



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 30, 2019

Contact: Meredith Pierce

314-532-4221

TWO SLPS SCHOOLS TO LAUNCH CONSORTIUM PARTNERSHIP NETWORK

Ashland and Meramec Elementary Schools to Pilot New Education Model

ST. LOUIS, MO., July 30, 2019 – This will be a new kind of school year for teachers, students, parents and community partners of **Ashland** (3921 Newstead, 63115) and **Meramec** (2745 Meramec, 63118) elementary schools in the Saint Louis Public School District. Teachers are back early to continue powering up year one of a three-year pilot (August 2019-2021) of the new Consortium Partnership Network (CPN), a model that empowers school teams with the autonomy to make decisions that are in the best interests of the students and families they serve.

According to **Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kelvin Adams**, this new approach will take a concerted effort by the District and its partners. “It is important to remember CPN schools are still SLPS schools,” said Dr. Adams. “They are now part of our growing portfolio of schools – complementing Magnet, Choice and Neighborhood school offerings. CPN schools, however, are unique in that they have the flexibility to design new strategies with a singular mission of creating better outcomes for students.”

The CPN and its Board of Directors operate independently of the District, but are accountable to the Board of Education of the City of St. Louis (BOE). The CPN Board includes Dr. Adams, a parent representative (**Vivian Carbin**) and appointees from the Board of Education (**Susan Jones**), St. Louis City Board of Aldermen (**Dr. Priscilla Dowden-White**) and the Office of the Mayor (**Marcus Robinson**).

Vivian Carbin, a parent at Ashland, said, “I am excited to be a voice for the parents of the CPN initiative. We are starting with a blank slate, and we are being given the autonomy help rebuild our educational programs based on exactly what’s needed and what is essential to meet the needs of students at these two schools.”

“The CPN model represents a significant investment in education strategy,” said Dr. Adams. “In addition to qualifying for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s comprehensive school funding for lower-performing schools, the launch is supported by the [St. Louis Public Schools Foundation](#). Our key partner in the CPN is [SkipNV](#), a system design organization that works to create educational equity, which has provided design and launch support for the initiative.”

Executive Director of SkipNV Dr. Saras Chung explained, “SkipNV is honored to serve as a design partner with Saint Louis Public Schools to develop a promising school model that puts decision-making in the hands of educators who are most attuned to student needs. We hope that this model can foster healthy school climates to best serve children and their families.”

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In preparation for this launch, Dr. Adams said District leadership spent the better part of last school year investigating models and examining data. “We believe the timing is right,” said Dr. Adams. “Our recent performance in core subject areas is encouraging, and SLPS is in a good position to build on that momentum. However, in order to achieve real breakthroughs, schools must have more autonomy. Principals, teachers, students and parents need the freedom to make decisions relative to their schools.”

The CPN-style formula has been piloted successfully in large school districts across the country and is favored by State and Federal policies of [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#). This individualized approach, SLPS leaders believe, will also help to support equity in resources. “The schools will continue to receive a proportional share of the District budget, but will be able to determine the best way to apply those funds in order to ensure that every child has what he or she needs to succeed,” said Dr. Adams.

District teams have worked hard over the past 10 years to reclaim full accreditation in 2017, but as Dr. Adams acknowledges, with 17 SLPS schools targeted by the state as underperforming, there is still a long way to go. “Ashland and Meramec are led by progressive principals and teacher-leaders who opted in for this new experience and who, I believe, can be counted on to ensure the best possible start and outcomes for our students,” he said.

One of the CPN’s first decisions was the June hiring of **CPN Executive Director Jay Hartman**, whom Dr. Adams describes as an educator with a proven track record of teaching and leading in both high- and low-performing urban schools. Hartman said, “I am excited to be part of this process. The District’s CPN is a unique opportunity to take what I have learned and apply it in a different context in service to our students and their families. We are re-envisioning what community school success looks like.”

Teams started meeting last semester to dedicate extra time to a full needs assessment, said Hartman. They followed up with a three-year strategic plan and professional development outline. That preparation led to one of their first key decisions, the adoption of new ELA curricula. **Ashland Principal Dr. Paula Boddie** explained, “We vetted a variety of options and ultimately voted to adopt a program from *Amplify* called [Core Knowledge](#). It’s both a knowledge-based and skill-based process that is vertically aligned from pre-k to fifth grade. The knowledge-based units, in particular, lend themselves to more effective learning opportunities outside the classroom.”

Dr. Adams said, “We are optimistic the CPN pilots will succeed and provide the data we need to decide how, where and when to extend the model in order to impact more SLPS students and families.”

For more information on the District’s new CPN, visit www.slps.org/CPN.

About Saint Louis Public Schools (SLPS)

Saint Louis Public Schools has been preparing students for a bright future since 1838. The District serves approximately 22,000 children in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. With more than 70 schools and academic programs, including Magnet and Choice schools, SLPS has a school to fit every child’s needs. For more information about SLPS, visit the District’s website at www.slps.org and follow the District on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#).

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