, which packages items such as tomatoes, Brussels sprouts and lettuce.

"Isn't that the point of buying fresh produce? That you can look at the banana, you can look at the green pepper, at the onion, at the carrot? When something's wrapped in plastic, you can't do that. You don't know what you're going to get."

Still, it can be argued that discount stores like Aldi are doing more, faster to close the food inequality gap than big-box retailers.

Last month, aiming to take on upscale grocers like Whole Foods, Aldi announced an aggressive campaign to expand its natural, organic and fresh food offerings by 40 percent.

It's a decision that runs in lockstep with current food trends. A 2017 U.S. Department of Agriculture study found that consumer demand for organically produced goods continues to grow in double digits annually.

Aldi, based in Germany, also announced plans to spend \$5 billion over the next four years to build 700 new stores in the U.S. and remodel more than 1,300 with brighter lights, bigger aisles and less-cluttered shelves.

The changes are just the latest for Aldi, which in the past decade, through modernizing its stores and offering better quality food, has transformed from an oft-maligned chain to one of the fastest growing grocers in the world.

"There is a lot of data out there that shows that healthy food is profitable," says Kara Lubischer, an assistant extension professor at the University of Missouri and the founder of Stock Healthy, Shop Healthy, which partners with small grocers to provide healthier food.

That means working as closely with the community as the grocers themselves to get consumers to want to buy healthier (and sometimes more expensive) foods.

"We start with the demand first," Lubischer says. "Bringing together community coalitions and community partners and engaging customers in the conversation" to heighten interest in healthy foods. Then, Lubischer says, Stock Healthy, Shop Healthy teaches retailers how to adequately meet those needs.

Lipari says he and his team did their own canvassing around the community, to surprising results. "We asked customers if they thought bringing a nutritionist to the store once a month to teach shoppers how to cook, eat and shop healthier would do any good in this area. Come to find out, it absolutely would."

Nagel of the Blue Parkway Sun Fresh, on the other hand, says the idea hasn't made its way to his desk. "There's always room for improvement with any store," he says. "But there just hasn't been that big of a demand here for change."

A question of health

Having both knowledge of healthier foods as well as adequate exposure to them is paramount, studies say.

In 2011, after 15 years of studying the dietary habits and overall health of Americans, the Journal of the American Medical Association determined access to grocery stores — or lack thereof — had no connection to healthier diets. Instead, the bigger factors were knowledge about nutritional foods and access to them.

Nationwide, the black obesity rate is 51 percent higher than that of whites, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The diabetes rate is 77 percent higher, according to the National Institute of Health.

Locally, according to a 2015 500 Cities Project survey, East Side neighborhoods are afflicted with diabetes at nearly four times the rate as those west of Troost. The East Side also has double the rate of high blood pressure.

Lubischer suggests that stores place signs or "shop-talkers" to draw attention to the healthier items on the shelves and pair those healthy items with recipe cards to give ideas for meals.

"Turning those kiosks into taste tests or food demos that allow customers to try a new, healthy product is an option," she says. Grocery stores around the nation have been making concentrated efforts to make their stores healthier.

"In my opinion, people want healthy food. They know this is important," Lubischer says. "But food comes third. Safety and housing come first for a lower income community. ... Grocery stores should work with their communities to make eating healthier a viable option."

A few years ago, Brunston was talking with her mother about foods she eats now — sushi, snapper, whiting — foods she was never exposed to growing up. Her mother shared a mind-boggling memory: She did not know what broccoli was until she was an adult.

"My dad was a retired respiratory therapist at Truman," Brunston says. "And one day they had a potluck at work and someone brought broccoli. And he came home to my mom and was like, 'You should try to cook this.'"

Brunston continued: "That day my father brought home the broccoli, she told me that was the first time she'd ever had it. ... She grew up in a poor family, ate a lot of beans and rice growing up. She just never got exposed to it. I couldn't believe it."

"Being healthier people, better people. It starts in the house. It starts in the mindset," Brunston says.

And, it seems, in the grocery store, too.

Elm Grove Elementary students garden – and eat

By Michael Smith michael.smith@examiner.net

Some second, third and fourth graders at Elm Grove Elementary School in Independence get really excited when their parents get to eat lunch with them.

It's not only because they have their parents with them. Some of the vegetables served in the cafeteria were grown in garden beds maintained by the students outside the school.

"They will tell their parents, 'I am in the Garden Club. We grew this!'" Elm Grove teacher Mandy Vassalle said.

That's just one part of the Farm to Fort program, in which the Fort Osage School District collects

produce and fruit from local farmers to serve for lunch at each school, including some student-maintained vegetable gardens at Elm Grove, Buckner Elementary and at the Career and Technology Center.

Fort Osage is the first school district in the Eastern Jackson County area to have a program like this and only the fourth in the Kansas City area. It's a part of a national program called Farm to School.

The goals, according to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, are:

- Students consuming more fruits and vegetables.
- Students learning about agriculture and healthy eating.
- School food-service operations increasing both the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables served and

increasing their revenues from adult and student participation in school meal programs.

• Farmers diversifying their markets, securing contracts for their products and establishing grower collaboratives and cooperatives.



In the summer of 2017, a group of Fort Osage food service staff members went on a Farm to School bus tour. They visited some producers in Warrensburg.

"It piqued our interest to bring local produce to our school," Fort Osage Food Service Director Stacie Waller said. "We have a committee of 13 people with different backgrounds – some in education and some in the community. We're working with local producers to bring fresh fruit and vegetables to our schools."

"We are also partnering with the MU Extension Office that is part of the Farm to Missouri Program. Someone from their office is on our committee, as well. We're starting really slow, but it's taking off. It's more economical to buy local. It's just the right thing to do."

Some locally grown fruits and vegetables can be seen at some school cafeterias such as watermelon, cantaloupe, cucumbers and red and green papers, among other foods. A significant portion of the fruit and vegetables served comes from Moyer Farms in Richmond.

"We've had meetings with two other local farming groups, as well," Waller said. "And we had eight to 10 farming groups that are starting to get involved with the process."

Because some of the food is grown at the schools, Waller said that has encouraged some of the elementary students to eat healthier.

"They were very interested in trying the local produce that they normally wouldn't try at home," Waller said. "The kids take a huge amount of pride in what they did (at Elm Grove). It's fun and something different."

Elm Grove teacher Sara Green agreed. She oversees the students who work on the garden beds. She said the garden beds have been at the school for a few years and she is happy that the vegetables the students are helping produce are being used in the school's cafeteria, such as broccoli, green beans, sweet potatoes and radishes. The students plant the seeds, water the plants and harvest the vegetables. They also learn what vegetables can and cannot grow during certain seasons.

"We weren't able to do anything with the garden before besides sharing it with each other," Green said. "The kids get so excited because they get to provide food for their friends.

"My favorite part is kids learning where food comes from and how (the process of growing vegetables) works. When it comes from someone they know, the kids are more likely to try it."

In the future, Waller said she hopes the district can expand some of the gardens, have students take field trips to nearby farms and to have an addition greenhouse to the one that's at the Career and Technology Center.

"We're just starting slow with education and letting the parents know this is now available," Waller said. "We're getting the message out a little bit at a time."

KANSAS CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY LEVY QUESTION

ACCESS FOR ALL

KCLIBRARY.ORG/ELECTION

ABOUT THE LIBRARY QUESTION

More than ever, the Kansas City Public Library is central to the lives of the individuals, families, and communities it serves. From early childhood literacy to outreach for the elderly and disabled. From access to computers and the internet to civic and community engagement. On November 6, we are asking voters to authorize an 8-cent increase in the property tax based operating levy – the first such request in 22 years – to maintain and modernize facilities and sustain and enhance essential services.

THE NEED

The current level of funding, set in 1996, is no longer sufficient to sustain operations at the Library system's 10 locations and the current level of on-site and online services they provide. Demand in the community is great, as reflected by the **more than 4 million visitors** to the Library in 2017-18. Levy funds supporting its operations and services have grown by less than 1 percent annually over the past decade, failing to keep pace with residents' rising needs.

ELECTION DAY NOVEMBER 6, 2018



WITH LEVY APPROVAL, THE LIBRARY CAN:

- ► RESPOND TO GROWING COMMUNITY NEEDS
- ENHANCE LIBRARY SERVICES, PROGRAMS, AND SAFETY
- ► RENOVATE AND REPLACE AGING FACILITIES
- SUSTAIN AND EXPAND LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

YES

to the Library Question means:



Expanding Library services for children, students, seniors, families, and others



Extending Library hours, increasing access to programs and materials



Modernizing computers and other digital resources and expanding training



Renovating or replacing aging Library branches

NO

to the Library Question means:



Acquiring fewer new materials and resources including books, movies, music, magazines, databases, and other research tools



Cutting back Library hours, reducing access to computers, materials, services, and programs



Scaling back technology updates and likely falling short in meeting our community's growing digital needs



Making only basic repairs and postponing renovations; facilities will deteriorate

THE LIBRARY IMPACTS LIVES | 2017-2018



ENHANCING CHILDREN'S & YOUTH LITERACY

Children's programs, including story times and Friday Night Family Fun events, drew **73,084** participants.

The Library's Books to Go program delivered **101,600** materials to approximately **4,700** children at preschools and childcare centers.

Participation in youth summer reading, designed to maintain reading retention between school years, totaled **3,483** children and teens, a 55 percent rise from the previous year.



HELPING SENIORS STAY INDEPENDENT

Seniors and others who are homebound received **13,985** books and other Library materials.

More than **31,000** seniors were Library card-holders.

Library outreach services were provided to **16** senior living communities.



ADVANCING COMPUTER ACCESS & LITERACY

Computer and wireless internet sessions at Library locations totaled **800,026**.

Public computer use totaled **335,871** hours.

Individuals seeking to improve their computer skills participated in **31,632** classes, learning circles, one-to-one sessions, and online training sessions.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION FOR ALL



4,033,872

In-person and digital visitors to the Library



1,948,409

Items checked out by community members



69,800

Inquiries and information requests fielded by librarians



198,877

Attendees of the Library's acclaimed adult and children programs



LIBRARY QUESTION

For the purpose of renovating and replacing aging Library facilities, enhancing spaces, safety and programming for children, seniors and families, expanding services, access to computers and collections to serve public demand, and for the general operation of public libraries, shall the Board of Trustees of the Kansas City Public Library District be authorized to levy an additional eight cent (\$.08) tax over the present property tax for the free public library?

HOW WOULD THIS LEVY INCREASE AFFECT MY PROPERTY TAXES?

HOME MARKET VALUE	ADDED YEARLY COST	ADDED MONTHLY COST
\$75,000	\$11.40	\$0.95
\$100,000	\$15.20	\$1.27
\$150,000	\$22.80	\$1.90
\$200,000	\$30.40	\$2.53

Taxes based on lower, assessed value

02

Every Student, Every Day

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Join other school, nonprofit and civic leaders for a one-day summit to strengthen the connection between school attendance and academic achievement through research-based practices and strategies.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2018 8:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M.

Kauffman Foundation Conference Center 4801 Rockhill Rd, Kansas City, MO 64110

HOSTED BY

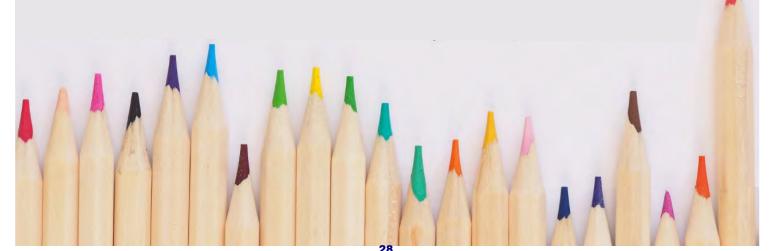






This summit is for superintendents, school board members, principals, counselors, teachers, nurses, social workers, school resource officers, and nonprofits who work with schools and funders.

FOR EVENT DETAILS, SEE OTHER SIDE.



Every Student, Every Day

WHY STUDENT ATTENDANCE?

Educators understand how critical school attendance is for academic success. Federal and state policy has raised the bar for districts and schools in their duty to lower chronic absenteeism rates; and increasingly, education systems across the country are developing effective strategies for responding to this challenge.

ABOUT THE EVENT

Hear from the nation's foremost expert on the issue, Hedy N. Chang, founder and executive director of Attendance Works, a national non-profit initiative focused on advancing student success and reducing equity gaps by addressing chronic absence.

- Connect with other educators from across the metro around strategies for improving school attendance and reducing chronic absence.
- Choose from a set of action-oriented breakout sessions designed to share knowledge, spur collaboration and build upon local efforts to ensure student success.
- Breakout sessions are scheduled to include the social service safety net, fostering a strong school culture, building public awareness, student mobility and attendance, and more.

SCHEDULE

8:30 a.m. Registration and Breakfast

9 - 10:10 a.m. Opening Remarks and Keynote Speaker, Hedy Chang, Executive Director, Attendance Works

10:20 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Breakout Sessions

12:15 p.m. Lunch and Panel Discussion, "Reducing Chronic Absence: What Works"

1:25 p.m. Concluding Remarks

1:30 - 2:30 p.m. (Optional) Post-Summit Discussion: Using Data to Inform Strategy

REGISTRATION

Register online: https://tinyurl.com/ya4btkrm

For additional information, contact Jim MacDonald at jim.macdonald@uwgkc.org.







2018 LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL EVENTS AT LINC CARING COMMUNITIES SITES

In communities today, 15.1 million children take care of themselves after the school day ends. Afterschool programs keep kids safe, help working families and inspire learning. Join us, along with 7,500+ afterschool programs nationwide, in celebrating our afterschool programs.

Center School District

Boone Elementary School

Carnival & Resource Fair Saturday, Oct. 6, 1-5pm

Grandview School District

Butcher-Greene Elementary

Trunk or Treat Thursday, Oct. 25, 5:30-7pm

Conn-West Elementary

Let My Light Shine! Thursday, Oct. 25, 5-5:45pm

Martin City K-8

Block Party! Thursday, Oct. 25, 6:30-8:30pm

Meadowmere Elementary

Celebrate Diversity Thursday, Oct. 25, 5:30-7:30pm

Hickman Mills School District

Compass Elementary School

Happy Healthy Circus Thursday, Oct. 25, 5-6:30pm

Dobbs Elementary School

Mad Science Extravaganza Thursday, Oct. 25, 4:30pm

Ingels Elementary School

Family Game Night Thursday, Oct. 25, 5:30-7pm

Johnson Elementary School

Trunk or Treat Wednesday, Oct. 31

Millennium at Santa Fe Elementary School

Let's Celebrate Thursday, Oct. 25, 5:15pm

Smith-Hale Middle School & Hickman Mills Freshman Center

Fall Festival Thursday, Oct. 25, 5-7pm

Symington Elementary School

It Came from the Library Friday, Oct. 26, 4-6pm

Kansas City Public Schools

ACCPA

STEM-tacular Thursday, Oct. 25, 5pm

Border Star Montessori

Fall Family Fun Festival Wednesday, Oct. 24, 4:30-6:30pm

Carver Elementary School

Carnival Thursday, Oct. 25, 6-7pm

Faxon Elementary

Science in the City Thursday, Oct. 25, 5-6:30pm

Foreign Language Academy

Chili Potluck Friday, Oct. 26, 6-7:30pm

Garcia Elementary School

Fall Festival Friday, Oct. 26, 5-6:30pm

Garfield Elementary School

Trunk or Treat Wednesday, Oct. 24, 4:30-6:30

Gladstone Elementary School

Minute to Win It Thursday, Oct. 25, 5-7pm

Holliday Montessori

Face Painting, Balloon Crafting & More Thursday, Oct. 25, 6-8pm



James Elementary School

Fall Festival Thursday, Oct. 25, 4-6pm

Longfellow Elementary

Harvest Festival Friday, Oct. 26, 5-6:30pm

Melcher Elementary School

Shine Melcher Shine! Oct. 22-26

Pitcher Elementary School

Car Safety Thursday, Oct. 25, 4-5pm

Rogers Elementary School

Spooktacular Carnival Thursday, Oct. 25, 5-6:30pm

Troost Elementary

Pitch a Tent Wednesday, Oct. 17, 3:30-5:30pm

Wendell Phillips Elementary

LINC in the Spotlight! Friday, Oct. 26, 5:15-6pm

Whittier Elementary

STEM Family Game Night Thursday, Oct. 25, 5pm