

# Parent Pulse

St. Louis Public Schools



801 North 11th Street  
St. Louis, MO 63101  
(314) 231-3720  
www.slps.org

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*Parent Pulse* is a newsletter designed to keep parents of the St. Louis Public School District informed about news and events associated with their school system. This publication is produced at no cost to the district or taxpayers. The advertising contained in the *Parent Pulse* envelope offsets the cost of producing and distributing the newsletter. The district does not endorse any of the companies whose ads appear with this publication.

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## Students Have Fun Preparing for the MAP

In preparation for the 2008-2009 school year MAP Exams, students across the District participated in a variety of activities to encourage learning and promote healthy habits.

Approximately 260 students from Kindergarten to 5th grade attended a "MAP Rally" at Lexington Elementary School to honor students who performed proficient and advanced on the MAP test in 2008 as well as to hear a motivational performance by Rapper Joka.

Shepard Elementary hosted Daniel Dancer, the famed artist from Art For the Sky. Dancer created a giant living painting of the famed Birdman Tablet from the Cahokia sub-tribe of the Illiniwek tribe. More than 160 students and teachers crouched outside posing for the picture taken from a crane more than 80 feet in the air.

Students at Big Picture Middle School @ Turner Branch hosted a "Map Festival" in which students turned their classrooms into a celebratory and educational MAP station with lesson booths, content games, prizes, and much more.



Hodgen Elementary's basketball team "creamed" their coaches and teachers during a basketball game during the school's "CREAM the MAP" rally.

Stevens Middle Community Education Center provided test-taking tip workshops for students before the exam to provide support for students at each grade level as they took the MAP exams.

The students at Mann eMINTS Academy were rewarded for their incredible effort during the MAP testing by "Spraying the Principal with Silly String!"

Students at Big Picture Elementary @ Des Peres received a lesson in economics during MAP testing. Students earned a paycheck, up to \$35.00 a day, for practicing positive behavior and test taking skills. After the third week of testing, students presented their paychecks in a simulated bank where they received Wildcat cash to purchase various items such as snacks, toy items, school supplies, No homework passes, and a game day pass.

According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the MAP Grade-Level assessments were created not only to assess knowledge, but also to measure how well a student can apply that knowledge. The Grade-Level assessments use three different types of questions or items. In addition to selected-response (SR), or multiple-choice questions, the exams include short-answer, or constructed-response (CR) questions. With these items, students can construct or supply an answer rather than choosing from a list of choices.

## Students Hear a “Who!”

“Children want the same things we want. To laugh, to be challenged, to be entertained and delighted,” said Theodor Seuss Geisel, also known as Dr. Seuss, who for more than 50 years has served as a legendary icon stressing the importance of reading.

March 2nd, Dr. Seuss’ birthday, kicked off a week of celebrating for students. They paid tribute to the life and literature of Dr. Seuss by reading books, playing games, making snacks and a variety of other activities.

On Monday students were giggling with excitement at Mason eMINTS Academy as they spent the day dressed in their pajama best while they read legendary works by Dr. Seuss, such as *Cat in the Hat*, *Horton Hears a Who!*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, and *Oh the Places You Will Go!* Preschool to 5th grade students also decorated classrooms and doors, made *Cat in the Hat* hats, *Cat in the Hat* snacks, *Green Eggs and Ham*, and had *Ready Readers* visit classrooms to read stories.

Later that day, another school, Sigel Elementary Community Education Center, had a visit by Chris Guinther, Missouri’s National Education Association president, and the *Cat in the Hat* himself. They were

touring the state to promote reading through the NEA’s Read Across America. The students laughed and clapped as they listened to stories and saw magic tricks during the performance. However, the table quickly turned as approximately 50 students, proud and excited, sang and danced in a 45-minute presentation that regaled their invited guests.

On Wednesday, March 4th, Farragut Elementary School welcomed enthusiastic readers from organizations such as Local Teachers Union 420, Harris Stowe State College and Alpha



Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. In addition, Reverend Roy McGowan, Criminal Justice Major Markus Burns and Cydne’ Bonnett gave their voices to entertain students with stories by Dr.

Seuss such as *And To Think I Saw It On Mulberry Street*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, *I Am Not Going to Get Up Today*, and others. Students enjoyed the day’s activities, especially sharing cake and ice cream with their friends, teachers, parents and guest readers.



Reading is an important part of SLPS curriculum, and is currently supported by teachers, literacy coaches, and curriculum supervisors across the District.

Literacy Coaches are reading specialists who focus on providing professional development for teachers by giving them the additional support needed to implement various instructional programs and practices.

They provide essential leadership for a school’s entire literacy program by helping to create and supervise long-term staff development processes that support both the development and implementation of literacy programs over months and years.

Curriculum Supervisors provide services primarily associated with curriculum, instruction, and professional development. Because they maintain liaison and active participation with education leaders on so many levels, they are in a position to assist in the formulation of philosophy and objectives for the instructional program of the districts to which they are assigned. They keep abreast of developments in curriculum and furnish leadership in determining their appropriateness for inclusion in the district’s educational program.



## SLPS FORMS GOVERNING PARTNERSHIPS TO CREATE CONCEPT SCHOOL

During the opening remarks of the final “Building Our Future: One Community, One School, One Child at a Time” Summit on Saturday, April 25th, 22nd Judicial Circuit of Missouri Judge Jimmie Edwards announced a new innovative concept school for the District, which will serve as the first community partnership school envisioned by Superintendent Dr. Kelvin Adams.

To educate students Judge Edwards introduced a four-tiered approach to ensuring that students are given the support necessary to achieve academically. The first tier identifies and enrolls 120 SLPS students in grades 6-12 who would otherwise be out of school due to suspension or safe schools act violations. The second tier provides activities in the evening for all community children in the City of St. Louis. The third tier creates a reporting center for students who are under court supervision. The fourth tier creates a curfew center open until 4:00am on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights to ensure that students are not walking the street at night.

This school, which will educate the students as well as serve as the headquarters for the afterschool activities, reporting center and curfew center, will be located at the current Blewett Middle School, 1927 Cass Ave. Blewett Middle School is one of 14 SLPS schools closing at the end of the current school year.

In addition, the school will be governed by three partners: the St. Louis Public School District who will provide education, maintenance, transportation, staff, and equipment necessary to support an academic environment; the Twenty-Second Judicial Circuit of Missouri Family Court- Juvenile Division who will provide services to surround students with protective factors to enhance their future opportunities as well as provide leadership in bringing collaborative participating agencies to provide resources and support to the school; and MERS Goodwill who will provide leadership in managing the building as well as program leadership. MERS Goodwill will also operate the Juvenile Transitions Jobs program within the school.



## NCAA MIDDLE SCHOOL MADNESS™ PROGRAM UNVEILS WINNERS



Before the NCAA crowned the University of Connecticut as the 2009 Women's Champions, the NCAA announced top performers of the NCAA's Middle School Madness classroom curriculum program offered to the St. Louis Public Schools.

The Middle School Madness curriculum, which was offered to students in grades 6-8, included lesson plans in language arts, math, social studies, art, science, physical education and health. Accompanying the lesson plan were collegiate women's basketball trivia, sportsmanship exercises and other teaching tools.

This year's theme, “The Power of a Dream,” allowed students to compete in poster and essay contest centered on community participation and the overall importance of sports.

The winning essay contestants were Omnia Nesbitt, a seventh grade student from Langston Middle School and Kenneth D. Johnson, a sixth grader from AAA Busch Academy. Poster contest winners were MiChon Watson from Carr Lane VPA Middle School and Corbin Mason, an eighth grader from Gateway Middle School.

Winners of each contest received two tickets to the 2009 Women's Final Four, an invitation to the 2009 Women's Final Four Salute Presentation, recognition at NCAA Hoop City® Refreshed by Coca-Cola® at America's Center and a basketball goal and basketball for home use. Winning entries are also showcased throughout St. Louis during the Women's Final Four, including displays at NCAA Hoop City, the Salute Presentation at the Ferrara Theater and at the Scottrade Center. In addition, every student who entered the Middle School Madness Contest received an NCAA gift.

## New SLPS Hotlines



SLPS Weather Emergency  
Hotline: 314.345.2466

SLPS Events  
Hotline: 314.345.INFO (4636)

SLPS School Safety Anonymous  
Tips Hotline: 314.345.SLPS (7577)

For the most up-to-date information:  
[www.slps.org](http://www.slps.org)

## Special Administrative Board Approves 2009-2010 School Calendar

The Special Administrative Board for the St. Louis Public Schools District approved its academic calendar for the 2009/2010 school year. The calendar, which includes 176 instructional days, totaling 1,135.2 hours, will begin Thursday, August 20th, 2009.

The calendar will include school holidays for Labor Day (Sept. 7, 2009), Veterans' Day (Nov. 11, 2009), New Year's Day (January 1, 2010), Dr. Martin Luther King Day (Jan. 18, 2010), Presidents' Day (Feb. 15, 2010), and Memorial Day (May 31, 2010). In addition, schools will be closed Nov. 26 and 27, 2009, for Thanksgiving Break; Dec. 21 through Dec. 31, 2009 for Winter Break; and March 15 through 19, 2010, for Spring Break.

As part of the 2009-2010 calendar there are several professional development days and two parent conferences that should be noted:

- August 10 through 19 - Opening Activities (No students)
- October 16 - Professional Development (No students)
- October 23 - Parent Conference day with no students. Conferences to be held three hours after school on Oct. 22 and 3 hours on the morning of Oct. 23.
- January 4- Recordkeeping Day (No students)
- February 5 - Professional Development (No students)
- March 26 - Parent Conferences (No Students). Conferences to be held three hours after school on March 25 and three hours on the morning of March 26.
- April 2- No Classes
- May 28 - Recordkeeping Day (No students)
- June 2 - Last Class Day (assuming no make-up days for snow)
- June 11 - Professional Development Day for Summer School (No students)
- June 14 - Summer School Begins

The complete St. Louis Public Schools 2009-2010 academic calendar is posted on the on the St. Louis Public Schools website at [www.slps.org](http://www.slps.org).

## Picture Hall of Fame 2008-2009

