



THE INSIDE VIEW

ISSUE 32 • DECEMBER 2023



COUGAR CORNER MARKET CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING AT KOCH ELEMENTARY

Koch Elementary School hosted a ribbon-cutting and grand opening for the Cougar Corner Food Market on November 1. Scholars and community partners joined school and District officials to celebrate the market's grand opening.

The Little Bit Foundation and St. Louis Area FoodBank (SLAFB) partnered with Koch Elementary to launch the market. The market will provide a variety of healthy food choices, including fresh produce and dairy products. It will also feature shelf-stable and frozen food for Koch families and nearby RGSD schools.

Families are empowered to make healthier choices with the in-school design model. This model has a significant impact on attendance and achievement.

The market is open on a weekly basis. It is also available to school staff for emergency student needs.

RIVERVIEW GARDENS SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER



IMPORTANT DATES

- 11/22-11/24 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY DISTRICT CLOSED**
- 11/28 **SAB MEETING | 7PM**
- 12/4 **FRECKLE MATH CHALLENGE BEGINS**
- 12/5 **SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER RIBBON CUTTING RGHS | 4PM**
- 12/5 **SAB WORKSHOP WITH MSBA**
- 12/14 **TOWN HALL MEETING WESTVIEW MIDDLE | 6PM**
- 12/21-1/2 **WINTER BREAK DISTRICT CLOSED**



100

Excellent

0 School days missed in an academic year

95

Nearly There

9 School days missed in an academic year

90

Concerned

20 School days missed in an academic year

85

Very Concerned

30 School days missed in an academic year



ATTENDANCE MATTERS EVERYDAY



Riverview Gardens
SCHOOL DISTRICT

PARIS FRENCH & MICAH LONG NAMED STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES TO THE SAB

Paris French and Micah Long, two outstanding scholars at Riverview Gardens High School, were announced as the Student Representatives for the Riverview Gardens School District's Special Administrative Board for the 2023-2024 school year.



As Student Representatives to the SAB, French and Long will be responsible for attending SAB meetings to share student reports, input and feedback. Both young ladies will help provide valuable perspectives, feedback and insight as the Riverview Gardens School District looks to better serve its scholars. French and Long will also be responsible for advocating for the needs of RGSD scholars.



Research shows that if students are involved in service-learning projects, such as civics and governance, they develop a higher degree of voice and ownership. The students' self-concept and political engagement will improve as well. Having student representatives on the Board also increases opportunity and access for our scholars. [FULL STORY](#)

TRACI NAVE, THE LITTLE BIT FOUNDATION HONORED FOR RIVERVIEW EXCELLENCE

RGHS Principal Traci Nave was selected as the Riverview Excellence Staff of the Month for October 23. Nave was honored for several accomplishments including, efforts in restoring school order following the fights in September, her commencement to RGHS scholars, and her triumph in the Nave Bowl.

The Little Bit was selected as the Community Partner of the Month for October 2023 for supporting the RGSD scholars with educational programs, free school supplies, food markets, health and wellness programs, and much more. [RIVERVIEW EXCELLENCE NOMINATION FORMS](#)



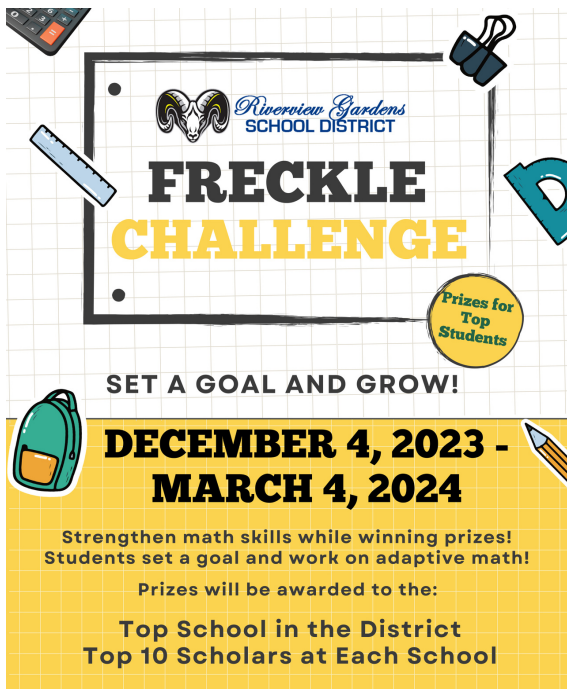
FRECKLE MATH CHALLENGE BEGINS DECEMBER 4

RGSD scholars have an opportunity to learn adaptive math while earning exciting prizes by participating in the 2nd Annual Freckle Challenge.

The Freckle Challenge is an initiative to incentivize scholars to set a math goal, learn and grow.

The challenge runs from Dec. 4, 2023 – March 4, 2024.

Scholars from all grade levels can complete fun Freckle activities. The top 10 scholars from each school will win prizes. The top school will also be rewarded.



Riverview Gardens SCHOOL DISTRICT

FRECKLE CHALLENGE

Prizes for Top Students

SET A GOAL AND GROW!

DECEMBER 4, 2023 - MARCH 4, 2024

Strengthen math skills while winning prizes!
Students set a goal and work on adaptive math!

Prizes will be awarded to the:

**Top School in the District
Top 10 Scholars at Each School**

SPIRIT WEEK AT MICHELLE OBAMA ECAC



DR. SAM PAGE VISITS MICHELLE OBAMA ECAC



St. Louis County Executive Dr. Sam Page visited the Michelle Obama Early Childhood Academic Center on October 12.



MO-ECAC Director Dr. E'mita Meeks-Williams guided Page, his team, school and District leaders on a tour of the facilities.

Page met scholars and staff, and visited classrooms.



MOLINE ELEMENTARY JOINS GIRLS ON THE RUN

The Girls on the Run team from Moline Elementary participated in the organization's Fall Season Celebratory 5K on November 18. Girls on the Run is designed to enhance participants' social, emotional and physical skills to successfully navigate life experiences. Schools and organizations from all across the area participated in the event, which was held at Forest Park.



SONJA CLAY-STROZIER RECEIVES RESOLUTION FROM THE MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

On Nov. 8, Michelle Obama Early Childhood Academic Center Parent As Teachers Coordinator, Sonja Clay-Strozier was presented with the Missouri House of Representative Resolution offered by District No. 66. for her 25 years of service with Riverview Gardens School District and her commitment to the PAT program.

Bellefontaine Neighbors Mayor Dinah Tatman presented Clay-Strozier with the award. SAB members, school and district guests were in attendance.

MO-ECAC Director E'mita Meeks-Williams, Ed.D., hosted the event for the National Parents as Teachers Day celebration.

Meeks-Williams recognized PAT staff for their commitment to advancing RGSD children and families. The staff was provided lunch and presented with certificates of appreciation.



RGSD Mission

Collaboratively educate and empower our scholars to thrive in challenging environments.

RGSD Vision

Riverview Gardens School District will be a district where:

- There are high expectations for all.
- There will be healthy, loving, empathetic and kind relationships.
- Where students are at the center of our decisions.
- Supports are provided so students become grade-level ready.
- There is transparency, accountability, timely, clear communication, and high levels of customer service.
- All stakeholders have a voice.
- There is a focus on college and career readiness.

FIVE HONORED AT APPLE FOR THE TEACHER AWARDS

Five excellent Riverview Gardens School District educators were honored by Iota Phi Lambda Sorority (Alpha Zeta Chapter) as Apple for the Teacher awardees.

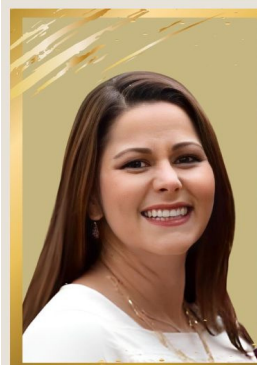
Dr. Tanya Patton, Traci Nave, Laura Erickson, Juanita Shaw and Patti Madonna received their awards on November 18 at the organization's 42nd annual Apple for the Teacher Awards Ceremony.

With five honorees, Riverview Gardens School District had the most award winners of any school district at the awards celebration.

Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc. is a national organization for professional women that strives to unite in sisterhood qualified business and professional women in order to enhance and improve the status of women, promote increased interest in the broad field of business education among high school and college young women, help develop leadership skills and more. The organization was founded in 1929. The Alpha Zeta Chapter was established in 1937.



**Dr. Tanya Patton
Traci Nave
Laura Erickson
Juanita Shaw
Patti Madonna**





KEESHA BUCKNER JOINS HIGHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Keesha Buckner joins the Highland Elementary School Huskies as the building secretary. Buckner will be responsible for managing the school's main office and performing principal secretarial duties.

Buckner has over 23 years of administrative experience in the transportation industry and 12 years as a funeral director before transitioning into her career as a secretary with RGSD.

Buckner's only child is a proud graduate of Riverview Gardens High School. She enjoys working at Highland due to the opportunities to interact with scholars and give back to the community through education and service.

In her spare time, Buckner is passionate about assisting the elderly.

EBONY HARTFIELD NAMED ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

The Riverview Gardens School District is proud to announce Ebony Hartfield has joined the Communications Department as the administrative assistant to the Executive Director of Communications.

Hartfield will prioritize the logistics and organization of the Communications department while providing support with designated projects and assignments. As a valued Communications team member, Hartfield will help capture, compile, and create meaningful content for the Riverview Gardens School District.



I'm excited to welcome Ebony Hartfield into the "Ramily," stated Ishmael Sistrunk, executive director of Communications. "She has a proven track record of high performance. Her commitment to detail and her ability to bring structure and content coverage will prove invaluable to the District." [FULL STORY](#)

HOWARD HERNANDEZ WOODARD NAMED ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF SAFETY AND SECURITY



Howard Hernandez Woodard was named the District's new assistant director for Safety and Security.

As assistant director, Woodard will work to implement the district's policies on safety and security. He will assist in the coordination of security for after-school activities and athletic events. He will also help lead all necessary inquiries and investigations.

"We are proud to welcome Howard Woodard as the new assistant director of Safety and Security," stated Warren Newton, director of Safety and Security. "Woodard brings more than 35 years of combined military, law enforcement and corporate security experience to the position and is integrated into the RGSD community."

Prior to his promotion, Woodard served as a district safety officer and a district rover in the Riverview Gardens School District. He also has served as the security operations administrator for Neshor Pharmaceuticals. Additionally, he spent several years as a police officer in East St. Louis. [FULL STORY](#)

BULLETIN BOARD

RGSD IS HIRING



rgsdmo.org/jobs



Riverview Gardens
SCHOOL DISTRICT

#ANewViewOnTheHorizon

*Commit to Creating a
New View on the Horizon*



Join a committee!

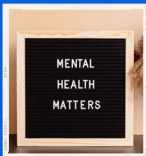


Riverview Gardens
SCHOOL DISTRICT

RGSD PARENT UNIVERSITY PRESENTS:
A SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL AWARENESS
WORKSHOP



Looking at how what
happens to us,
impacts us.



Wednesday
December 13, 2023

6:00pm - 7:00pm

Live with
Candice Cox,
CEO of KHAOS

Gibson Elementary
9926 Fonda Drive
St. Louis, MO 63137

RGSD.K12.MO.US



IN
PERSON



Learn More



Riverview Gardens
SCHOOL DISTRICT

BECOME A SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Candidate Filing Opens Dec. 5



SAVE THE DATE

14

DECEMBER 2023

TOWN HALL

6-8 PM



Riverview Gardens
SCHOOL DISTRICT



PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
PRESENTS:



FAMILY & COMMUNITY LEARNING

Learn computational thinking skills through
hands-on experiences inspired by the
PBS KIDS series *Work It Out Wombats!*

MONDAY: DECEMBER 4, 2023

From: 6pm to 7pm

Location: Gibson Elementary

9926 Fonda Drive
St. Louis, MO 63137

REGISTER BY NOV. 29TH

Adults &
Children



Adults &
Children

Nine PBS

Supported by Ready to Learn and Corporation for Public
Broadcasting through the U.S. Department of Education.

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Essay [written oratory] and
contest application must be
postmarked by **November 28,**
2023, or emailed no later than
midnight on **November 30, 2023**



Finalists chosen to participate in
the oratorical contest will be
contacted by **December 6, 2023**



All essays should
reflect the values of
Dr. Martin Luther King,
Jr. and the theme of
"Now is the time..."

NCCU

North County Churches Uniting for Racial Harmony & Justice
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Oratorical Contest



For application and rules, please call Dr. Barbara Thompson 314.780.4464 or John Thomas at 636.395.7144

Happy
Thanksgiving



Helping Hands Food Pantry

Ferguson Metro Plaza-Lower Level
3156 Persshall Rd Suite 152
Ferguson, MO 63136

Open Tuesday

(Closed on the 5th Tuesday of Each Month)

9AM-12:30PM



For more information contact: 314-795-4753



A NEW VIEW ON THE HORIZON

By Dr. Joylynn Pruitt-Adams, Superintendent of Schools

Greetings RGSD Stakeholders,

First, I would like to congratulate all of the amazing scholars, staff members and community partners who have been honored in recent weeks. So far in the 2023-2024 school year, Riverview Gardens High School scholars have already surpassed more than \$2 million earned in college scholarships.



Esteemed scholars, faculty and staff members have received awards from organizations such as the Little Bit Foundation, the St. Louis American Foundation, the Alpha Zeta Chapter of Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, the Mu Nu Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. Family members have also earned resolutions on behalf of the Missouri Senate and the Missouri House of Representatives.

While most of us do not actively seek or solicit awards and acknowledgment, it is a testament to the talented and dedicated community that Riverview Gardens continues to lauded for excellence.

As the Thanksgiving and holiday seasons approach, I am grateful that our school community has proven to be a tapestry of resilience, collaboration and learning. Though the school year has had its share of challenges, let's continue to celebrate the bonds that strengthen our schools and the spirit of growth and excellence that we know exist.

On December 14, Riverview Gardens School District will host our first town hall meeting for the 2023-2024 school year. We hope that you will come out to this event to learn more about the District, our goals, initiatives and celebrations. While we just completed the Fall 2023 Climate & Culture surveys, we look forward to sharing the results and giving the community an opportunity to share additional feedback in person.

We cannot succeed with the involvement, input and effort of parents, scholars, staff and community stakeholders. As the State of Missouri prepares to return RGSD to local governance by July 2024, it is ever-important that we come together as a school community to work towards sustained academic improvement.

If you have been wondering how you can support and serve children, you may want to consider running for the RGSD school board. The final two appointed school board seats will transition to elected seats in the April 2024 election. Serving on a school board is a major decision. To help provide information into what school board service entails, the Special Administrative Board has added an informational agenda item during the Nov. 28 SAB meeting that will detail the requirements for candidates, answer questions from interested parties and give insight into the duties of a school board member. Community members can participate in person or via Zoom. To learn more, visit rgsdmo.org/election.

If you are unable to commit to campaigning to join the school board, there are still many opportunities for you to partner with RGSD. We are seeking student, parent, staff and community participation on various committees and sub-committees, the parent ambassador program, Parent University. People can also volunteer directly with the District or through one of our many supportive and essential community partners.

Lastly, I would like to welcome Paris French and Micah Long to the Special Administrative Board as student representatives. Thank you for your commitment to represent RGSD scholars on the school board. Student voice is essential to achieving and sustaining academic success. I look forward to working alongside you to provide the support and resources required to help each and every scholar of Riverview Gardens to be successful.