

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF UNIVERSITY CITY CONNECTIONS

DEDICATED TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

A publication connecting the School District of University City and Parents in the University City Community

September - October 2008

Calendar Highlights:

- October
- 2 NH Donuts With Dad (7:45A)
Board of Education Mtg (7P)
 - 3 JGEC Free Immunizations (9A)
 - 8 BW PTO Meeting (6:30P)
 - 9 BW Papa John's Pizza Night
 - 11 Community Engagement (9:30A
at JGEC)
 - 14 Trivia Night registration deadline
DH PTO Mtg (6P)
BW MAP Dinner (6:30P)
Community Engagement (6:30P
at JGEC)
 - 15 BW MAP Breakfast (7:15A)
Meet the Superintendent (9A at
McNair)
UCHS AA Mtg (6:30P)
UCHS PTO Mtg (7P)
 - 16 FP 1st and 2nd Grade Music
Program (6:30P)
Board of Education Mtg (7P)
UCHS Athletic Boosters (7P)
 - 17 Schools Closed
 - 18 UCHS Homecoming Parade,
Football Game and Dance
 - 21 Brittany Dine Out (6-8P)
 - 23 NH Muffins With Mom (7:45A)
 - 25 UCEF/UCHS AA Trivia Night
(6-10P at Heman CC)
 - 27 Early Release
Parent/Teacher Conf. (4-8P)
DH Grandparents' Breakfast (8A)
DH Book Fair (3:30P)
FP Book Fair (4P)
BW Book Fair (4P) & Borders
Gift Card Sales begin
 - 28 DH Book Fair (3:30-6:15P)
 - 29 Early Release
Parent/Teacher Conf. (4-7:30P)
DH Book Fair (3:30P)
FP Book Fair (4P)
BW Book Fair (4P)
FP Classroom Fall Parties (2:30P)
 - 31 Schools Closed, Offices Open

For more information about school and district events click on the "Events Calendar" button on the right side of the District's home page at www.ucityschools.org or call 314/290-4019.

Missouri's Teacher of the Year for 2008-2009 school year

During a surprise assembly at University City High School, social studies teacher Margaret Williams learned that she would be Missouri's 2008-2009 Teacher of the Year.

Last spring, Williams, along with Mariah Spanglet, a Special School District of St. Louis County teacher assigned to Flynn Park Elementary School, were the only St. Louis area candidates among the six state finalists in the Missouri competition.

Williams will be honored during a special recognition banquet on November 19 in Jefferson City. As the Missouri Teacher of the Year, she is a candidate for National Teacher of the Year. This announcement is typically made in April.

School board liaisons for SY2008-2009

Each school year, the University City Board of Education assigns additional responsibilities to its members, including the role of liaison to particular schools and representatives appointed to various committees. School liaison assignments for the School District of University City for the 2008-2009 school year are:

Julia Goldstein ECEC	Bob Elgin
Barbara Jordan Elementary	Todd Gilyard
Delmar-Harvard Elementary	Meg McClelland
Flynn Park Elementary	Meg McClelland
Jackson Park Elementary	Tom Peters
Nathaniel Hawthorne Elementary	Stacy Clay
Pershing Elementary	Trudy Moon
Brittany Woods Middle	Ellen Bern
University City High	Stacy Clay
Lieberman Learning Center	Trudy Moon
Adult Education & Literacy	Ellen Bern

Superintendent forums

To keep the channels of communication open, Superintendent Joylynn Wilson will continue to host "Meet the Superintendent" forums. Morning meetings are scheduled for 9 a.m. on October 15 in the McNair Building, 8136 Groby Road, and February 11 in a location still to be determined. Evening sessions begin at 6 p.m. on December 10 at Pershing Elementary, 6761 Bartmer, and on April 22 at Brittany Woods Middle School, 8125 Groby Road.

For more information, call 314/290-4002.

District requests early Fourth Cycle MSIP review

The Fourth Cycle of the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) will be held November 10-13, 2008 in the School District of University City. This is not a preliminary review, but a real review.

"Superintendent Joylynn Wilson has requested that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) conduct the evaluation two years early so that the District can receive feedback about its strengths and immediately address any instructional concerns that surface," said Chauna Williams, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. "By requesting this early review, the District maintains its accreditation status."

The MSIP review evaluates the District's implementation of the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP), approved by the University City Board of Education and DESE. Unlike Third Cycle MSIP, which focused on

MSIP continued on back

Destination UCity Schools meeting schedule revised

Since July, several hundred University City parents, residents and other stakeholders have attended the Destination UCity Schools meetings which are aimed at soliciting community input that will help determine the district's future.

The meeting schedule has been revised. The next set of meetings, which would have focused on Family and Community Involvement, but now will feature a discussion on the current state and future needs of the district's building facilities, will be held on Saturday, October 11 and Tuesday, October 14 (formerly October 7). The October 11 meeting will be held from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Julia Goldstein ECEC, located at 737 Kingsland, and October 14 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Pershing Elementary

Destination UCity Schools continued on back

Need Assistance?

If you are in need of special accommodations or assistance in order to participate in a school- or district-sponsored event, contact Eric Gonzalez-Rubio, operations supervisor, at 314/290-4004.

MSIP *continued from front*

documentation, the Fourth Cycle of MSIP focuses on evidence of student achievement.

During the November review, a team composed of representatives from DESE and other state educators, trained in the MSIP review process, will observe every classroom in the District, conduct interviews of all principals, counselors, nurses and librarians, as well as conduct focus groups to gain insight about instructional practices in the District. In addition, the team will evaluate the District's curriculum and preselected teacher assessments for alignment with instructional practice. All students and parents will have an opportunity to participate in the MSIP process by completing the Advanced Questionnaire survey. In addition, Central Office personnel and members of the school board will be interviewed. On the last day of the review, the Superintendent will receive a preliminary report outlining the MSIP team's findings. A comprehensive evaluation of the District's educational programs and services will be provided to the District at a later date.

The MSIP process focuses on standards that are organized into three categories: nine process standards, 11 resource standards and 14 performance standards. Process standards focus on the quality of instructional implementation. Resource standards support student performance and include instructional materials, whether the District has an adequate number of certified staff members and class size. Performance, the most important standard, determines the District's accreditation. DESE examines the first two standards, because how we use our resources, and the processes that we use, directly affect performance.

"The District is excited about the upcoming review because it is an opportunity to improve our practice and better serve the students of the School District of University City," Williams added.

MSIP Cycle Five is scheduled for 2013.

Parental rights under No Child Left Behind

Under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110), public school districts are required by law to provide parents with certain information. When requested, the School District of University City will release to parents/guardians the following information in a timely manner:

- ◆ whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction,
- ◆ whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or another provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived,
- ◆ whether children are provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications, and
- ◆ what baccalaureate degree major the teacher has and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification.

In addition to the information that parents may request, districts must provide each individual parent the following:

- ◆ information on the achievement level of their child in each of the state academic assessments as required under this part, and
- ◆ timely notice that their child has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

Destination UCity Schools *continued from front*

School, located at 6761 Bartmer Ave. The changes were made to allow the administration to better prepare for our presentation on District Facilities. A separate session on Family and Community Involvement will be held in January 2009.

The remaining dates, topics and locations for the Destination UCity Schools meetings are:

- **Final Recommendations for Grade Level Configurations:** Wednesday, November 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Pershing Elementary School & Saturday, November 8, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Julia Goldstein Early Education Center
- **Finances & Development of Final Recommendations:** Tuesday, November 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Barbara Jordan Elementary School & Saturday, November 22, 9:30-11:30 p.m., Julia Goldstein Early Education Center
- **Final Recommendations & Presentation to the Board of Education:** Thursday, December 4, 7 p.m., McNair Administration Building

Light snacks and childcare is available. For more information, contact Daphne Dorsey at 314/290-4016.

Ten students receive recognition through National Merit program

University City High School (UCHS) seniors Nils Carlsson, Thomas Kenyon, Zachary Levinson, Adam Mizes, Matthew Shafer-Skelton and Nicholas Shafer-Skelton are semifinalists in the 2009 National Merit Scholarship Program. They are among 16,000 high school seniors from across the nation who will compete for some 8,200 Merit Scholarship awards worth \$33 million next spring. They entered the 2009 competition by taking the 2007 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. All six University City High School seniors will be notified in April if they advance as finalists.

To be a finalist, a semifinalist must have a high performing academic record, be endorsed and recommended by the school principal and earn SAT scores that confirm the student's earlier qualifying test performance. About 90 percent of Semifinalists advance to the Finalist stage of the scholarship program. Half of those are selected as National Merit Scholarship winners.

Three other UCHS seniors, Stefan Bach, Eli Katz and Carol Simpson, were designated as National Merit Scholarship Program commended students. Commended students place among the top five percent of the more than one million students who took the 2007 PSAT test.

UCHS senior Julian Nicks has been named an outstanding participant in the 2009 National Achievement Scholarship Program.

CONNECTIONS is a publication of the School District of University City. Published monthly throughout the school year, containing information of interest to parents of children throughout the school district.

Superintendent of SchoolsJoylynn L. Wilson
 Communications SpecialistCarolAnn Cole

Please send suggestions or comments to: School District of University City, Communications and Media Services, 8136 Groby Road, University City, Missouri 63130; call: 314/290-4019 or e-mail ccole@u-city.k12.mo.us.

Applicants for admission or employment, students, parents of elementary and secondary school students, employees, sources of referral, and all professional organizations that have entered into agreements with the School District of University City are hereby notified that our School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. Inquiries or concerns regarding the application of this notice may be referred to our School District's Compliance Coordinator for civil rights laws, Dr. Judy Sclair, Assistant Superintendent/Human Resources, 8136 Groby Road, University City, MO 63130, phone (314) 290-4023. Any person who is unable to resolve a problem or grievance arising under Title VI (race/color/national origin), Title IX (sex), the Age Discrimination Act (age), Section 504 (disability), or Title II of the ADA (disability), may contact the Office for Civil Rights, Region VII, 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, MO 64114; phone (816) 268-0550.