



## Friday news and updates

1 message

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*Health of a Lion*

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
UNIVERSITY CITY  
Transform the Life of Every Student Every Day!

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Hello U. City Schools Families:

I hope you are all well and taking in a delightful spring. It was wonderful to welcome groups of sophomores and juniors to the high school's Distance Learning Hubs this past Thursday. I have several updates for you today regarding important topics, including state testing and an upcoming Town Hall.

### **Board of Education**

The University City Board of Education held its election for two board seats on April 2. We welcome Dr. Monica Stewart as a new member to the Board and congratulate Joanne Soudah who will begin her third term on the Board this month.

### **District Town Hall Meeting**

Please mark your calendars for Tuesday, May 4 at 9 a.m. or 5 p.m. for all-parent Town Hall Webinars to discuss plans for the 2021-22 school year. We will further offer an in-person Town Hall the same day at 6:30 p.m. in the high school library. We are currently finalizing next year's plans for in-person instruction with a second option for virtual learning, understanding that a safe response to COVID-19 will continue to drive our decisions. Please register for any of the three Town Hall sessions at [www.ucityschools.org/TownHall050421](http://www.ucityschools.org/TownHall050421).

### **Staff Vaccinations**

I am pleased to announce that a preliminary voluntary survey of staff coupled with data from our March staff vaccination clinic indicates that about 53% of 447 total staff members will be fully vaccinated as of April 18. We will be following up further with those who did not fill out the survey so we can get a more accurate percentage, but it is our belief that our overall vaccination rate is significantly higher, particularly among classroom

teachers.

## Student Vaccinations

We have a vaccine distribution partner and expect to offer an on-site vaccination clinic for students 16 and older very soon. This would likely take place on a Wednesday. Please stay tuned for more information.

## DESE state testing requirements for this spring

The District has received official notification from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regarding requirements for this spring's statewide MAP testing for students in Grades 3-12. These tests are referred to as "Grade-Level, End-of-Course" (EOC) and "Map-A Assessments."

**DESE is requiring that all public school students statewide take the standardized assessments in-person in a proctored setting.** There is no virtual option. The state is further requiring that 85% of our students participate in the testing.

DESE has given all public school districts a window to administer the assessments starting in early April and continuing through June 15, 2021. If the District is unable to have 85% of students tested during this window, it will be required to test any student that has not taken the assessments next September to reach that 85% mark.

DESE believes the benchmarks are important despite the negative influence the pandemic has had on learning and in-person instruction. We must strive to comply.

In high school, students typically take four required tests at the end of coursework in Algebra 1, English 2, Biology and Government. Senior parents, please note that all four of these End of Course Exams must be completed before graduation.

In grades 3-8, we are planning a variety of in-school testing dates for students who are currently working virtually from homes or in high school Distance Learning Hubs. Students who attend regular, in-person instruction will be tested while attending school. All testing, of course, will utilize COVID-19 screening, physical distancing of students and desks, mask-wearing and regular sanitizing and hand-washing.

Please stay tuned for updates from your school principal about testing dates and times, and make sure to plan ahead so your child does not miss the spring window to take the testing. You can also learn more about the testing situation in this [DESE FAQ document](#).

## U Are Special retiree and honoree event

On May 12, the District will celebrate its 2020 and 2021 retirees and further honor several people and organizations who went above and beyond to support the District during a global pandemic. The invitation-only reception will take place at 5:30 p.m. outdoors in the Brittany Woods Courtyard or inside Brittany Woods in case of inclement weather.

## Some Spring Fun

Join us on May 1 in front of Brittany Woods Middle School from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. for **Growing Together**, a safe outside celebration of our resilience and growth during this hard year. The event is open to all District families and will include trap yoga, fitness fun, a dunk tank, games, entertainment and the chance to plant your own veggie garden box if you order ahead through the [UCity Schools Food Garden Network](#). Attendees can also participate in a jumbo public art project that will embody just how much we've grown together as a community in the past year. Stay tuned for more information soon!

## Welcome Back Sophomores & Juniors



## Grab & Go Team



## UCHS Academic U





**Growing Together**  
The UCity Schools  
Food Garden Network

is a new student-driven sustainability initiative that provides FREE seedlings, gardening supplies and green thumb support so District families can grow their own food.



Join the New  
**Food Garden Network!**  
www.ucityschools.org/  
GrowingTogetherSignUp



Learn more at  
www.ucityschools.org/  
GrowingTogether2021



**Key Dates**

This is the time of year when schools host multiple events. Please check your weekly emails from principals so you don't miss the fun!

- **Now through Sunday, April 18** - [Join the UCity Schools Food Garden Network](#) to order free seedlings and garden supplies to grow fresh veggies.
- **Wednesday, April 14** at 6 p.m. - Alive and Well Communities Virtual Session: Know Thyself - We Are More Than Our Experiences. To register, [click here](#).
- **Friday, April 23** - Early release day.
- **Friday, April 23**, noon to 3 p.m. - Senior cap and gown pickup in front of the high school.
- **Saturday, May 1**, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Growing Together SDUC celebration in front of Brittany Woods Middle School. A day to celebrate our strength and resilience over the past year: Music, trap yoga, a public art project, games, dunk tank, make a veggie planter and more.
- **Tuesday, May 4**, 9 a.m., 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. - Two virtual and one in-person Parent Town Hall sessions to discuss the 2021-2022 school year. [Click here to register for a session](#).

As always, you can reach me at [shardin@ucityschools.org](mailto:shardin@ucityschools.org) or on my cell phone at 314-399-0941 if you have any questions or concerns.

In Service of our Children,

Sharonica Hardin-Bartley, Ph.D., PHR  
*Superintendent*

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