



## 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT

### CSDGKC MISSION

*The mission of the Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City is to leverage our members' combined strengths to provide high-quality and cost-effective services and resources to maximize learning for all students.*

# Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City

## CSDGKC helps member districts facilitate prompt response to COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic that began making headlines in February was new territory for school districts across the country. In Missouri, the protective steps for school districts were first assigned to local governments to decide, then the state government issued an order to close all school buildings until April 24 and, finally, it was decided that all buildings should close for the balance of the school year.

Early on in the process, CSDGKC began connecting with superintendents, Commissioner Margie Vandeven and her Advisory Committee at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and fellow organizations such as EdPlus in St. Louis, the Missouri Association of Rural Educators (MARE), Missouri Association of School Administrators (MASA), the Greater Ozark Cooperating School Districts, and the Missouri School Public Relations Association (MOSPRA) to share and gain insights that could be helpful to CSDGKC member districts.

It started as a series of phone calls, including one to Paul Ziegler, chief executive officer at EdPlus to learn what they were hearing on their side of the state, and one from Dr. Paul Kinder, superintendent of the Blue Springs School District, who had received information from a superintendent in Washington state, where the virus was already active. That superintendent's message: Get ready now because this virus will be impacting everything you do as a school district soon.

These initial calls led to more calls, a series of meetings and the creation of an ad hoc group of nine regional superintendents, through the Greater Kansas City School Administrators Association. The group was hosted by the Blue Springs School District and, candidly, said Dr. Southwick, "We didn't have much information early on. So, we just shared a lot of 'what if?' scenarios, early on. We also made a commitment that we would work together and that CSDGKC would help facilitate those efforts."

This led to a string of meetings, phone calls, and, eventually video conferences as the situation evolved, planning for an eventual shutdown of the school buildings of some sort.

"The superintendents identified four priorities right away," said Dr. Southwick. "They wanted to continue to deliver on their academic responsibilities to their students, to keep school district staff and students safe, to make certain that students were fed, and to continue to pay school district staff."

As the situation moved from a temporary to a permanent shutdown of school buildings for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, the work intensified to launch plans and keep them running smoothly to address those four priorities.

Through it all, CSDGKC played the role of facilitator – sharing information and updates, and connecting districts to each other when their questions or needs were similar. "It seems like we were always on a conference call; it was a real moving target," said Dr. Southwick. "You would go in in the morning, the situation changed by noon, and then it changed again that same night."

Through it all, collaboration helped solve the challenges that surfaced.

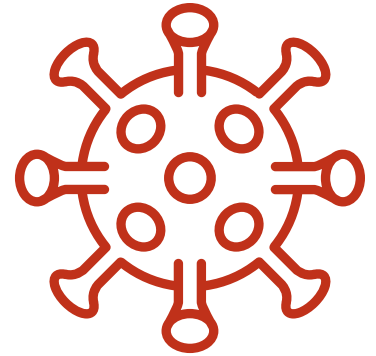
For example, it was not possible for all school districts to simply distribute academic content to students via a website or portal, because not all students and families had devices or even internet access. This meant different types of learning – remote, virtual, distance, etc. – depending on the situation. This is one example of where the collaboration was beneficial, Dr. Southwick said.

Another was more episodic but just as urgent. Several districts – even some on the Kansas side – experienced hiccups in conducting their meal distribution programs. Their fellow superintendents stepped up to offer meals to fill the gap and even, in some cases, deliver the meals.

Now, CSDGKC and the school leaders are looking at long-term questions, such as:

- How do we close out this school year? Questions such as how to retrieve devices on loan to students, allow students to clear out lockers, whether or not to stage proms and graduations (and how to do so) during the summer, etc. are still on the table.

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## PROMPT RESPONSE TO COVID-19 continued from front page...

- Are we going to have summer school and, if so, what does it look like?
- What does the start of school in the fall look like?

"I can't say enough about how the superintendents, their staffs, the agencies, and the other associations have responded," Dr. Southwick said. "These are unprecedented challenges that required new thinking, and everyone has stepped up, worked hard, shared success stories to help their fellow districts. It's really why CSDGKC was created: to bring together the best minds in public education to solve challenges and improve each school district we serve."

## Retirement trust grows, performance remains strong and costs continue to decrease



The Cooperating School Districts' Retirement Trust remains a solid performer for enrolled districts and their employees, and continues to adhere to its goals when it was created in 2010: To improve retirement planning and outcomes for school districts and charters, while reducing member fees.

Membership in the trust increased to 10 districts this past year, with Oak Grove joining the fold. Other member districts are Grain Valley, Harrisonville, Independence, Kansas City, Kearney, Lee's Summit, Liberty, Platte County and Smithville. Adding in the charters, the total number of enrolled school districts and charters now stands at 55, up from 49 in 2019. Membership, in terms of employees, grew to more than 7,500 – up from 6,000 in the previous year – a very strong 25% increase.

This growth is not surprising, says Paul Shrout, of CSDGKC. "We view the trust as a safe and easy alternative to handling such responsibilities in house," he said. "The investment options are plentiful, and the advisors educate the members, so they can make the choices that are right for them."

It also helps that the program's performance and fees have both topped expectations. Specifically, the investment options to Trust members have outperformed their peer benchmarks 100% of the time. Investment management fees have decreased in 94% of the Trust's investment options. And participant fees continue to drop, from, for example, \$140 when the fund was established in 2010, down to \$52 this past year (for an account balance of \$10,000.)

Sound interesting? Contact Paul Shrout, CSDGKC's director of business services at (816) 753-7275 or pshrout@csdgkc.org. Or you may also visit [www.csdrt.valic.com](http://www.csdrt.valic.com).

## New year, same result as CSDGKC earns a fifth-straight clean audit

Once again, Marr and Company, P.C. of Kansas City was engaged by the Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City to conduct the organization's annual audit. And, as has been the case for the last five years, the firm returned a report showing a clean audit for CSDGKC.

Specifically, Marr and Company performed a comprehensive review of the organization's finances, fiscal practices and procedures in determining their findings. Beyond the audit process, the CSDGKC Board of Directors reviews the organization's monthly financial statements, which provide them information about variances or changes related to finances.



## Education Policy Fellowship Program completes a successful sixth year, in spite of COVID-19

Participation in the Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP) continues to grow. For the 2019-2020 cohort, 23 individuals took part, up from 21 in the previous school year. This brings the total of all participants so far to 114.

As has been the case since its founding, the purpose of 10-month EPFP is to take an in-depth look at numerous factors that influence school districts, such as leadership skills, understanding how policies are developed and the influence of local, state and federal organizations on policy. Networking with colleagues is also an outcome of the program, as the group spends a good deal of time together.

The schedule was similar to previous years, beginning with a retreat in Jefferson City. This was followed in October by the annual trip to the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, where they learned about Leadership Development and Strategic Thinking.

The traditional March trip to Washington D.C for the three-day Washington Policy Seminar was cancelled, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Not to be deterred, the group shifted to an immersive, two-day virtual event by the Institute for Educational Leadership that was similar to a regular seminar – keynotes, breakout sessions, access to education policy expert, etc. – but was presented online.

As of April 2020, the current cohort group is on a "sabbatical." They will return in January 2021 to complete their journey. As a result, there will be no new cohort for 2020-2021. CSDGKC thanks the Local Investment Commission (LINC) for their continued partnership that makes the program possible.

## Associate and Affiliate memberships offered expanded advantages

Begun in 2009, the Associate and Affiliate membership benefits were updated in Fall 2019 to make the program more robust for businesses who support CSDGKC and its members.

While Associate memberships are only available to educational institutions or organizations, Affiliate memberships, available to business organizations and vendors, have been expanded to three levels. Platinum membership was renamed Gold, while Silver membership remains unchanged and formerly Basic members will now be known as Bronze.

Although all levels of membership do not constitute an endorsement by CSDGKC, they do offer a point of connection between organizations that work with, support and seek to do business with CSDGKC member districts. Since the last Annual Report, two new organizations joined the ranks. Artisan Solar became a Gold member, while Trane Technologies is a new Bronze member.

For more information about the expanded benefits, please visit <https://www.csdgkc.org/> and click on the "Our members" tab near the top of the homepage.



## Legislative dinner offers education leaders a chance to share ideas face to face

CSDGKC's twelfth Legislative Dinner was held in January 2020 (to benefit the schedule of our honored legislative guests) at Delta Woods Middle School in the Blue Springs School District.

Attendees that night included school district administrators, Board of Education members, 11 members of the Missouri Senate and House, plus staff members from the offices of U.S. Senators Blunt and Hawley, and U.S. Representatives Cleaver, Hartzler and Graves.

The legislators were thanked for their service and then asked to each share some thoughts with the group. This provided the opportunity for informal give and take on educational issues for the upcoming session and a very successful event.

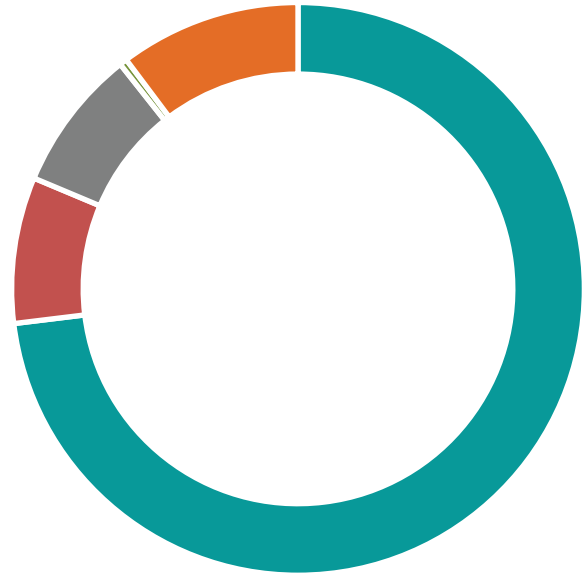
## Districts interested in self-insurance should investigate SiPGKC

Negotiating together for health insurance services used by employees, spouses, dependents and retirees for districts that self-insure means more advantages at the bargaining table and lower costs.

Four school districts – Blue Springs, Grain Valley, Hickman Mills and Smithville – through their participation in the Cooperating School Districts' Self-Insurance Pool of Greater Kansas City are currently receiving these benefits.

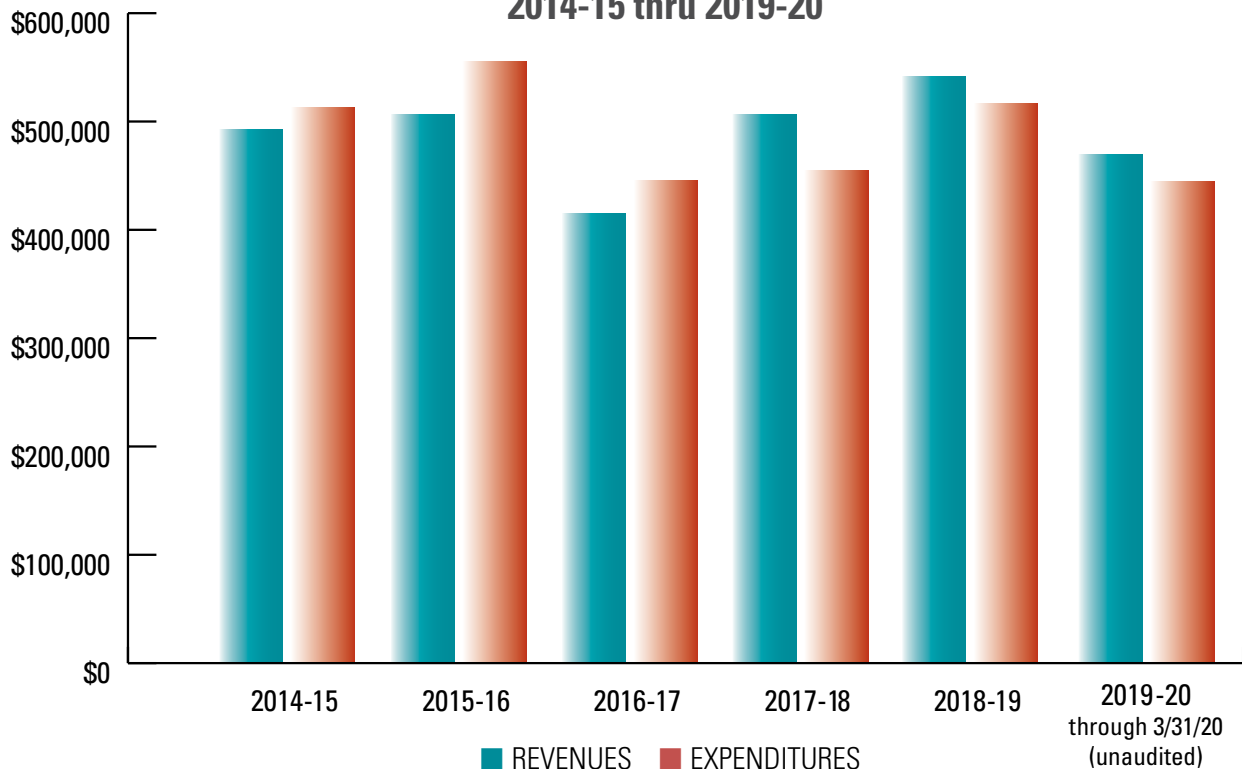
If you want to see what SiPGKC can do for your district and its employees, contact Paul Shrout, CSDGKC's director of business services, at (816) 753-7275 or pshrout@csdggkc.org.

## Revenues 2019-20 through 3/31/20



- Membership Dues
- Associate/Affiliate Membership Dues
- SIPGKC
- Purchasing Program
- Rebates/Administrative Service Fees

## CSDGKC Actual Revenues vs. Expenditures 2014-15 thru 2019-20



**Dr. Andrew Underwood**  
CSDGKC Board President  
Superintendent  
Belton School District

**Mr. Russell Fries**  
CSDGKC Board Vice President  
Board Member  
Smithville School District

**Dr. Dan Clemens**  
CSDGKC Board President-Elect  
Superintendent  
North Kansas City Schools

**Dr. Bill Nicely**  
CSDGKC Board Secretary/Treasurer  
Superintendent  
Kearney School District

**Dr. Mike Reik**  
CSDGKC Board Past President  
Superintendent  
Platte County School District

**Dr. Yolanda Cargile**  
CSDGKC Director  
Superintendent  
Hickman Mills School District

**Dr. Jeanette Cowherd**  
CSDGKC Director  
Superintendent  
Park Hill School District

**Mr. Michael Hackett**  
CSDGKC Director  
Board Member  
Grain Valley School District

**Ms. Jennifer Wolfsie**  
CSDGKC Director  
Board Member  
Kansas City Public Schools

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## PDN continues to shine, delivering high-quality, actionable information to educators

For the fourth year in a row, The Professional Development Network's (PDN) focus for the 2019-2020 school year was on the highly appreciated, year-long Greg Tang Workshop Series.

The districts that participated in the workshop series this school year were the Academy for Integrated Arts, Grandview, Independence, Kansas City, Lexington, Raytown and Richmond, Many thanks to Kansas City for hosting teachers in grades K-2, to Independence for hosting grade 3-5 teachers and for Raytown for hosting 6-8 instructors.

As has been the case in past years, the teachers who participated gave the workshops high ratings for presentation quality, content, participant engagement and being able to immediately apply the material they learned back in the classroom.

Greg Tang also graciously offered a variety of free workshops throughout the area for teachers and parents. The PDN looks forward to welcoming Greg back for his fifth year, in 2020-2021.

Members of the PDN Executive Board are:

- Dr. Trinity Davis, Kansas City Public Schools
- Dr. Eric Flack, Lee's Summit R-7
- Dr. Brian Huff, Raytown C-2
- Dr. Jeff Klein – Park Hill School District
- Dr. Prissy LeMay – Independence School District
- Dr. Beth Mulvey – Grain Valley Schools
- Dr. Annette Seago – Blue Springs R-IV
- Dr. Chad Sutton – North Kansas City Schools
- Dr. Alicia Wilson – Platte County R-3



## Members of CSDGKC

### FULL MEMBERS OF CSDGKC

Adrian  
Archie  
Belton  
Blue Springs  
Center  
Excelsior Springs  
Fort Osage  
Grain Valley  
Grandview  
Harrisonville  
Hickman Mills  
Independence  
Kansas City  
Kearney  
Knob Noster  
Lathrop  
Lee A. Tolbert  
Lee's Summit  
Lexington  
Liberty  
Lone Jack  
North Kansas City  
Oak Grove  
Park Hill  
Platte County  
Pleasant Hill  
Raymore-Peculiar  
Raytown  
Richmond  
Smithville  
West Platte

### PDN-ONLY MEMBERS

Academy for Integrated Arts  
Chillicothe  
Crossroads  
Guadalupe Centers  
Kansas City International  
Academy  
St. Therese

### SIPGKC MEMBERS

Blue Springs  
Grain Valley  
Hickman Mills  
Smithville

### CSD Retirement Trust Members

Grain Valley  
Harrisonville  
Independence  
Kansas City  
Kearney  
Lee's Summit  
Liberty  
Oak Grove  
Platte County  
Smithville



## Education/Corporate Supporters

### ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Metropolitan Community College  
Western Governors University -  
Missouri

### AFFILIATE MEMBERS

#### Gold Membership

Artisun Solar  
ConvergeOne  
EdCounsel, LLC  
Guin Mundorf, LLC

#### Silver Membership

k12itc  
McCownGordon Construction

#### Bronze Membership

ACI Boland Architects  
BlueCross BlueShield of Kansas City  
CBIZ  
Hollis + Miller Architects  
Navitas  
Patron Insight  
Security Benefit  
Trane Technologies  
VALIC