



POUNCE

STRENGTHENING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Excelsior Springs School District Newsletter • October 2022



Excelsior Springs School District earns Aramark Diamond Food Services Award

Aramark awarded Excelsior Springs School District the Diamond Food Service Award in recognition of the district's food service process advancements, innovation, special events, and amplified participation.

Aramark serves students in over 600 school districts throughout the US. Aramark is a worldwide company, and Excelsior Springs School District is the sole recipient of the coveted Diamond Food Service Award.

The Excelsior Springs School District (ESSD40) had the highest participation in the breakfast and lunch program in the region - serving over 645,000 meals during the 2021-22 school year.

To increase participation, Aramark and ESSD40 partnered to offer many creative food service opportunities and special events for students and staff.

Student View Point Surveys were utilized to gain valuable feedback that helped increase opportunity, ensure food services were enjoyable, meet the interests of students, and to guide future special event planning. We look forward to the continued partnership between Aramark and ESSD40 to provide the students of Excelsior Springs a world class award winning food service program.



*What's coming up?
Scan here for
district calendar!*

See more on page 6

Board of Education

SPOTLIGHT



Jill Evert



Kalyn Goode



Troy Snelling



Find School Board meeting info & minutes here!

What does it mean to you to serve our community as a BoE member?

Jill Evert: I attended school from preschool through high school graduation (Go, Class of '84!) in our district. I also was an educator for many years in the district and retired from the ESSD in 2020. I feel blessed to be able to serve on the board and hope I can be a huge support to students, families, and staff in the ESSD. It is a privilege to serve and I am proud to be on the board.

Kalyn Goode: Serving the community and children of Excelsior has been one of my life's greatest blessings. My number one goal everyday is to make sure the kiddos in our district are receiving the very best education by being a voice for them and my community.

Troy Snelling: A chance to use my 30 yrs plus experience in the classroom, department chair, love of education help my own community and to give back. I had a tremendous educational experience here, and I think that's what every kid deserves. That is my motivation a decade ago to run, and I've never regretted. Additionally, being able to recognize things that are being presented to the board are best for teachers and students.

What are you most proud about in regards to our schools?

Jill Evert: We have a great staff that will do whatever it takes to support students. Our students are making strides

and we have many graduates that go on to trade schools, college, military, and careers and are successful. For a community our size, we have superior facilities and hope we can continue to provide that for all students.

Kalyn Goode: I am so proud of everything our district has accomplished over the last few years. Especially expanding our ECC programs and our new partnership with Swope Health. What I am most proud of though are our staff and our kids. We have the most wonderful, dedicated staff and the best children in Excelsior Springs.

Troy Snelling: Pride in our staff and kids is given. We worked really hard to raise standards - we have work to do but we have a great staff and we are keeping that staff now. Cornerstone is great, but employee retention is probably the thing I am most proud of. Creating a pro-teacher board and working with the supt in helping to create the right climate and culture in our buildings helps to keep people here.

What is your favorite thing about the start to a new school year?

Jill Evert: A new school year gives everyone a fresh start and renewed energy to have a successful school year. I love seeing how excited our early learners are about school. If you are ever having a bad day, step into a kindergarten classroom- it will completely turn your day around. :)

Kalyn Goode: I love watching how excited our community becomes while gearing up for back to school and seeing the

buildings come back to life with kiddos and teachers. It's a great feeling.

Troy Snelling: You know, I think about that as a teacher, and what I miss the most about a new year is meeting 120-130 new thought-provoking young people each year. Keeping me young and excited! Nervous excitement hoping and thinking about things like, "is everything going to work today, buses arrive, teachers in the right spot," and so on. Also, of course, seeing kids coming back, knowing they have a safe place to go, and hot meals.

What is your own favorite memory from school?

Jill Evert: I loved school and it's difficult to pick a favorite memory but homecoming week my senior year was definitely a favorite memory. I loved everything about it- spirit week, pep rally on the old Roosevelt football field, parade, game, and dance. And I was homecoming queen that year. :)

Kalyn Goode: I have so many memories that I love from school, I don't think I could pick just one. My time at the Career Center was probably my favorite, I made so many life long friends while in the program.

Troy Snelling: I had a really good experience in school. I LOVED high school - being able to stand as valedictorian and give the commencement address and earning national merit scholar. My favorite activity was band. •••••

Staff Spotlight



Sergeant Nash-St. John, SRO, got in on the fun at the recent Color Blast fundraiser at Cornerstone Elementary, letting the kids coer her in color!

Sergeant Samantha Nash-St. John, SRO

How long have you been an SRO? 4 years

What does a typical day in the life of a school SRO look like? What I do changes on a day-to-day basis based on the needs of the situations at hand. I always try to start my day by being present during the arrival of students. My day shifts to meeting with administrators and the district social worker for check-in on what the day may look like or things we need to follow up on. The school social worker and I complete home visits throughout the day as requested. I mingle with kids during passing periods and at lunches just to check in on them and chat. Throughout the day I help handle any safety concerns. I finish the day up by being present for the dismissal of students.

What do you look forward to most in a new school year? Being able to see the kids again!

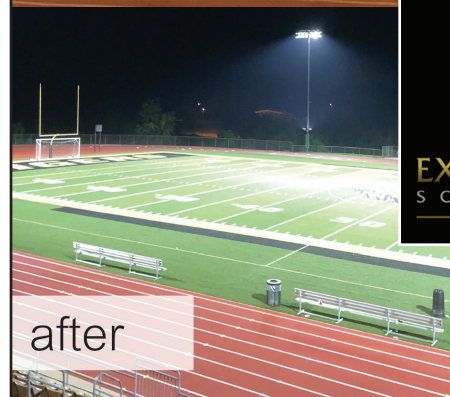
What advice do you have for parents and students when it comes to school safety? If you "See Something (or hear), Say Something"

What do you love most about being an SRO? Being able to spend time with kids and build rapport with them!

What positive impact do you think SROs can have on our student's lives? SROs work hard to replace negativity and fear students may have towards a police officer, instead showing students we are just people and are there to support them at school. We want students to have positive interactions with us and not be afraid or look at us in a bad light because we wear a police uniform.



before



after

We appreciate your partnership, Excelsior Springs!

Excelsior Springs School District saves on energy costs and reinvests in schools district-wide over two-year partnership



-  Football field lighting
-  Interior & exterior LED lighting
-  VoIP phones
-  Mechanical upgrades
-  Building automation system

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Life Is On



Student Spotlight

WE ASKED STUDENTS:

What has you excited for school this year?



LEWIS ELEMENTARY

Ethan

"I'm excited to be in Mr. Campbell's class this year. We get to read a lot of really good books and I love to read."



CORNERSTONE ELEMENTARY

Jase

"I am most excited about getting to interact with my friends and learning new things, I love math!"



CORNERSTONE ELEMENTARY

Zoey

"My favorite thing about school this year is my teacher, Mrs Colgan. She is the best because she's great at teaching division"



ELKHORN ELEMENTARY

Grace

"I'm excited to be back at school and keep learning. I love writing because I have a big imagination and I love to write about what I'm imagining"



ELKHORN ELEMENTARY

Titan

"I love math! It's fun and easy. I am excited to be back at school and see all of my friends!"



LEWIS ELEMENTARY

Michaela

"I'm excited to be back at school to see my friends. I'm excited to learn new things this year in fifth grade! I really like my teacher. She is nice and very helpful."



ES MIDDLE SCHOOL

Oakleigh

Now that I'm at the middle school, I love being able to have different classes with all of my friends"



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Innovative Design Class: Endless Opportunities

Program Spotlight



What opportunities does this program provide our students?

The Innovative Design class gives students the opportunity to dive deep into the problem solving process to explore a problem that matters to them and to develop a solution for that problem. We start by defining and creating our culture and brand for the class, then the students experience the design process in a more guided way as they develop STEAM education kits for upper elementary students. Once those initial projects are finished, the students will spend the majority of the class developing and solving a problem they identify. The students will become experts on these problems as they validate it, research prior solutions, develop success criteria, brainstorm ideas, prototype and test their idea, and present it both in the community and at the KC STEM Alliance Showcase in late April. The problems the students have explored have ranged from reducing headlight glare during night drive to maintaining a healthy sleep schedule to dealing with broken locks on a public bathroom - all of these problems were identified and validated by the students.

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Are these students able to work with community business partners?

The students will definitely work with community partners throughout the design process. Depending on the specific problem a group of students chooses, they may be working with mentors who provide expert guidance, they may be interviewing community members as stakeholders in their potential solutions, or they may be presenting their final solutions to a panel of experts. The community connections the students make plays an important role in deepening and enriching the work that the students do.

How does this class prepare them for the real world?

Innovative Design prepares the students for the real world in a number of different ways. The process we use mirrors how entrepreneurs and innovators approach developing a new idea, giving them valuable experience at managing and accomplishing long-term goals. The students' participation in events like the Showcase Kickoff event at Burns & McDonnell and the KC STEM Alliance Showcase in the spring extends the students' learning beyond the walls of the classroom. The students' connections with

outside experts gives them experience interacting with others in a professional setting. Most importantly, the students' agency in selecting and pursuing a problem that matters to them grows their ability and agency to change the world around them. One goal for Innovative Design is to teach students that they should be participants in their world, not just observers.

What are some previous projects that we may notice or recognize?

One example of the impact the Innovative Design students have had is in the STEAM kits they created and delivered to the elementary schools. The kits are designed to teach elementary students about a topic in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, and they have to be designed to meet the needs of the stakeholders - teachers and elementary students in this situation. We've been lucky to partner with classes at all three elementary schools to have the younger students test the kits the Innovative Design students have created, and it is an incredible experience every time. The elementary students have fun learning and making with the kits, and the high school students learn so much by watching the kids use them. We are continuing to look for meaningful problems to solve in the community, so hopefully everyone hears more about the Innovative Design students soon!

Other note-worthy opportunities or highlights?

We will have a Community Showcase in the spring! The date is not set yet, but we will be sure to announce it as soon as possible, and we would love to see the community there to see the results of the students' work.

Food Service Spotlight



Continued from page 1

- **Meals served each day (breakfast, lunch, snacks)**

We serve roughly 2,500 meals and snacks each day throughout the school district.

- **How long has Aramark been in food service?**

Aramark was founded in 1936, Aramark began by providing vending services to employees in the aviation industry in Southern California. In 1968, ARA provided Food services at the Mexico City Olympic Games, ARA Services changed its name to Aramark in 1994.

- **How many school districts does Aramark serve, and what does it mean to you, the director, to be in partnership with our ESSD40 schools?**

Aramark serves over 350 school districts in 24 states. At Aramark Student Nutrition, we see the potential in every student. By serving nutritious, delicious foods in engaging, creative ways we can brighten days and fuel futures. We partner with schools to create culinary experiences that propel students to success. ESSD40 has not only allowed Aramark Student Nutrition to operate with our full potential, but ESSD40 has also partnered with us to pilot new programs, sometimes being one of the first school districts to launch new recipes, action stations, digital boards, rebranding the cafes, etc. It has been a tremendous partnership.

- **What are you most proud of with our food service program?**

Launching new and exciting ideas that Aramark Student Nutrition brings, in partnership with ESSD40, has been something to be extremely proud of. Having a

dedicated Chef on the team raises the culinary bar! The Chef, managers, and culinary team, make a big impact, helping run and facilitate all the production systems throughout the school district and training the culinary team which elevates the entire program. This innovative approach for Aramark student nutrition with ESSD40, is something to be most proud of.

- **What did it mean to you and our program to be awarded the prestigious Diamond Food Services Award?**

We are extremely proud of the Diamond Food Services Award, for several reasons. Our goal is to serve exciting and nutritious meals, working to eliminate the stigma of "school food" by providing students fresh ideas of the food they know and love while also introducing exciting new recipes and ingredients.

We are working to create "foodies of the future". We believe food powers potential in our students. This is why, we are proud and passionate about serving healthy and tasty selections. We have monthly limited time offers, we celebrate national food days, and we offer themed event meals... the more we make our programs fun and exciting, the more our students are engaged while building lifelong healthy culinary curiosity!

- **Upcoming special events/programs by food service?**

Be on the lookout for National Pasta Day, French Toast Day, National Cookie Day, Buffalo Chicken Meatball Mac & Cheese Bowl, Smoothies for Breakfast, and Holiday meals like the Gobbler Bowl.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

*Food Truck Events • Employee Appreciation Day • Teacher Appreciation Week • Board of Education Dinners
Monthly Limited Time Offers • Earth Day 'Dirt & Worms' • Salad and Condiment Bars
Elkhorn 'Rise & Shine' Breakfast • Cinco de Mayo • All Staff Breakfast • Sparkling Juice Bars • And More!*



Weekly Menus Found Here



In November 2021, the Student Services Department issued a survey to all teachers and staff. The survey was facilitated through our Panorama programming to gauge teacher/staff well-being and sense of belonging and had a 93.7% response rate. The nature of the past two school years and our attention to Collaborative Culture and Climate, according to our CSIP, dually serve as the catalyst for this survey. The results have proven what we already know about educational staff - there is a real concern that the physical pandemic is producing an alternative pandemic for teachers and staff. Burnout, fatigue, and stress of teaching have always been factors, but in our current situation these byproducts are heightened.

We know that students need strong relationships and that educators must be well and strong to build healthy relationships with students so that expectations can be realized. Self-care to ensure positive mental health often can be another request on staff. Instead of putting the onus on our staff, we want to respond to the results of this survey by providing the tools for staff well-being and sense of belonging. We want to create that community for our staff to respond to the results of our survey. Our response is what we can do to help to appropriately build those relationships toward well-being and in turn support our students in a sense of belonging.

The following proposal is with Fuel-Ed, an educator partner in social emotional/mental health perspective recommended through one of our current partners, Panorama. We began with our district and school administrators (The Whole Educator Collective) in July 2022, followed by all of our staff members in August 2022. We will also have a sustaining program from there on to extend the work and maintain learning and support.

Recently, Dr. Jaret Tomlinson secured \$90,000 in the DESE Teacher Retention Grant. Knowing that well-being and belonging are strong contributors to teacher retention, we worked together on this programming and he submitted the proposal to DESE for approval. We intend to use that funding to implement the FuelEd proposal and then sustain it with Clay County Children's Fund.

Scan to view FuelEd proposal



It's Soccer Season!



2022 Tiger Varsity Soccer Schedule

October 12	North Kansas City	Home	6:30PM
October 17	Raytown South	Away	6:30PM
October 24	Ruskin	Home	6:30PM
October 26	Oak Park	Away	6:30PM

Keep up with all the district activity schedules here!



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