

December 2020

# Mehlville Messenger

A Mehlville School District Publication

## Students and staff show persistence, flexibility in the face of COVID-19

Since school started on Aug. 25, Mehlville School District has pivoted between two learning models in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The district started in Plan C: Connected, our virtual learning model. Slowly, students transitioned to Plan B: Blended, a learning model where students attend school two days a week, receive virtual instruction one day a week and complete independent work on the other two days. By Oct. 27, all of our on-campus students were following Plan B. Students enrolled in Mehlville@Home continued uninterrupted virtual learning.

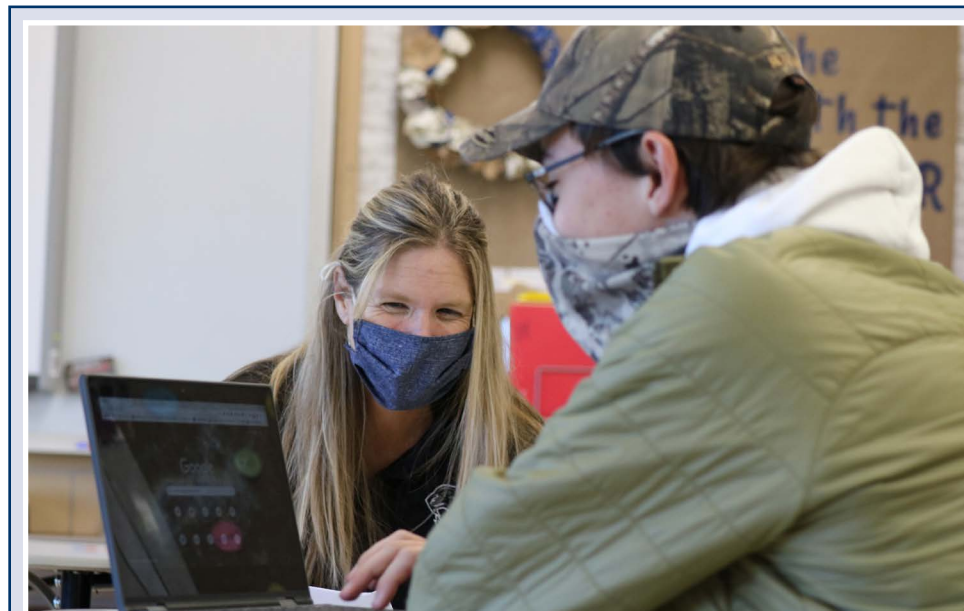
A surge in COVID-19 cases in ZIP code 63129, the county and the entire state began in late October, and by Nov. 16, high school students returned to virtual learning through Plan C.

“This has been a year of impossible and difficult decisions,” said Dr. Chris Gaines, Superintendent. “We are making the best decisions possible given each week’s new set of circumstances. We do not take lightly the impact these decisions have on our students and their families.”

As the district continues to respond to COVID-19, students and staff have shown persistence, grit and flexibility. Teachers have learned how to provide engaging instruction through videoconference and other technology. School food staff have ensured children have access to food. Bus drivers have delivered meals and supplies to students at home and completed special projects during Plan C.

“We would all prefer to be teaching in-person,” said Dr. Jeff Bresler, Assistant Superintendent, Supervision of Schools. “But there are a few silver linings to these challenges. Our students and staff are developing greater resiliency. The pandemic has given us the opportunity to develop and improve virtual learning opportunities – which is a setting in which some students are thriving.”

For the latest on Mehlville School District’s COVID-19 response, visit [bit.ly/msdr9covid19](https://bit.ly/msdr9covid19).



### In-person help for high schoolers

While learning in Plan C, students may participate in on-campus interventions with their teachers. High school students and teachers have intervention time built into their schedule each day from 9:40 a.m. to 11:55 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 2:50 p.m. Transportation is available upon request for the morning intervention time.

“Some of the students really struggle with online learning,” said Stephanie Guliano, Mehlville High School math teacher. “In-person support can help them connect with a teacher. They are able to ask questions and clarify their thinking with a live person.”

## Safe, free meals available for children under 18

All families living in Mehlville School District can take advantage of our free meal program for children ages 1-18.

Students attending in-person can pick up a grab-and-go breakfast on their way to their first class. They can also eat lunch for free in the school cafeteria. A la carte items and extras are available for purchase.

Families with children not attending Mehlville in-person can pick up curbside meals from any district school on Mondays from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. On Tuesdays through Fridays, curbside meals can be picked up from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Mehlville High School (3200 Lemay Ferry Road) and Oakville High School (5557 Milburn Road). Please complete a meal request form each week at [bit.ly/msdr9lunch](https://bit.ly/msdr9lunch) to let our staff know how many meals to prepare.



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The *Mehlville Messenger* is published by the Communications Department four times a year for Mehlville School District residents, businesses and families. Its purpose is to inform the public of district news, student achievements and community involvement activities. Please submit questions, letters and comments to:

Communications Department  
3120 Lemay Ferry Road  
St. Louis, MO 63125  
314-467-5000  
messenger@msdr9.org

The Mehlville School District mission is to build a high performing school system rooted in the community's desire to build a culture of improvement for staff and students.

Mehlville School District believes that all of our graduates should be creative and critical thinkers, self-aware, persistent, communicators, and ethical and global. We call this our Portrait of a Graduate.



Mehlville School District is proud to be a National District of Character.



Mehlville School District

## FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Kevin Schartner



# We hear you, and we're making the best decisions possible

The role of a school board director is to be a representative for our community in the oversight and strategic direction of our school district. In a normal year, most of us agree this means things like ensuring balanced budgets and improving academics. I also think most of us would agree that this year has been anything but “normal.” The coronavirus has changed the lives of everyone in our country. Many have lost jobs, local businesses are facing unprecedented challenges, and many in our community have lost loved ones. It has upended “normal” life for just about everyone.

Throughout this time, we have heard from stakeholders across our district. These include families with students who struggle to learn in a virtual school, those who worry for their own health or of bringing this virus home to vulnerable family members, requests to resume sports to provide scholarship opportunities for our seniors, and many more. The one constant of these stories is they all bring their life experiences to advocate for a position, and because of this they are all valid. Some of them are truly heartbreaking. We also know that meeting all of these competing requests was never possible. I can honestly say there has not been a

time where any COVID-related decisions felt good, only that they were the best call we could make with the information we had.

As I write this article, it is with the knowledge that we are closer to the end of this pandemic than the beginning. Two vaccines are coming, and a third has just released test results showing great promise. As I read articles and watch videos of our new Mehlville School District Alumni Hall of Fame inductees and former graduates working as health providers, it fills me with promise as I think of the days ahead where our current students will become like those great people, leading the efforts to overcome future challenges.

Before ending, I want to explicitly express our board's appreciation for all of our teachers, support staff and administration. This year has numerous, unique challenges none of us saw coming. We are proud of the work you are doing and we are extremely thankful, especially for our frontline teachers and school support staff. We understand the added pressures and work you are putting in during this unprecedented time, and we sincerely appreciate your efforts and dedication.

## How to connect with the Mehlville Board of Education

The Mehlville Board of Education are elected officials who are responsible for setting policy governing Mehlville School District operations, overseeing district finances, appointing the district's superintendent, and providing direction for the district. The Board of Education welcomes public comments and feedback from constituents. There are a variety of ways to communicate with board members.

### Email a board member directly or as a group

Each member of the Mehlville Board of Education can be reached via email. To reach all seven members of the Board of Education, email [MehlvilleBOE@msdr9.org](mailto:MehlvilleBOE@msdr9.org).

### Provide public comment at a regular meeting

Any Mehlville School District resident who would like to address the Board on a matter that affects the district has the opportunity to speak during the open comments period at any school board meeting.



Board of Education meeting in August 2020

Residents who wish to speak at board meetings are requested to sign the open comments sheet that is provided before meetings, giving their address and topic of the comments to be made. Three minutes will be allotted per person. When a group wishes to address the board, the group must pick a spokesperson, and that individual will have five minutes to speak for the entire group.

### Mail the board a letter

The Mehlville Board of Education receives mail at the following address: Mehlville Board of Education, 3120 Lemay Ferry Road, St. Louis, MO 63125.

Additionally, the Board of Education may host special events as needed to gather general feedback or feedback about specific items. During the 2019-2020 school year, the Board of Education used these sessions as Mehlville Listens focus groups to gather feedback specific to the next iteration of our strategic plan. In years prior, the board hosted open Listening Sessions. However, these open format events were sparsely attended.

To find out about upcoming Board of Education meetings, committee meetings and special events, and to receive board meeting notes, sign up for email notifications at <https://bit.ly/BOEnotifications>.

### Have a general question?

For general questions about Mehlville School District, email [messenger@msdr9.org](mailto:messenger@msdr9.org) and a member of the communications team will route your question to the appropriate person.



## Analyzing a new set of data

As educational leaders, we routinely review data and make data-based decisions. Typically, that data relates to things like academic achievement and attendance. These days, our data analysis is centered around COVID-19, and it's how I start each morning.

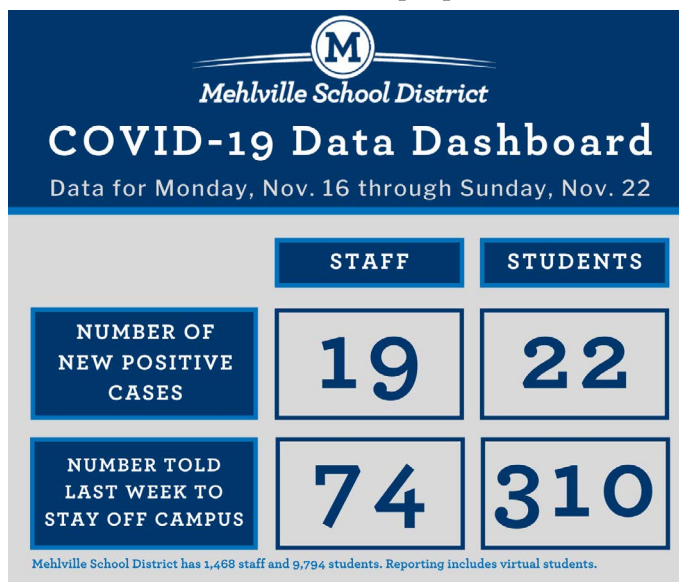
Every day I receive a report of the new cases in our three ZIP codes. I also pull data from a dashboard with age band data on positivity rates and case rates. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, I receive updates on St. Louis County positivity rates. Historical numbers often change with updated data, so we have to be mindful to catch those changes.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services provides a report on youth cases by school district. This report is released sporadically and provides the number of cases within district boundaries over the 14 days prior. The state also updates regional transmission rates, typically on Wednesdays. A transmission rate greater than 1 means that the spread of the virus is increasing in our region.

We also track what is happening with the virus in our students and employees. Each Monday, we update the COVID-19 dashboard on our website. It has the numbers of new positive cases and people required to be off campus.

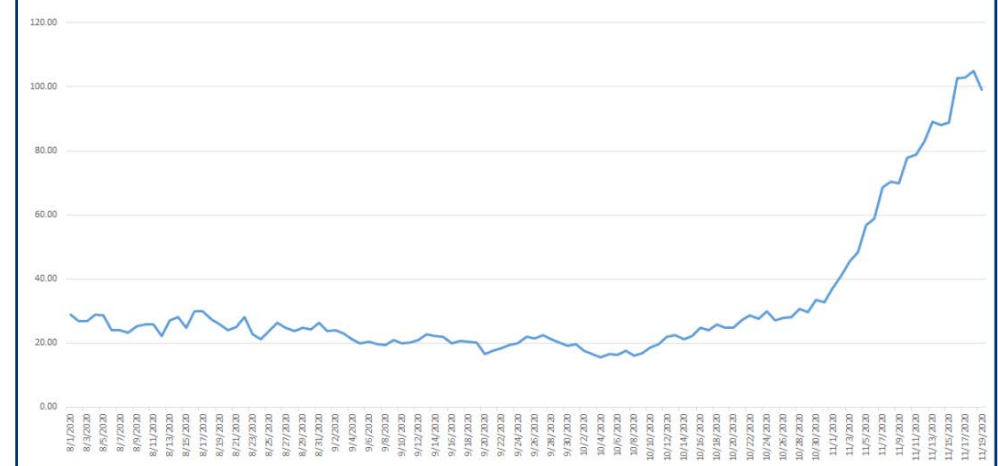
Each week, our leadership team reviews the data and has a lively discussion of next steps. The decisions we have made have not been easy. Each decision creates a new puzzle that must be addressed. I often tell people that the challenges we have faced since March probably represent the most complex problems they will ever try to solve.

Each week we record a COVID-19 update that gets published to our YouTube channel and gets shared with our parents, staff and high school students. You can see those updates here: [bit.ly/msdr9covid19](https://bit.ly/msdr9covid19).

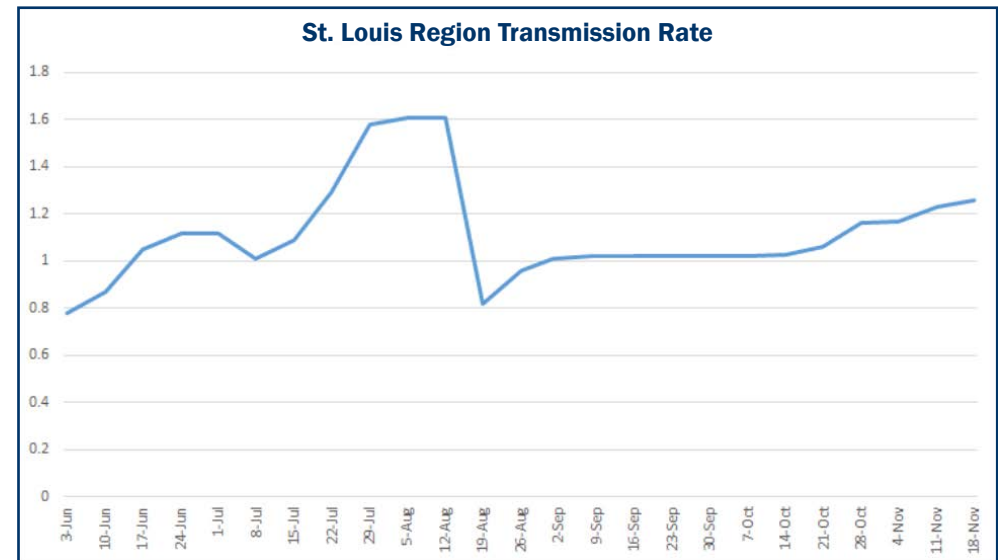


I am thankful we have such a thoughtful and talented team to navigate these challenging times. I'm also thankful for our community. I appreciate your continued grace, support and patience during this prolonged, unusual time.

7-Day Average of New COVID-19 Cases per 100,000 in 63125, 63128 and 63129



Data via Christopher Prener, PhD, Saint Louis University, [https://github.com/slu-openGIS/MO\\_HEALTH\\_Covid\\_Tracking](https://github.com/slu-openGIS/MO_HEALTH_Covid_Tracking)



Data Source: Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

## Mehlville School District Board of Education Candidate Filing

Any person wishing to file for the Mehlville School District Board of Education may do so in the Mehlville School District Administration Building, 3120 Lemay Ferry Road, St. Louis, MO 63125, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. beginning Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2020, through Friday, Jan. 15, 2021. The final day for filing will be Tuesday, Jan. 19, 2021, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. An election for two seats on the board will be held Tuesday, April 6, 2021. The seats carry a three-year term.

The office will be closed and no filings will be accepted Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2020, through Friday, Jan. 1, 2021, for winter break and Monday, Jan. 18, 2021, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Except for the first and last day of filing, filings will be taken by appointment only. No filings will be accepted when the office is closed due to inclement weather or in the event of a closure due to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Under the provisions of Missouri Statute Section 115.124, if the number of candidates who file is equal to the number of positions to be filled by the election (two), no election will be held. However, if the number of candidates filing exceeds the number of positions, the annual school board election will be held on April 6, 2021. Per Mehlville School District Policy BBB-1, the names of qualified candidates shall be placed on the ballot in order of filing. For more information and for board member qualifications, visit [bit.ly/boecandidatefiling](https://bit.ly/boecandidatefiling). To make an appointment to file for candidacy, call 314-467-5000.

Candidates must wear a face covering and observe district infection control rules in force at the time of filing.

# Parents share their experience with the first semester of Mehlville@Home

In August, Mehlville School District launched Mehlville@Home, a virtual program that serves as an alternative for on-campus learning. Some parents recently shared their experience with the first semester of the program.

“We have had a wonderful experience with Mehlville@Home,” said Abby Reiss, who has two children enrolled in the program. “They are engaged in dialogue daily with their educators and fellow students, are actively learning and have had positive growth in the program.”

The district’s virtual learning plan has been continually developed since the sudden shift to virtual learning in the spring and now provides a more robust learning experience.

“It is a viable option to traditional in-person school,” said Jenna Sita, who has three children involved in the program. “It is also much different than the in-home learning we did in the spring. My kids have a dedicated teacher available to them on-camera five days a week. It holds them accountable and helps them feel connected.”

The elementary curriculum for Mehlville@Home is the same as the curriculum for on-campus students. For middle and high school students, all core classes are provided along with a choice of electives. The virtual setting provides for personalization of learning to allow students to work at their own pace.

“I am impressed with how closely my children’s classes mirror what they were doing prior to COVID-19,” Sita said.

Both Sita and Reiss have re-enrolled their children in Mehlville@Home for the second semester of the program.

“We feel they are getting quality instruction and an opportunity to connect with their teachers and classmates five days a week,” Reiss said. “You will get to know a lot about your child’s learning in this program. I think you will be surprised to find a really engaging personalized educational experience occurring.”



Students in Megan Geisler's Mehlville@Home kindergarten class use Play-Doh to mold the letter "M" they had been studying.

## 2020-2021 school year will be last year for traditional snow days

In the past, Mehlville School District has canceled school due to snow or other types of inclement weather. Virtual learning has changed that.

The district was approved by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide virtual instruction on up to five snow days each year. Starting with the 2021-2022 school year, when our campuses close due to weather, students will be expected to log in to their Chromebooks to connect with their teachers from the safety of their homes.

“There are two benefits to providing virtual instruction on inclement weather days,” said Dr. Brian Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning. “Virtual instruction allows us to provide continuity of instruction in a format our students have gotten used to during the COVID-19 pandemic. It also provides us with some additional control over the school year calendar.”

The district considered using virtual snow days this school year, but in-person learning days have been in short supply due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The district is hopeful that all students could return to campus at some point in the second semester. That’s why, for the 2020-2021 school year, we intend to continue to shut down even virtual learning and take traditional snow days. Any snow days would be made up starting on June 1.

In the event that campuses close, staff and parents will be notified via text, phone call and/or email through SchoolMessenger. In order to receive texts

about cancellations or events at your child’s school, text the word YES to 67587 from any wireless device on file with your child’s school.

Campus closures will also be announced through social media, via our district website, mehlvilleschooldistrict.com, through local television stations and other media partners. You can also download the Mehlville School District app from the Apple Store or Google Play and turn on push notifications for cancellations.



# The 2020 Mehlville School District Alumni Hall of Fame Inductees

Mehlville School District's Alumni Hall of Fame identifies and celebrates graduates of the Mehlville School District (Mehlville High School and Oakville High School) who have made a lasting impact in the community or in the nation. Inductees serve as role models for current and future generations of students who aspire to be productive citizens and demonstrate traits that align to the Mehlville School District Portrait of a Graduate Traits: creative and critical thinker; self-aware; persistent; communicator; and ethical and global.

Typically, Alumni Hall of Fame inductees are honored during an induction ceremony in the fall. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the induction ceremony will be postponed until the fall of 2021. Congratulations to the following 2020 inductees!

Learn more about the 2020 Alumni Hall of Fame inductees at [bit.ly/2020hofinducteesmsdr9](https://bit.ly/2020hofinducteesmsdr9).



**Abdul-Kaba Abdullah**  
**Civic Leader and Executive Director at Park Central Development**  
*Mehlville High School Class of 1997*

An esteemed civic leader, Abdullah is committed to improving St. Louis through community development and government affairs. Through Park Central Development, Abdullah strengthens St. Louis' urban neighborhoods by attracting investments and maintaining equitable and vibrant urban neighborhoods and commercial districts.



**Bridgett Riley**  
**Professional Stunt Woman and World Champion Kickboxer**  
*Oakville High School Class of 1989*

Riley is a pioneer in boxing, kickboxing, martial arts and Hollywood stunts. A mentor to many in female combat sports, Riley won the International Female Boxers Association bantamweight world championship title, is a five-time world kickboxing champion, is in the Black Belt Hall of Fame, and has numerous Hollywood stunt and acting credits.



**Lieutenant Commander James B. Brendel, Jr.**  
**Supervisor of the U.S. Coast Guard Marine Safety Detachment Cincinnati, Ohio**  
*Oakville High School Class of 1997*

After enlisting 20 years ago, Lt. Cmdr. Brendel climbed the ranks in the U.S. Coast Guard while receiving numerous awards for service. He is currently responsible for port safety and enforcement in a three-state area including the Port of Cincinnati.



**Dr. Jason Wang**  
**President, Owner and Pharmacist-in-Charge of Medicine Shoppe, Pevely and co-owner of Medicine Shoppe Affton**  
*Mehlville High School Class of 2005*

An award-winning pharmacist, Wang works to break barriers to care for underserved patients in his community. He is involved in numerous organizations including Pevely Lions Club and St. Louis College of Pharmacy Alumni Association. He is a mentor to both pharmacy students and students in his community.



**Dr. Desmond Kirchhofer**  
**Superintendent of Northwest School District**  
*Mehlville High School Class of 1989*

Dr. Kirchhofer started his education career as a teacher and coach at Mehlville High School. The highly respected superintendent previously served as an administrator at three schools and deputy superintendent at Parkway Schools. Throughout his career, Dr. Kirchhofer has been a mentor to countless students and educators.



**Dr. Kristy Weber**  
**Chief of Orthopaedic Oncology at Penn Medicine and Director of the Sarcoma Program in the Abramson Cancer Center**  
*Mehlville High School Class of 1983*

Dr. Weber is an innovator in diagnosing and treating bone and soft tissue tumors in children and adults. She has also served as the first female president of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, an organization that advances the highest quality musculoskeletal care for patients.



# Reuniting on campus

After weeks of connected learning from home, students slowly returned to campus in September and October. They were greeted with new safety procedures and by staff committed to maximizing their instructional time together.



Bernard Middle School



Oakville Elementary School



Wohlwend Elementary School



Washington Middle School



Oakville High School



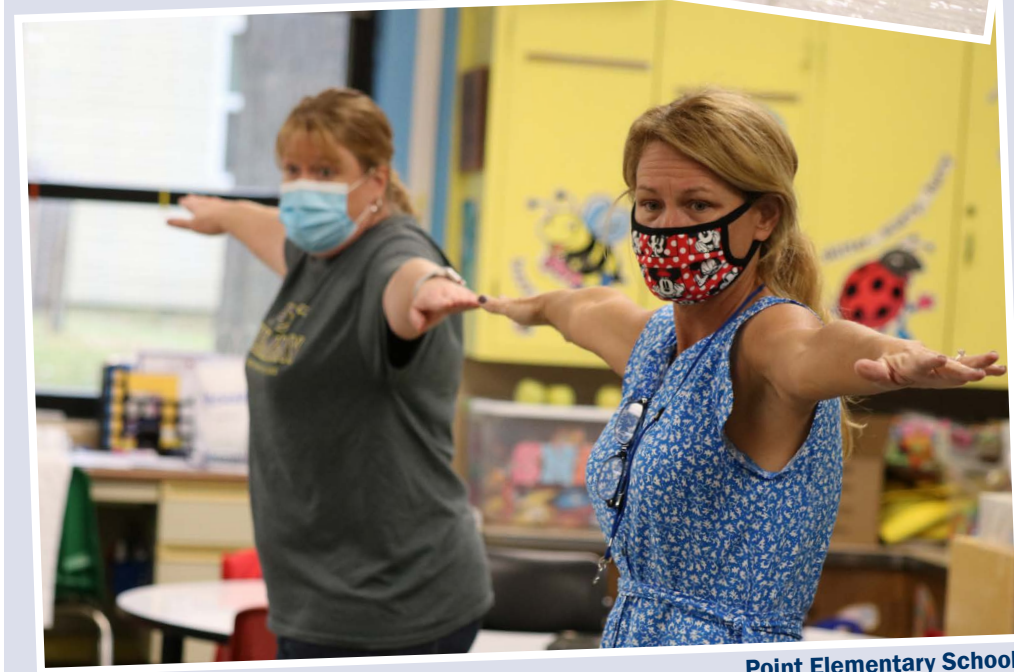
Margaret Buerkle Middle School



John Cary Early Childhood Center



Blades Elementary School



Point Elementary School



Beasley Elementary School



Oakville Middle School



Mehville High School

# Kindergarten enrollment opens on Jan. 11

Mehlville offers full-day, tuition-free kindergarten to resident families. Children must be five years old before Aug. 1, 2021, to begin kindergarten next August. Kindergarten enrollment is available online at [bit.ly/msdr9kregistration](https://bit.ly/msdr9kregistration) beginning Jan. 11.

Parents must have a Parent Portal account to enroll a new student via the online application. If you do not have a Parent Portal account or have forgotten your username and/or password, please contact your child's school. You can look up your child's elementary school at [bit.ly/MSDR9boundaries](https://bit.ly/MSDR9boundaries) or by calling 314-467-5000.

## Step 1

Contact the school to add your new student to Parent Portal.

School	Hours	Phone
Beasley Elementary	8 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.	314-467-5400
Bierbaum Elementary	8:45 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.	314-467-5500
Blades Elementary	8 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.	314-467-7300
Forder Elementary	8:45 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.	314-467-5600
Hagemann Elementary	8:45 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.	314-467-5700
Oakville Elementary	8:45 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.	314-467-5800
Point Elementary	8:45 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.	314-467-5900
Rogers Elementary	8:45 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.	314-467-6300
Trautwein Elementary	8:45 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.	314-467-6400
Wohlwend Elementary	8:45 a.m. to 3:35 p.m.	314-467-6500

## Step 2

Gather the following required information and documentation.

- Student(s) legal name
- For transfer students, previous school contact information
- Emergency contact information
- Parent/guardian photo identification
- Birth certificate issued by the Bureau of Vital Statistics
- Medically documented immunization/health records
- Proof of residency (please read more below)
- IEP and evaluation, if the student is receiving special education services
- For transfer students, an unofficial transcript or most recent report card

### Proof of Residency

Unless student is exempt from the proof of residency requirement, one document from each List A and List B are required. Electronic documents are accepted if they are current and contain the information required for the district to verify proof of residence (date, name, address, applicable signatures, etc.).

#### List A documents

- Deed or Mortgage statement dated within 30 days of the date of submission
- Real estate tax receipt dated within one year of the date of submission
- Unexpired lease/rental agreement signed by landlord and tenant, including the address, apartment number and date of rental



Students work on literacy skills at Rogers Elementary.

- Landlord verification letter on property management company letterhead for month-to-month leases only (original lease showing month-to-month terms required)
- Sales contract free of contingencies and signed by all parties, provided a copy of the closing statement is submitted within 60 days of enrollment

#### List B documents

- Utility bill (water, gas, sewer, electric or trash) dated within 30 days of the date of submission including the name, service and mailing address. Trash bills will be accepted if dated within the most recent billing quarter.
- Personal property tax receipt dated within one year of the date of submission
- Unexpired occupancy permit listing all the occupants of the residence
- Government acknowledgment of address (i.e. social security, voter registration, welfare, etc.) dated within 30 days of the date of submission

## Step 3

Begin the enrollment process by logging into Parent Portal at [sis.mehlville.k12.mo.us](https://sis.mehlville.k12.mo.us). Look for the banner in yellow that says "Online registration must be completed for the 2021-2022 school year." Click on "View" to begin enrolling your student.

Once your enrollment has been submitted and reviewed by a school registrar, you will receive an email confirmation from your child's elementary school.

Please call your child's elementary school if you have questions or need assistance with enrollment. We are looking forward to meeting your new student!

## MOSAIC Elementary kindergarten lottery opens in January

MOSAIC Elementary provides personalized learning paths to empower learners for life beyond the classroom. Instruction and authentic learning opportunities are based on each student's academic and social needs. Teachers use a variety of tools and strategies, including learning menus, technology and blended learning opportunities to explore the curriculum. Students are encouraged to learn the curriculum at their own pace and within the context of their interests.

MOSAIC Elementary will hold a virtual parent information night on

Monday, Dec. 7, at 6 p.m. for parents who are interested in their child attending kindergarten at MOSAIC Elementary for the 2021-2022 school year. Please visit the [MOSAIC website](https://mosaic.mehlvilleschooldistrict.com), [mosaic.mehlvilleschooldistrict.com](https://mosaic.mehlvilleschooldistrict.com), to register for the parent information night.

The kindergarten application for MOSAIC Elementary will be available online on the MOSAIC Elementary webpage beginning Jan. 4, 2021. **Only online applications will be accepted.** The online application closes on Jan. 29. Following a lottery, parents will be notified of acceptance in March.

# District continues to make progress towards new strategic plan

Superintendent Dr. Chris Gaines gave his annual State of the District Address in September. While the district's focus for most of 2020 has been on COVID-19, this address provided some much-needed perspective on where the district has been and where we're going once the pandemic ends. Here are some notes from Dr. Gaines' address. You can watch the address at [mehvilleschooldistrict.com/about\\_us/state\\_of\\_the\\_district](http://mehvilleschooldistrict.com/about_us/state_of_the_district).

## Looking back

During the 2019-2020 school year, we engaged the community in our Mehlville Listens efforts, which included in-person meetings, focus groups and surveys of parents, students, staff and the community. The purpose of Mehlville Listens was to gather feedback to prioritize what the community wants us to accomplish in the coming years. Safety and personalization of learning were the top themes that emerged through the process. We are currently drafting the next iteration of our strategic plan, and those two themes will be addressed in the plan proposed to the Mehlville Board of Education in early 2021.

In January 2019, the Facilities Steering Committee started its work to identify necessary facilities work at each of our campuses. After visiting each school and surveying students, parents and staff, the committee prioritized \$35 million in facility projects related to safety and accessibility, and restroom and parking lot improvements. We have the opportunity to complete these projects without raising taxes through a zero tax rate increase bond issue.

## Looking ahead

Voters made a significant investment in facilities 20 years ago through the approval of Prop P. The district has identified projects that will need to be completed in the next 6-10 years as we are ending the lifecycle of some of our infrastructure, including \$30 million in HVAC work. We are planning now for how we will pay for those facilities expenses.

One of the changes the district made this year is the opening of Mehlville@Home. Around 2,000 students are currently enrolled in the all-virtual program. The district is committed to continuing to offer virtual learning for families even after the pandemic is behind us. Additionally, we are planning to continue the expansion of the Academy concept at the middle schools and the MyPath program at the high schools. All three of these programs expand personalized learning opportunities for our students by providing students with greater voice and choice in their learning.



Sarah Hale, first-grade teacher at Hagemann Elementary, teaches her students reading through Google Meet video conferencing.

## Board approves 2020 tax rate

The Mehlville Board of Education unanimously approved the 2020 blended tax rate of \$3.8056 at its annual tax rate hearing on Monday, Sept. 28, 2020. The blended rate is similar to the previous year of \$3.7994.

The blended rate is an average rate of the residential, commercial, agricultural and personal property tax rates. It includes the \$0.04 temporary tax for Prop A, which ends in 2025. The tax rates for 2020-2021 by category are as follows:

- Residential tax rate: \$3.6531
- Commercial tax rate: \$3.8641
- Agricultural tax rate: \$4.3656
- Personal property tax rate: \$4.5374

Voters approved Prop A in April 2016, which increased the district's capital projects fund by 4 cents, with a subsequent reduction in the debt service fund of 4 cents. Prop A has a 10-year sunset, and funds are being used to complete roofing projects throughout the district.

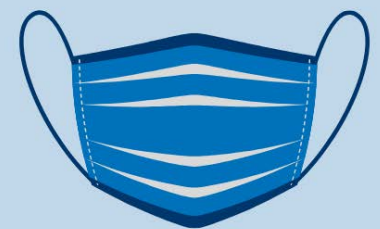


WE NEED YOUR HELP!



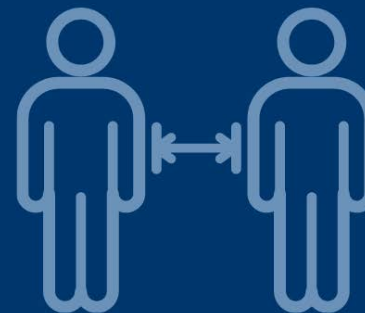
**HANDS**

Sanitize your hands frequently



**FACE**

Wear a face covering



**SPACE**

Maintain social distancing



**HOME**

Stay home when you feel sick



## Real-world experiences get kids “AMPED” on algebra

The Algebra, Manufacturing, Production, Entrepreneurship and Design (AMPED) course at Mehlville and Oakville high schools is teaching students math and business through real-world experiences.

“They learn the curriculum of Algebra I while learning to run a business and make money,” said OHS AMPED instructor Suzy Mueller. “We produce products after we design them, then sell them for a profit.”

This school year, students have been printing decals and signs to be used in the hallways to promote social distancing, one-way traffic flow and other efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19. AMPED students have also been designing and printing face masks for other student organizations. Last school year, students designed and produced stickers, banners, posters, T-shirts and printable vinyls.

“I felt like I was actually doing something for a purpose, and it made me want to learn it more,” said OHS sophomore Hailey Veninga, who took the class last year as a freshman. “Usually in math class, people say, ‘we’re never going to use this. What’s the point of it?’ In AMPED, you actually get to apply it literally.”

For example, Mueller said, her teaching partner Ronald Thompson, teaches a math lesson on slope. “Then we will go into how that goes into business with supply and demand, what types of slopes are we dealing with and where is that intersect point,” said Mueller. “We take that math problem and put words to it that interface the business aspect.”

Potential clients contact Mueller or Thompson with a request. The teachers forward work requests to the students who handle the entire project including communication with the client, calculating cost of production, designing the

product and production. Some of the projects include posters for teachers, stickers to raise awareness for causes and T-shirts for clubs.

“You get to come up with all of these ideas and use creativity and mathematics to apply yourself in different ways,” said Veninga. “We’re all working together, and you get experiences you wouldn’t get in a normal math or business class.”



Oakville High School AMPED students design and print masks for the school's DECA club. (L-R): Freshman Brody Burlingame, freshman Diana Farelal-Alcantar and sophomore Seth Gallagher.

## STAFF DISTINCTIONS

### Rogers Elementary teacher receives Excellence in Teaching Award

Julia St. Louis, a first-grade teacher at Rogers Elementary School, is Mehlville School District's Emerson Excellence in Teaching award recipient for the 2020-2021 school year.

A Mehlville High School alum, St. Louis enrolled at Mizzou where she initially majored in engineering. She had always enjoyed working with children through tutoring and summer camp programs, so after a year, she switched her major to education.

“I like learning from the students,” St. Louis said. “I grow every single day with them, and every day is different. We have fun and laugh. They always keep things interesting.”

St. Louis spent a year teaching in another district before she was hired at Rogers Elementary, where she has taught for the past five years.

“She is highly motivated to be the best version of herself every day,” Dr. Patrick Keenoy, Rogers Elementary principal, said. “That carries over to her students having relevant, meaningful lessons each day in a joyful learning community.”

Those meaningful lessons are something she strives to create because of her own experiences growing up in Mehlville School District.

“The things I remember about school are the things that were fun, different and exciting,” St. Louis said. “I want to give my kids those experiences and for school to be a fun, positive place where they get to be themselves.”

St. Louis was integral in the district's transition to virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She led virtual professional development training for teachers in the spring and throughout the summer to help them prepare to begin the new school year in a connected format.

“Ms. St. Louis saw that there was a need for doing connected learning the right way, and she stepped in and took on leadership responsibilities on her own accord,” Dr. Keenoy said.

St. Louis is reaching students beyond Mehlville School District this year through her work with Nine Network's Teaching in Room 9 series where she leads televised lessons for third-grade students.

“She is a wonderful representative of our community and our school district,” said Dr. Brian Smith, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning. “We couldn't be more excited for her to receive this award.”

Emerson recognizes educators from across the St. Louis-area each year with the Excellence in Teaching Award. Each school in the district nominates one teacher for the award, then a representative from the district is selected.



Rogers Elementary first-grade teacher Julia St. Louis reviews subtraction problems with a student during a Toy Story-inspired theme day last school year.

# STUDENT DISTINCTIONS

## National Merit



Matthew Hansen



Angelina O'Brien



Aurora Baker



Andrew Curran



Katie Seithel



Justin Crawford



Hannah Franke



Vicky Riordan

Two Mehlville High School seniors were named National Merit Semifinalists: **Matthew Hansen** and **Angelina O'Brien**. Three Oakville High School seniors were named National Merit Semifinalists: **Aurora Baker**, **Andrew Curran** and **Kathleen Seithel**.

Three Oakville High School seniors were named National Merit Commended Students: **Justin Crawford**, **Hannah Franke** and **Vicky Riordan**.

## Kiwanis Outstanding Student

**Allison Miller**, Washington Middle School eighth-grade student, received the Outstanding Student Award from the South County Kiwanis.



Allison Miller

## OMS Yearbook

**Oakville Middle School's yearbook program** has been named a Jostens 2020 National Yearbook Program of Excellence. The National Yearbook Program of Excellence recognizes engaging yearbooks that reflect a broad representation of the student body while helping students develop 21st Century skills such as communication, collaboration, and information and communication technologies literacy. The Oakville Middle School award-winning yearbook program is led by the Oakville Middle Staffers under the direction of **Christina Whelehon**, Oakville Middle School yearbook adviser.

## OHS Softball

Oakville High School senior **Ella Strickland** was named 2nd Team All-State for softball. She previously earned 1st Team All-District and 1st Team All-Region honors.

## OHS Girls Golf

Oakville High School sophomore **Anamaria Wilson** was named 1st Team All-Conference in girls golf.

## VFW Contest

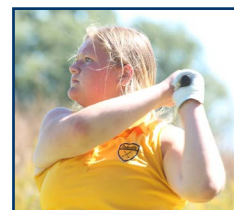
**Lanaja Johnson**, an eighth-grade student at Buerkle Middle School, won first place in the first round of the VFW's Patriot's Pen contest and received \$750 for her essay on "What is Patriotism to Me."

## OHS Volleyball

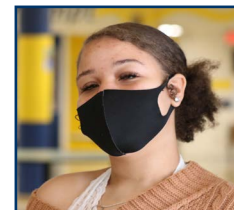
**Regina Elguezabal**, Oakville High School senior, was named All-State for girl's volleyball. She also received All-District and All-Conference honors and was named the Conference Sportswoman of the Year.



Ella Strickland



Anamaria Wilson



Lanaja Johnson



Regina Elguezabal



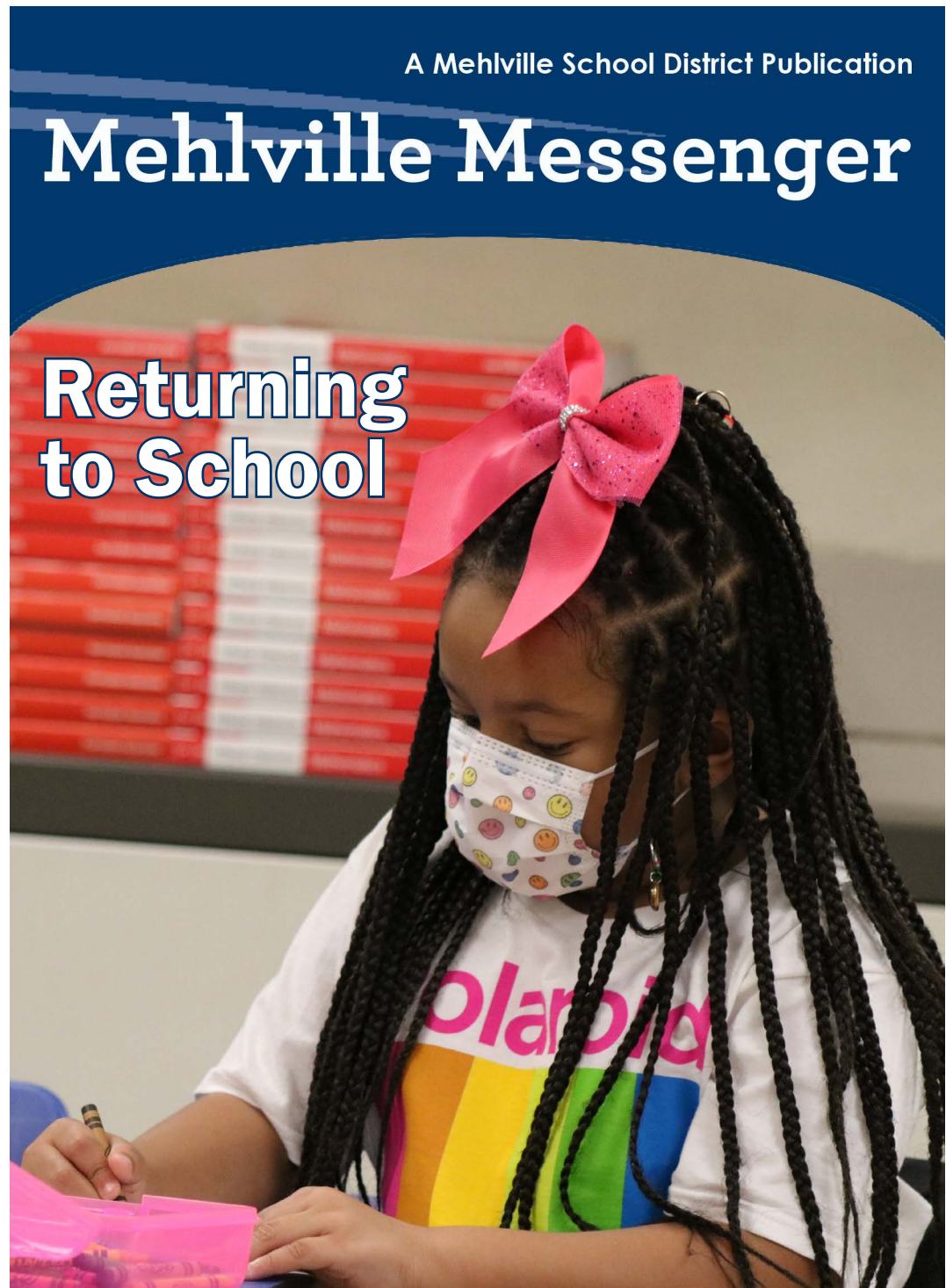
Thank you to all of the Mehlville School District alumni helping in the fight against COVID-19. We appreciate you!



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A Mehlville School District Publication

# Mehlville Messenger

## Returning to School

### IMPORTANT DATES

Find district event information at [mehvilleschooldistrict.com](http://mehvilleschooldistrict.com).

<b>Dec. 15</b>	Board of Education candidate filing begins, see page 3
<b>Dec. 17</b>	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Nottelmann Auditorium
<b>Dec. 23-Jan. 1</b>	No School - Winter Break
<b>Jan. 4</b>	No School - Teacher workday/professional development
<b>Jan. 5</b>	Students return from Winter Break
<b>Jan. 14</b>	Finals and end of second quarter
<b>Jan. 15</b>	No School - Teacher workday
<b>Jan. 18</b>	No School - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
<b>Jan. 21</b>	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Mehlville High School
<b>Feb. 4</b>	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Mehlville High School
<b>Feb. 15</b>	No School - Presidents Day
<b>Feb. 25</b>	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Mehlville High School
<b>Mar. 15-19</b>	Parent/teacher conferences
<b>Mar. 18</b>	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Mehlville High School
<b>Mar. 22-26</b>	No School - Spring Break

## Now Hiring

- Bus drivers
- School food technicians
- Cafeteria recess monitors
- Custodians
- Substitute teachers



Join our team!

▶ Apply at: [bit.ly/employmentmsdr9](http://bit.ly/employmentmsdr9)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, students and teachers have been making the most of their limited time on campus.

Pictured: Ava Burton, first-grade student at Bierbaum Elementary School, returned to school with half of her classmates on Sept. 22.

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