



INSIDE

the School District of University City

A publication for and about the staff of the School District of University City

March 2009

New partnership helps redesign middle school instruction

As part of *Destination U. City Schools* recommendations, the School District of University City and Washington University are working collaboratively on a new academic reform initiative focusing on Brittany Woods Middle School. Through the Middle School Design Partnership, they will collectively develop a plan to redesign the curriculum and restructure Brittany Woods into a “true” middle school that will be implemented around the concept of inquiry through project-based learning and include extensive professional development. For more details, visit www.ucityschools.org. More information will be posted as the collaborative progresses.

District embarks on educational reforms

The School District of University City is sponsoring two public forums to update stakeholders on plans for educational reforms to restructure and redesign the District’s PreK-12 academic and instructional programs, based on recommendations by *Destination U. City Schools* community engagement program. Dr. Chauna Williams, assistant superintendent for curriculum & instruction, will discuss the topic, which will include plans for implementing a “true” middle school model at Brittany Woods Middle School designed around the concept of inquiry through project-based learning and teachers as learners through Professional Learning Communities.

“We want to change the quality of the instructional programming that we provide our students,” said Williams. “School reform is a combination of opportunities for teacher learning, excellent instruction and facilities that support student learning.”

The one-and-a-half hour forums are scheduled for Wednesday, March 11; 9 a.m. at Julia Goldstein ECEC and 6:30 p.m. in the McNair Board Room.

Who sets the PACE in U. City?

Due to spring break, PACEsetter (Positively Affecting Community Education) nominations will be accepted through March 27. For more details or to serve on the selection committee, email ccole@u-city.k12.mo.us.

School tours give voters an up-close look inside buildings

On March 24 and 25, the School District of University City will host Open House tours at all of its neighborhood schools, giving residents a first hand look at the current state of our buildings prior to the April 7 election.

The District is seeking passage of a \$53.6 million zero-tax-rate increase bond issue that calls for the construction of two new schools on the current sites where Barbara C. Jordan and Pershing Elementary Schools are located as well as renovation of the District’s existing elementary, middle and high schools.

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Get the GOOG-411

Google’s new 411 service is free, fast and easy to use. Call 1-800-GOOG-411 (1-800-466-4411), and a google operator will connect you directly with the local business for free. Note: Some phone companies may charge time usage for the call.

To post current calendar or school event information on the District website, contact your school key communicator.



School Tours continued from front

Visitors will be able to see up close a myriad of structural issues such as deteriorating foundations, water damaged walls and ceilings, “odd” classroom configurations, loose wiring, exposed pipes, aging heating and cooling systems and other challenging conditions. Each School Open House and tour will be held from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. during Parent/Teacher Conferences.

For more information, call your neighborhood school or 314-290-4016.

What should our new and renovated schools look like?

In January 2009, the School District of University City began conducting and organizing Facilities Imperative: Community Engagement Sessions with architects from Bond Wolfe and the community to scope the details of the new construction and renovations proposed in the Proposition U bond issue.

A districtwide open house has been scheduled for 5 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, April 2, in the McNair Board Room, located at 8136 Groby Road (63130) to share with the community the final recommendations from these sessions.

For more information and summaries of the meetings, visit www.ucityschools.org.

BEYOND OUR WALLS

Kevin Kearns, Yale Team’s seventh grade math teacher at Brittany Woods Middle School, arranged for *St. Louis Post Dispatch* columnist Sylvester Brown to speak to the Yale Team on February 24. Brown featured his visit in his February 26 article that can be viewed at www.stltoday.com.



UCHS dance teacher **Heidi Morgan** will be honored by Special School District during their “Salute to Ambassadors Banquet” on March 4. She is the recipient of the SSD Special Ambassador Award, their highest recognition given to community members who demonstrate an extraordinary commitment to the students and/or staff of SSD. Also recognized will be community volunteer Calla Smorodin.



LLC teachers **Dan Holden** and **Cathleen Callahan** presented at CSD/PRDC’s “Best Practices Conferences III - Honoring Teachers, Classrooms and Schools That Get Results” on February 26. Their topic, “Alternative Voices,” explained how teachers meet frequently with students as their advocates and how students are given more of a voice. They shared 1) work based on Diana Day’s Education Dedication statements, advocate groups, goal setting, meetings and recognition; 2) LLC’s new Outdoor Art Gallery and 3) The Alternative Voices CD. Volume VI was produced in 2008.



UCHS Jazz Band director **Stanley Coleman** and musicians received awards for Top Trombone Section, Best Jazz Soloist, Violin and top honor of First Place Overall in the high school category in the Southern Illinois University - Carbondale Jazz Festival on February 21. Upcoming performances include An Afternoon of Jazz with UCHS Jazz Band at the Sheldon Concert Hall at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 29. Tickets are \$10 and available through the UCHS Jazz Band.

Don’t miss FAME - performed by UCHS students on April 4-5!

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Courtesy of the School District of University City.

INSIDE the School District of University City is published 11 times per school year the first week of each month except July. The August issue is mailed to all staff homes, subsequent issues will be emailed to all staff with District e-mail addresses. Building secretaries are asked to post the current issue for all staff to read. If you have any information to contribute to this publication, please contact CarolAnn Cole at ccole@u-city.k12.mo.us, phone 314/290-4019, fax 314/725-7846 or inner-office mail to McNair Administration Building.

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