

# Parent Pulse

St. Louis Public Schools



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

## SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD

**Rick Sullivan**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Melanie Adams**

**Richard Gaines**

**Kelvin Adams, Ph.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

*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.

*Parent Pulse* is a publication of the Office of Public Information. If you have questions, please contact Eric Little at Eric.Little@slps.org.



## SHEDDING LIGHT

### Cole Students Participate in Community Arts Project

On October 3, fourth, fifth and sixth grade students from Cole e-MINTS Academy took part in an outdoor festival called the Light Project. The event marked the grand finale of their collaboration with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and the Pulitzer Foundation for the Arts.

First, the students worked throughout the summer to create an indoor light installation with prestigious German sculptors Sebastian Hungerer and Rainer Kehre. The installation was on display at the Stone Church on Spring Avenue in the Grand Center.

Once school started, students built instruments with the guidance of renowned percussionist Dr. Craig Woodson. Hand drums, xylophones and mallets were made out of paper, plastic, wood, and various other easy-to-obtain materials. Cole's music specialist, Stacie Powell, worked with the students on constructing their instruments. She also rehearsed and directed the October 3 performance, for which the students composed their own music.

On the night of the festival, the students helped carry the lanterns from the sculptors' studio to the outdoor installation site. Using their instruments, they performed with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. They also filled two six-foot tall cylinders with art pieces they had made in class.



Cole students perform with their handmade instruments.

Cole's students collaborated with students from Metro High School, Cardinal Ritter, and Loyola Academy to build the light installation. In addition, each school created installations in their own buildings.

Johnathan Loesch, Cole's art specialist, worked with the students to create the school's art piece. "This has been a great experience in getting the kids to appreciate the process of making art, as well as the product itself," Loesch said.

For Cole's installation, students made translucent circles out of sequins, colored plastic, and wire rings. These circles hang in a front archway of the school and shimmer as they shake in the breeze. The piece is not only an exercise in making art physically, like gluing sequins to paper, but a way to explore the existence of light in the world. With just the plastic circles, the students can see how light changes the way something looks, depending on the time of day, the way the light hits an object, and the translucency or opaqueness of an object.

Stella Erundu, Cole's principal, was very pleased with the entire process. "I am proud to say that this partnership has been rewarding to all involved and is expected to be ongoing," she said.



# College Bound



## SLPS Prepares Students for Higher Learning

Last year, a record percentage of SLPS students were accepted into college. These graduates gained entrance into prestigious institutions such as John Hopkins, William and Mary, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Washington University. They were also offered more than \$50 million dollars in scholarships!

In addition to the hard work and dedication of our students, teachers, counselors and principals, a lot of this success is due to the innovative programs and initiatives that the district offers to all of our students.

### NCA ACCREDITATION

All SLPS four-year high schools are accredited by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA). NCA is the standard that most colleges and universities rely upon when admitting students.

The certification recognizes schools with a reputation for quality and continuous school improvement. It also assures parents that the school is meeting regionally and nationally accepted standards for quality and successful professional practice. Most importantly, the process keeps everyone in the building focused on raising student achievement.

Learn more at [www.ncacasi.org](http://www.ncacasi.org).

### AVID

The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program places previously underachieving students in the same college preparatory courses as high-achieving students, and then provides the necessary support to help them achieve success. The program supports students who are primarily from low income and ethnic minority backgrounds. The curriculum features writing, study skills, time management and organization.

Research shows that AVID graduates enroll in college at a rate two and half times greater than that of their contemporaries. SLPS is the only district in the state of Missouri to offer this international, college readiness approach.

For more information, contact Linda Bell, AVID Director, at 314.345.4474 or [Linda.Bell@slps.org](mailto:Linda.Bell@slps.org).

One question frequently asked by our parents is, "If I enroll my child in the St. Louis Public School District, will he/she be accepted into a reputable university?"

The answer is a resounding, "Yes!"

### ADVANCED PLACEMENT CLASSES

The Advanced Placement (AP) program allows middle and upper level students to earn college credit while still in high school. Students reduce their costs of higher education and are exposed to new academic challenges that encourage them to raise their career goals and ambitions.

All SLPS high schools now offer AP classes. This year, more than 1,300 students are enrolled in courses, including: calculus, physics, chemistry, environmental science, European history, Chinese, Russian, English literature, statistics, and computer science.

For information, contact John Niemeyer, Project Coordinator, at 314.345.2363 or [John.Niemeyer@slps.org](mailto:John.Niemeyer@slps.org).

### COLLEGE SUMMIT

The nationally acclaimed College Summit works with the district to dramatically increase the number of students who advance to college. They provide a post-secondary planning course for all seniors, with a comprehensive curriculum that guides students through every stage of planning and a website that helps them manage their college application materials. Plus, senior leaders from each school attend summer workshops, where they complete their college applications and are equipped to return to their schools to motivate their classmates.

For more information, contact Stacy Clay, Executive Director, at 314.345.4463 or [sclay@collegesummit.org](mailto:sclay@collegesummit.org).

## 10 Steps to Prepare Your Child for College

1. Investigate and choose a savings plan.
2. Begin saving as early as possible.

### In Elementary and Middle School...

3. Encourage your child to challenge himself or herself academically, develop good study habits, and become involved in school- and community-based extracurricular activities.
4. Discuss career and college options with your child and encourage his or her aspirations.
5. Make sure your child starts on a college preparatory track in middle school.

### In High School...

6. Meet with a guidance counselor to map out your child's high school curriculum and familiarize yourself with the college admissions and financial aid processes.
7. Help your child research colleges and narrow his or her options.
8. Make sure your child takes any required college admissions tests and submits all admissions, financial aid and campus housing paperwork on time.
9. Learn all you can about financial aid and assist your child in filling out the application forms.
10. Devise a budget with your child and determine how much will be covered by financial aid, how much you will provide, and how much your child will contribute by working and/or borrowing.

*Information provided by the American Council of Education.*

## New Course Adds Up to Future Success

Starting this school year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has authorized SLPS to award high school credit to seventh and eighth grade students who successfully complete the Algebra 150 course. Students enrolled in the class are



using the same text book, resources, and curriculum as high school students. Also, they will be required to take the same benchmark test and the state's end-of-course exam. Once these students enter high school, they will have the benefit of being able to enroll in advanced math courses. Currently, Gateway, Long, Bunche, and McKinley middle schools are offering the course.

## I Was a High School Opera Diva



Seven SLPS high school students won positions in this year's Artist-in-Training (AIT) program offered by Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. This is the highest number of SLPS students accepted into the program in a decade. The AIT program sets out to identify, coach and encourage a select group of talented students from high schools across St. Louis, with weekly voice lessons by opera professionals at one of three area universities. The program also offers master classes with internationally and nationally known visiting artists.

Winners Jaynea Brooks, Eugene Harper, Ciera Marcano and Marquise Murphy are students at Central VPA. Yvonne Crockett is their choir director. The two winners from Soldan IS are Sharon Palmer and Symonne Sparks. Their choir director is Kevin Mansco. Winner Lauren Crear is a student at Clyde C. Miller Career Academy. Danny Dumaine is her choir director.

At the annual year-end recital, students will compete for more than \$10,000 in scholarship awards, including the \$4,000 Monsanto Prize. Opera Theatre will continue to give \$10,000 in advanced study scholarship assistance to AIT alumni who are pursuing college degrees.

Opera Theatre took the AIT students to watch *Porgy and Bess* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, on November 14. The students were excited to see Roosevelt High School graduate and winner of the first AIT competition, Jermaine Smith, perform the role of Sportin' Life.

## Numbers to Keep at Your Fingertips

### STUDENT SERVICES

Early Childhood	314.771.4626
Parental Involvement	314.345.4692 314.345.2418
Record Center / Archives	314.645.2648
Recruitment & Student Placement	314.633.5200
Safety Hotline	314.241.7577
Students in Transition	314.345.4501
Student Support Services (Counseling, Health, Psychological & Social Services)	314.345.4401
Testing	314.345.2250
Transportation	314.367.6074
Volunteering	314.345.4577

### CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Academic Office	314.345.2488
Athletics	314.345.4419
Curriculum & Instruction	314.345.2338
Innovative Pathways	314.345.4465
Operations	314.345.4469
Public Information	314.345.2367
Safety & Security	314.345.4505
Superintendent's Office	314.345.2500



## Snow Days

When winter weather approaches, turn to these sources for important information about school closings:

SLPS Weather Emergency Hotline: 314.345.2466

KMOV-TV Channel 4 • KSDK-TV Channel 5 • KTVI-TV Channel 2 • KPLR-TV Channel 11 • KMJM Radio (104.9 FM) • KMOX Radio (1120 AM)

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

## Join the Arts Active Parent Network!

The arts engage young minds and build imagination and innovation – critical skills for our students. That’s why a

group of parents and community members are coming together in support of arts education in the St. Louis Public Schools. The “arts active” parent group is open to those interested in bringing



Shaw VPA students take a well-deserved bow.

the arts into our children’s lives through school and home activities and advocacy. To learn more, contact Laura Winter at [lsbwinter@yahoo.com](mailto:lsbwinter@yahoo.com).

## Get on the Fast Track to News & Information

Strong connections between home and school are critical to academic success. The SLPS quarterly newsletter, *Parent Pulse*, is designed to engage families and help them become true partners in their children’s education. However, we are taking additional steps to keep parents informed, and we need your help. Sign up now to begin receiving a monthly eNewsletter from the district that will communicate critical information regarding your child’s ongoing education via e-mail. To sign up for the new St. Louis Public School eNewsletter go to: [www.school2parent.US/MO/slps](http://www.school2parent.US/MO/slps).

## Honoring Students for Doing the Right Thing

Congratulations to SLPS students Neonna Campbell of Ashland Elementary, Andrew Givens of Ford Elementary and Kevin Nunez-Ortiz of Gateway Middle! These young role models received the “Do the Right Thing” Award at a ceremony held at the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department on October 15. The students were recognized for their positive leadership and service to others. They were selected from hundreds of children who were nominated by area parents, teachers, neighbors and friends. The program is sponsored by KMOV Channel 4, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, St. Louis County Police Department, Suburban Journals and Cooperating School Districts. To nominate a child, go to [www.kmov.com/forms/DTRT\\_emailform.html](http://www.kmov.com/forms/DTRT_emailform.html).



“Do the Right Thing” winners Andrew Givens, left, Neonna Campbell and Kevin Nunez-Ortiz.

## 2008-09 Dates to Remember

Professional Development (no students)...	<b>November 21</b>
Thanksgiving Holiday.....	<b>November 27 &amp; 28</b>
Professional Development (no students)...	<b>December 12</b>
High School Semester Exams.....	<b>December 17-19</b>
Winter Break.....	<b>December 22 - January 2</b>
Recordkeeping Day (no students).....	<b>January 5</b>
Report Card Day.....	<b>January 14</b>
Martin Luther King Day Holiday.....	<b>January 19</b>
Professional Development (no students).....	<b>February 13</b>
Presidents Day Holiday.....	<b>February 16</b>
Professional Development (no students).....	<b>March 6</b>
Spring Break.....	<b>March 16-20</b>
Parent Conferences.....	<b>March 26 &amp; 27</b>
Recordkeeping Day (no students).....	<b>May 22</b>
Memorial Day Holiday.....	<b>May 25</b>
High School Semester Exams.....	<b>May 28-29 &amp; June 1</b>
Last Day of School.....	<b>June 3</b>