



KPS STUDENTS EXCEL WITH A VARIETY OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Art, music, physical education, athletics, and theatre are all meaningful experiences for countless students each year in Kentwood Public Schools. Award winning educators in these areas provide students with experiences that shape them, challenge them, and help them to find success both inside and outside of the classroom. These classes extend and enhance the core academic classes which are also critical parts of student learning.

Through the arts students can overcome fear and engage with the world

Kim Meyers-Baas knows the arts and athletics reach students with other talents and interests, helping them develop skills that cross disciplines and impact them beyond the classroom. Meyers-Baas is the new Fine Arts Coordinator for the district. As an art teacher who is in her 19th year in Kentwood Public Schools and in her new role, she supports all Fine Arts programs including visual arts, performing arts, vocal music, and instrumental music.

"I believe that Fine Arts is the heartbeat of the public school system," says Meyers-Baas. "It's what ties everyone into their learning. It's about (students') emotional development. It's about their confidence."

Meyers-Baas talks about the skills students learn taking part in a production or ensemble group with students, and even participating on a team in sports, that can make a lasting impact on them well beyond their time in school.

"Through the arts students can overcome fear and engage with the world," Meyers-Baas explains. "They learn how to express themselves and connect with others in meaningful ways. It's also about collaboration."

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NON-HOMESTEAD OPERATING MILLAGE PROPOSAL TO BE ON THE MAY 6 BALLOT

This spring, Kentwood Public Schools will ask voters to consider a ballot proposal connected to its operating millage. The **proposal is for non-homestead properties and does not link to a homeowner's primary residence**. Kentwood voters have approved the non-homestead operating millage since it was put in place in 1994 when Proposal A was implemented.

Public school districts rely on non-homestead properties (such as businesses and rental properties) to receive full state funding and provide resources for schools. Primary residences are not included in this operating millage.

The non-homestead operating millage funds essential school district operations, such as teacher salaries, classroom supplies, and utilities. This May's proposal is for **3.9295**-mill for five years (2025–2029). Absentee ballots for the election will be available for all eligible members of the community on March 27. The election will be held on May 6.

For more details, visit our website at: www.kentwoodps.org/ourdistrict/operating-millage-ballot-proposal-information/

KPS Students Excel with a Variety of Learning Opportunities

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As a longtime member of Kentwood Public Schools, Meyers-Baas understands the quality of educators the district has in the area of arts education. In her new role of Fine Arts Coordinator that she began mid-year, she is getting a much closer look at the dynamic educators in KPS.

"I believe our foundation is the incredibly talented educators we have here in Kentwood. Many of them are practicing artists, musicians, performers outside the classroom. They bring a deep set of skills and knowledge with them, and they're already extraordinary teachers. Regardless of their background, they cultivate confidence, presentation skills, and creative problem solving in students which are essential skills that extend far beyond the arts."

Meyers-Baas comments on how well-supported the arts are in Kentwood, both by the district and by the community. She feels the level of appreciation for and commitment to the arts in KPS is comparable to that of the athletics programs in the district. In the end, this commitment benefits the students of KPS.

"We are proud of what we've built, and we're excited to keep growing," Meyers-Baas says. "By continuing to bring contemporary artists, performers, and creative experiences into our schools, we will further enrich the lives of our students. Fine arts are the heartbeat of public education, and we are committed to making that beat even stronger."



BRUMELS RECEIVES STATE HONOR

Congratulations to East Kentwood High School Co-Athletic Director Blaine Brumels. Brumels was recently named as a recipient of the Allen W. Bush Meritorious Service Award by the Michigan High School Athletic Association. This prestigious award is given annually to highlight individuals who give and serve locally, regionally, and nationally without seeking attention.

Brumels is a long-time member of the KPS team and serves our students and staff with distinction. His commitment to making sure that everything is in place and running smoothly for our student athletes and coaches is commendable. There is so much work and planning that takes place behind the scenes to ensure a quality experience for both athletes and fans in a variety of athletic endeavors at EK, and Brumels is a key reason for this success.

We congratulate Blaine on this honor and thank him for his continued service to our students, staff, and community. Go Falcons!



KENT ISD OFFERS ADULT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN KENTWOOD

The Kent Intermediate Schools District (ISD) is now offering a couple of great learning opportunities for adults right here in Kentwood.

One opportunity is for adults interested in the General Education Development (GED) program. This program helps adult students earn their high school equivalency certificate. The Kent ISD offers students 18 and older a chance to prepare for the GED through in-person classes.

The second opportunity is for adults interested in learning English when it is not their native language. The Kent ISD class offers beginning to advanced students the communication skills needed for work, at home, and in day-to-day activities.

Both class offerings are now taking place on Monday through Wednesday evenings at Crossroads High School here in Kentwood. Go to the Kent ISD adult education website to learn more about these opportunities and to enroll if interested.

Adult Education
Kent ISD



CRESTWOOD TEACHER RECEIVES HONOR

Congratulations to Crestwood Middle School teacher Rashawn McClanahan. Mr. McClanahan, also known as Mr. Mac, was selected by the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Pi Rho Zeta Chapter in the greater Grand Rapids area as the 2025 Educator of the Year.



McClanahan has worked in education for 24 years, with the past 10 years taking place at Crestwood Middle School, where he serves his students as a social studies teacher. In addition, McClanahan serves on a number of committees and participates in leadership opportunities at Crestwood. In announcing McClanahan as this year's recipient, Pi Rho Zeta highlighted the positive impact he has made over the years as an educator.



Students who have Mr. McClanahan for a teacher, don't just step into a classroom each day. They step into "Mac University." Here McClanahan makes sure that his students feel welcomed, that they know they are being served, and have the resources they need to be successful. When asked what the best part of his job is, McClanahan's answer is simple: "I get to work with kids."

If you would like to learn more about this award-winning teacher please scan the QR code to watch a video about Mr. Mac and his work in KPS, recorded in 2023.

We congratulate Mr. McClanahan for this honor and thank him for all that he gives to serve our students, families, and community.

EAST KENTWOOD'S ABC ORCHESTRA SHINES IN MULTIPLE VENUES

The ABC Orchestra has been very busy the last couple of months performing in a variety of venues.

In late January, the ABC Orchestra performed at the 19th annual Michigan Music Conference. This performance took place during a presentation by KPS teachers, Ryan Wallace and Elizabeth Knoll-Bowman to attendees at the conference. Wallace and Knoll-Bowman presented on alternative style ensembles. Those in attendance were definitely impressed with the playing and professionalism of our students.

On February 1st, the ABC Orchestra was invited to perform for the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association's District 10 Honors Band. The honors band is one of the premiere student ensembles in Michigan. The honors orchestra students, parents, and directors present at the concert were blown away by the way our ABC Orchestra students performed. They were also very impressed with the fact that more than half of the performance was music arranged by KPS students specifically for ABC. The ABC's showing at this event led band and orchestra directors in the audience to ask about having our students perform at other events in the future.

Finally, in mid-February the ABC Orchestra presented and performed for students of the Grand Valley State University College of Music Education. Our students were there to demonstrate what an alternative styles group can accomplish. They were able to feature a lot of student work and even invited some brave college students to improvise with our group. Members of the ABC Orchestra had the opportunity to get a glimpse into the life of a college music student which included a campus tour and a chance to sit in with the GVSU Symphony Orchestra for a rehearsal. The ABC Orchestra has been invited back next year to GVSU as part of a growing partnership between the university and KPS orchestra programs.



A UNIQUE INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACH IS ON THE HORIZON AT THE NEW HAMILTON ELEMENTARY

The excitement is building for the opening of the new Hamilton Elementary and Early Childhood Center, set to open in August for the beginning of the 2025-26 school year.

Input from key stakeholder groups—including families and staff—has led the district to explore a unique instructional approach for the new school. In early survey data related to the opening of the new school, 80% of families and close to 70% of staff indicated they would be interested in something other than a traditional school instructional approach at Hamilton.

This led district leadership to explore other options for teaching and learning. This process has resulted in our district beginning the application process to eventually have Hamilton Elementary become an International Baccalaureate (IB) school. According to the International Baccalaureate Organization, IB schools help students “develop the skills and confidence they need to thrive and make a lasting difference” in the world.

“If I were to describe International Baccalaureate,” says Executive Director of Elementary Education Carrie Tellerico, “it’s really about the student being in the center of the learning.” Tellerico explained that broad themes guide student learning throughout the year and offer opportunities for learning across content areas. “IB learning involves putting together transdisciplinary units that integrate all subject areas to bring students back to that central theme.”

Ahna Sisco, principal of the new Hamilton Elementary, is excited about the learning possibilities that lie ahead for her students.

“The foundation of IB is all about inquiry,” Sisco points out. “It drives students to really become owners of their own learning. It teaches them to become passionate about what’s happening in the classroom so that they can continue to grow and become passionate about what’s happening outside of the classroom. Students grow to be aware of the community within and then build until they get this global perspective of how their learning can impact, not just the community, but also the greater world as well.”

Sisco explains that students will still be learning the same content standards as all students in the district but will be approaching that learning in a different way.

Currently the district is applying to become a candidacy school for IB. If accepted, Hamilton will then be involved in a multi-year process to become a full International Baccalaureate school. Once the staff is in place, they will begin professional development and training this summer on the IB process.



A Destination District

COMMUNITY ENJOYS CELEBRATORY BLACK HISTORY PROGRAM

The Kentwood Community came together in mid-February to enjoy the annual Black History Month Program presented at the East Kentwood High School auditorium. The theme of this year’s program was “Echoes of Greatness.” The program featured student performances that included poetry, dances, and other musical presentations.

Prior to the program, a reception was held in the foyer of East Kentwood High School where students from schools across the district presented work they have done to learn more about Black history. This work included some amazing art projects from our talented students, elementary student-created podcasts, and informational displays of books highlighting Black authors. Tasty food was also part of the pre-program festivities for community members to enjoy.

Kentwood Public Schools would like to thank all of our community partners and volunteers who contributed to this year’s successful program. We also want to thank our students, both those who performed and those who worked behind the scenes, and whose talents, skills, and knowledge shone brightly for our community to enjoy.



STEM AND CLASSROOM PODCAST COLLABORATION

During the month of February, Meadowlawn 5th grade scholars have been working on creating Black History Month podcasts to showcase important African American Heroes. This podcast adventure has been taken on by our 5th grade teacher, Jessica Vogler, and our STEM teacher, Lisa Walbeck. Scholars have been utilizing their time during class to bring history and 21st century technology together.

This project consisted of scholars researching an influential African American and writing a thorough report. Scripts were created in pairs, and then scholars had the opportunity to act as both interviewer and interviewee during the podcast process. From green screen technology to the utilization of broadcasting equipment, our scholars learned what it takes to make a podcast look and sound professional.

Mrs. Walbeck assisted with green screen technology and helped scholars create their podcast cover art. Our 5th grade podcasts were showcased at the KPS Echoes of Greatness: Reflecting on Black History, Inspiring the Future event held February 19th. A select group of 5th grade scholars showed off their new podcast skills in person during the event, while others were able to walk the community through the various podcasts and the process they used. All podcasts were linked to QR codes that could be pulled up on cell phones and listened to during the event.

When asked about podcasting, 5th grade scholar, Avery, stated, "I enjoyed the process. I liked writing the script. I was nervous having to record it, but it ended up pretty good." Kennedie added, "My favorite part (of the process) was recording the podcast. I like how I got to express my feelings to the camera." Jadiel followed that up by saying, "It was fun! I liked the scripting part because I feel like you can really say what you want to say about your person face-to-face."



CELEBRATING HERITAGE THROUGH ART: MRS. KLUG'S STUDENTS INSPIRED BY ROMARE BEARDEN

In a vibrant display of creativity and cultural appreciation, Mrs. Klug's art students recently completed a project honoring the work of renowned artist Romare Bearden. Through these engaging lessons, students not only explored the artistic techniques of collage but also learned a profound lesson about identity, heritage, and the power of self-expression.

Mrs. Klug guided her students through an in-depth study of Bearden's legacy, encouraging them to understand the significance of his artistic choices. Inspired by his techniques, they created collages featuring three musicians, carefully arranging them on background papers. Each student used a variety of textured and colored papers to form their musicians, enhancing their compositions with watercolor and ink.

The project not only strengthened students' artistic skills but also deepened their appreciation for the role of art in preserving cultural history. By working in Bearden's signature collage style, they experienced firsthand how an artist can use visual storytelling to celebrate identity and heritage.

Mrs. Klug's commitment to integrating history and culture into her art curriculum has provided students with an enriching experience that extends beyond the classroom.



FRESHMAN GLOBAL LEARNERS ACQUIRE NEW LANGUAGES USING COMPREHENSIBLE INPUT

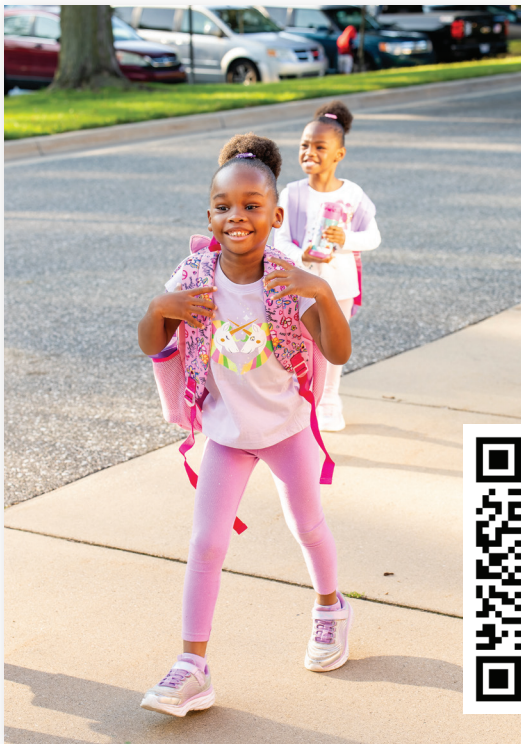
Did you know that the most effective way to learn a new language is the same way we learned our first—by hearing and reading words in meaningful, understandable contexts? This approach, called comprehensible input, immerses students in language that is just beyond their current level but still makes sense with the help of visuals, gestures, and familiar words. Instead of memorizing endless vocabulary lists, students acquire language naturally through stories, conversations, and real-world communication. This method builds confidence, fluency, and a love for language learning! Our scholars have the opportunity to learn Spanish (Sr. Morgan and Sra. Ubaldo), French (Madame Pieper), German (Frau Erhart), and Latin (Magister Steiner) and are applying their new learning to obtain a lifelong love for another language.

BUILDING STRENGTH, CONFIDENCE, AND A LOVE FOR FITNESS

We are thrilled to share an exciting addition to our 9th-grade campus—a brand-new weight room! Previously, only a few of our students had the opportunity to take a structured weight training course because our Weight Training class at the 10-12 building has been so popular for our students. Thanks to this new space, they're building strength, confidence, and a lifelong love for fitness right here in their freshman year.

Our teachers, Mr. Brown and Mr. Smith, have done an incredible job igniting a passion for health and wellness. Through engaging workouts, goal setting, and encouragement, they've helped students see that fitness is about more than just lifting weights—it's about perseverance, discipline, and self-improvement. Many students who are new to strength training have already seen incredible gains, not just in physical ability but in their mindset and self-belief.

We love seeing our students grow stronger, both inside and out, and we can't wait to watch them continue their fitness journey throughout high school and beyond.



REGISTRATION IS UNDERWAY FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

The window to register for the 2025-26 school year is now open. All students, whether they are new to KPS or returning, need to register online for the upcoming school year. Families may register by clicking the QR code or by visiting the district website at kentwoodps.org. Selecting the "enrollment" tab on the upper left-hand side of the page or clicking on the registration button at the top of the page will take parents to the registration page.

The district is asking all families to register by May 16 for the upcoming year. Completing registration in this timeframe allows the district to make important decisions regarding transportation needs, student placements, and schedules.



Elementary students should have received a letter in a light gray envelope in mid-February sharing the school they are assigned to for the upcoming year as the district gets ready to implement revised elementary attendance zones as part in conjunction with the opening of the new Hamilton Elementary and Early Childhood Center, the district's 11th elementary school.



KENTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School Calendar 2024-25

- Aug 19 *First Day of School
- Aug 30 No School
- Sep 2 No School
- Sept 25..... ½ Day K-12 / PD for Staff

- Oct 10..... ½ Day K-12 / Conferences
- Oct 11 No School

- Nov 1..... No School / PD for Staff
- Nov 27 - 29 .. No School / Thanksgiving Break

- Dec 20 ½ Day K-12 / KEA Records Day (non-report)
- Dec 23 - Jan 3 ... Winter Break

- Jan 20 No School for Students & Staff / MLK Day

- Feb 17 & 18 No School for Students & Staff / Mid-Winter Break

- Mar 5..... ½ Day K-12 / PD for Staff
- Apr 3..... ½ Day K-12 / KEA Records Day (non-report)
- Apr 4 - Apr 11.... No School for Students & Staff/ Spring Break

- May 23 ½ Day K-12 / KEA Records Day (non-report)
- May 26 No School / Memorial Day
- May 30..... Last Day of School - Half Day for Students & Staff

| School | Start | Dismissal | Half Day Dismissal |
|-------------|---------|-----------|--------------------|
| Elementary | 9:00 AM | 3:59 PM | 12:15 PM |
| Middle | 8:20 AM | 3:04 PM | 11:35 AM |
| EKFC & EKHS | 7:35 AM | 2:19 PM | 10:50 AM |
| Crossroads | 7:34 AM | 2:10 PM | 10:40 AM |

| AUGUST | | | | | | | JANUARY | | | | | | |
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| SEPTEMBER | | | | | | | FEBRUARY | | | | | | |
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| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
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| NOVEMBER | | | | | | | APRIL | | | | | | |
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| DECEMBER | | | | | | | MAY | | | | | | |
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No School For Students
 Half Day

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JUN 2-AUG 15, 9 AM - 3 PM
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