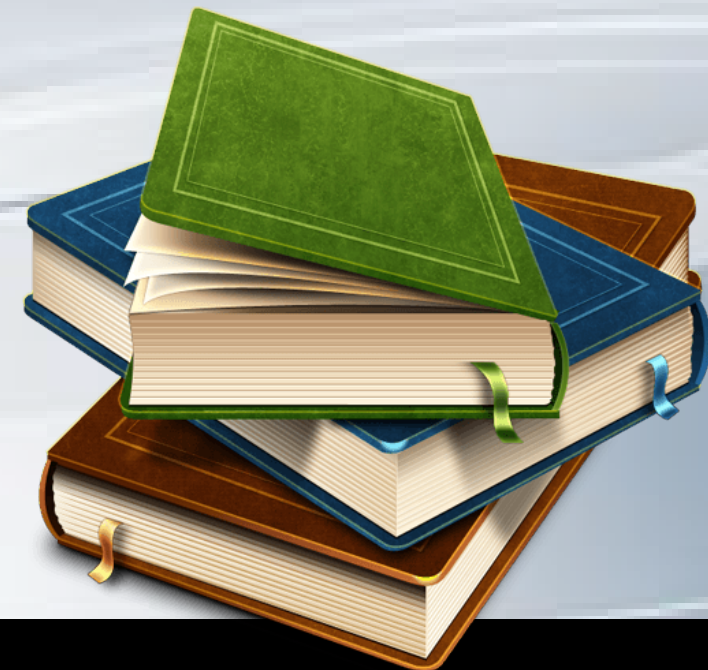


Establishing Healthy Relationships with Your Local School System

Presented By: Dr. Artesius Miller
Executive Director, Utopian Academy for the Arts



“We must reach out our hand in friendship both to those who would befriend us and those who would be our enemy. We must believe in the power of education.”

-Arthur Ashe



Ice Breaker

Getting to know your neighbors:

- 1. Introduce Yourself, Your State Charter, Location of School**
- 2. At your tables, identify what ways, if any, your respective schools have partnered with your local school districts?**
- 3. If there are no current partnerships in place, what ideas do you have for collaboration?**

Let's Collect Some Baseline Data!



Who Am I?

Very proud product of the Atlanta Public School System!

B.A., Morehouse College

M.A., Teachers College, Columbia University

Ph.D., University of Georgia



Professional Background

- 1. Wall Street**
- 2. Saturday School Teacher**
- 3. College Access Coach**
- 4. Operations Analyst**
- 5. Charter School Business Manager**
- 6. National Program Director**
- 7. Founder & Executive Director, Utopian Academy for the Arts**
- 8. Professor of Education**



Our Story

Utopian Academy for the Arts

Utopian Academy for the Arts started the 2014-2015 school year with hopes of meeting the academic and artistic needs of students living in the Clayton County School District. Our attempt to do this fell short because the Clayton County School District as well as the City of Riverdale placed several road blocks in our way to prevent them from meeting the vast needs of students in Clayton County.



Chronology of Events

August 4, 2014: Students Turned Away for the First Day of School

August 8, 2014: Utopian Academy for the Arts Files Legal Action against City of Riverdale

August 11, 2014: Utopian's Students Are Evacuated on the Second, Opening Day of School by Riverdale Fire Department

September, 2014: Riverdale Threatens to Shut Down Utopian's Food Service Program



Our Story

Utopian Academy for the Arts

Select Examples

April 21, 2015: The Utopian Academy for the Arts Act (HB372) Is Signed Into Law

August 19, 2015: Utopian's Exterior Sign is Removed by City of Riverdale

October, 2015: Representatives from Clayton County Schools Trigger Utopian's Fire Alarm (During School Day)

December, 2015: Clayton Schools Disables Utopian's Ability to Control HVAC Units

January, 2016: Clayton County Schools Threatens Eviction of Utopian from Riverdale Facility



Our Story Continued

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TUESDAY, AUG. 19, 2014

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The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Credible. Compelling. Complete.

2nd Ebola case on way to Ga.

Public Health

Georgia Health Department says it has received a report of a second case of Ebola in the state. The case is being investigated and the patient is being treated in a hospital in Georgia.

Hospitals facing criminal probes

Midwest Violence

Two hospitals in the Midwest are facing criminal probes for alleged cover-ups of patient deaths. The hospitals are accused of falsifying medical records and hiding the truth about the deaths.

A new view of the turmoil

Georgia Transportation Funding

A new report provides a detailed look at the challenges facing Georgia's transportation system. The report highlights the need for increased funding and better management of the state's infrastructure.

New option sought to ease traffic

Georgia Transportation Funding

State officials are exploring a new option to ease traffic congestion in major Georgia cities. The option involves building more transit lanes and improving public transportation services.

Red tape keeps 200 children out of school

Utopian Academy for the Arts

A new report reveals that bureaucratic red tape is preventing 200 children from attending Utopian Academy for the Arts. The report calls for reform of the state's education system to allow more children to access quality arts education.

Charter

Utopian Academy for the Arts

Utopian Academy for the Arts is a charter school that provides a rigorous arts education for students in the Atlanta area. The school has a long history of excellence and is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students.

Retired educators promote childhood literacy

By Jennifer Jackson
jackson@news-ajc.com

JONESBORO — The Clayton County Retired Educators Association is pledging its support to promoting childhood literacy. Members of the group gathered for the group's first meeting on Tuesday, August 19, 2014.

The retired educators plan to raise at least \$500 in order to provide 10 youngsters with a free book each month for a year through the First Foundation for Childhood Literacy.

Literacy, an organization with chapters throughout Georgia, is the focus of the group's efforts. The group is committed to providing free books to children in need and promoting literacy in the community.

The group is currently seeking donations of books and funds to support its efforts. For more information, contact Jennifer Jackson at 770-479-6673 or email cccrea@earthlink.net.

Utopian Academy for the Arts

Utopian Academy for the Arts is a charter school that provides a rigorous arts education for students in the Atlanta area. The school has a long history of excellence and is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students.

The school is currently facing challenges with the state's education system, which is preventing 200 children from attending. The school is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students and is seeking support from the community.

Atlanta Journal-Constitution Friday, August 21, 2015

B METRO

News: metronews@ajc.com | Delivery: ajc.com/delivery or 404-522-1111

Family: Shooting victim walks

HOME INVASION

Father, shot by home invaders, takes his first steps since incident.

By Mike Morris
mmorris@ajc.com

Michael Lash, 35, is on the left, walking with a cane, after a violent home invasion. Lash, who was shot in the leg, is walking with a cane. His wife, Whitney, is on the right, walking with a cane. They are both wearing bandages on their legs.

On Tuesday, Lash, Whitney and their 6-month-old daughter, Grace, were walking down the street when they were confronted by two men. One of the men shot Lash in the leg. Whitney was also shot in the leg. The men then ran away.

Lash and Whitney are now recovering from their injuries. Lash is walking with a cane and Whitney is walking with a cane. They are both wearing bandages on their legs.

The shooting occurred on Thursday afternoon, August 20, 2015. The police are currently investigating the case.

Riverdale, charter squabble over sign

IN YOUR SCHOOLS

A banner violated code, fix could cost several thousand.

By Tammy Jayne
tjayne@ajc.com

Adverse funding for the Utopian Academy for the Arts is a key issue in the charter school's fight to remain open. The school is currently facing challenges with the state's education system, which is preventing 200 children from attending.

The school is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students and is seeking support from the community.

Activist denies he lied about his race

A MATTER OF RACE

Morehouse grad also inflated claims of attack, bloggers say.

By Rosalind Wernick
rwernick@ajc.com

Shawn King, 35, has been a leader in the Black Lives Matter movement and has been accused of lying about his race. King has denied the accusations and has stated that he is a white man.

King has been a vocal advocate for the Black Lives Matter movement and has been involved in several protests. He has also been accused of lying about his race and has been accused of inflating his claims of being attacked.

Reshaping the Narrative

An invitational was extended to the new superintendent of our local school district, once the appointment became public.

As a leader, I maximized relationships with school board members that understood our our struggles, our vision, and our value to garner his support.

Present Day-Partnerships with Clayton Co. School System

Academics

Access to Excess Curriculum Resources
Invitationals to Professional Learning Communities and Courses
Gifted and ELL Services

Operations

Relocation to a Newer Facility
Transportation Services
Use of of Performing Arts Center-Arts Production

Finance

Lease of Building for \$1
Access to District Vendor Contracts

Think of these as potential ideas for your schools.

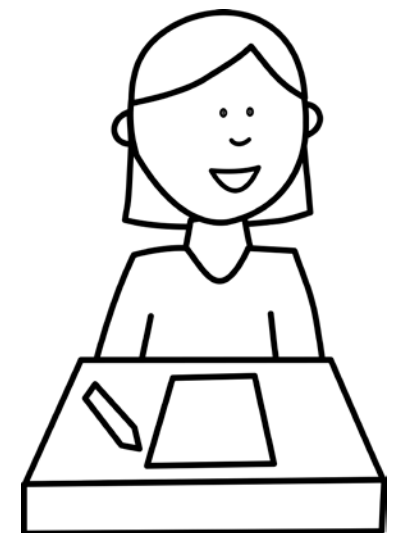


Dispelling the Myths

Historical Challenges Between Charters and Local Districts

Funding
Students
Facilities

Does the charter movement repair, assist, damage traditional public schools



District-Charter Collaboration Benefits

For Charter Schools

- Reduced political tensions within local community
 - Greater exposure to district level expertise
- Improved access to facilities, funding, and student enrollment
 - Access to operational supports as contracted services

For Local School Systems

- Implementation of best-practices and ideas
- Ensuring high-quality schools in all neighborhoods

For the Community

- Balanced portfolio of options for parents
- Healthy competition in the areas of academic performance and educational innovation

When you're able to partner, students benefit the most!



The Invitational

As a state-authorized charter school, establishing a relationship with the local school system in which your school is located, or enrolls students **is your responsibility**.

The first step in working closely with your local school system is to extend an invitation to visit your school.

Dispel the rumors and myths about charter school operations.

Consider inviting the following to your school:

1. District Superintendent
2. School Board Members
3. Executive Cabinet District Staff

*Add them to your email list!



Research within your school community to determine, what relationships, if any, your current stakeholders have with the list above.



Cultivate Relationships

Goal: As a governance board member of (Say the name of your state-charter school), I will increase the understanding and appreciation of state-charter schools in my community.

Don't assume that your community is aware of your educational model, grades served, operational structure as a state charter school, etc.

Be intentional

Speak unapologetically about your rationale for serving as a board member.

Be knowledgeable

Know the basics about your school and its desired needs.

Be inquisitive

Determine the level of knowledge and stance on charters of your district leaders.

Be consistent

Communication is the key. Once you are in the door, maintain consistency with your communication with your respective district leaders.

Make your intended audience a BELIEVER.

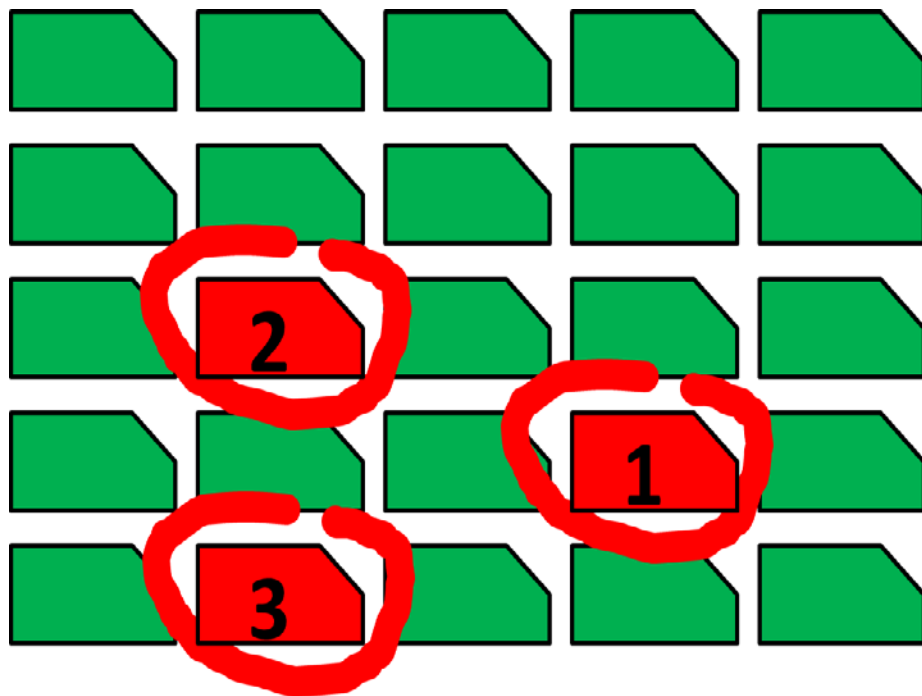


Prioritize Areas for Requested Support

Know your NEEDS and know your WANTS!

And know the difference between the two.

When the time presents itself and you are asked for potential areas for collaboration, know your information!



Remember--you can't have it all, so place an emphasis on what's most important to your school.



Reshaping the Narrative & Working Collaborative with Your Local School System

MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2019

WITH EXPANDED COUNTY-BY-COUNTY COVERAGE INSIDE

METRO

News: metronews.com | Delivery: atl.com/customerservice at 404-522-4141 | Coverage from the South State by AJC.com/public

ONLY IN THE AJC: CHARTER SCHOOLS

UTOPIAN ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS



"We are thriving because we are not fighting," Utopian Academy Director Anthony Miller, the school's founder, said recently. "For the last five years, Utopian has been able to stay..."

CLAYTON COUNTY

Utopian Academy to expand in 2020

Once-embattled school plans to add first grade, kindergarten classes.

By Lynn Staffard
lstaffard@ajc.com

Utopian Academy for the Arts, a Clayton charter school that was once the bane of the county's school district, plans to expand in 2020.

And this time it has the blessing of the county's school board, the county's Board of Education.

The charter school of north- through eighth graders will begin offering classes for kindergarten and first graders in August 2020 after winning unanimous approval for the additional students from the Clayton County Board of Education earlier this month. The board's support is a complete reversal from its relationship with the school earlier in the decade when leaders blocked its launch.

"We are thriving because we are not fighting," Utopian Academy Director Anthony Miller, the school's founder, said recently. "For the last five years, Utopian has been able to stay..."

Utopian continued on B4

ATLANTA

Atlanta charter school operator says financial issues are resolved

Gideons Elementary ended first year run by Kinder Schools \$214K in hole.

By Vanessa McCray
vanessa.mccray@ajc.com

A charter school operator hired by Atlanta Public Schools to run one of the district's elementary schools is taking a conservative approach to enrollment projections after a warning about its financial management.

In 2017, the Kinder Schools took over Gideons Elementary School, an academically struggling school in the southwest Atlanta neighborhood of Pittsburgh.

Kinder already operated two charter schools in the Atlanta district, but its work at Gideons represents a new model. As part of a plan to improve troubled schools, APS signed contracts with Kinder and two other charter-related groups to run and staff six district schools.

In March, APS sent Kinder a "letter of concern" about financial problems at Gideons during 2017, the first year under new operation. Gideons failed...

Kinder continued on B4

AJC CONTINUING COVERAGE: JAIL CONDITIONS

Feds weigh in on lawsuit against jail

Treatment of mentally ill women at Union City facility piques interest.

By Bill Kovach
bkovach@ajc.com

The U.S. Justice Department has weighed in on a lawsuit alleging deplorable conditions for mentally ill female inmates at a south Fulton County jail.

In a court filing last week, U.S. Attorney Mary Pelt and lawyers from the civil rights division in Washington alerted a federal judge in Atlanta to recent Justice Department positions concerning the constitutional requirements for housing prisoners with serious mental illness.

The motion — called a "statement of interest" — was filed in a case that demands improved conditions at the south Fulton Municipal Regional Jail in Union City. The suit, filed in April, said mentally ill women are being held in isolation under horrific conditions that increase their risk of serious psychological harm.

It was filed on behalf of two women, identified as M.J. and K.B., and the Georgia Advocacy Office, which protects the rights of people with disabilities.

The Justice Department's filing alerted U.S. District Court Judge Billy Ray to the civil rights division's ongoing investigation of the Hampton Roads Regional Jail in Portsmouth, Va.

That probe, concluded in December, found the jail failed to provide adequate medical and mental health care to inmates and that prisoners were constitutionally held in restrictive conditions for prolonged periods of time.

Atlanta lawyer Joe Whitley, a former U.S. attorney here, called the Justice Department's entry into the Atlanta case a potentially significant development.

"This is not something they ordinarily would do," Whitley said.

Inmate continued on B4

AJC IN-DEPTH GWINNETT EDUCATORS

Field trip opens world to principals

60 school leaders link with global businesses to help guide students.

By Arnette Smith-Bowdy
arnette@ajc.com

When students consider local companies with multinational ties that they may one day want to work for, Coca-Cola, Delta Air Lines and Home Depot may immediately come to mind. But those are just a few in a sea of possibilities. Georgia is home to more than 1,000 businesses with operations in just about every country in the world. Many, like Germany-based Henkel, Quagga, aren't typical household names.

To expose students to a world of opportunities, Gwinnett County Public Schools has partnered with area businesses for its third annual Principal Field Trip. The idea is that if principals know about the many employers right in their backyard, the knowledge trickles down to instructors, even when other staff who work directly with students.

This year, 60 school principals, school principals, as well as a few district leaders took part. The day-long, intensive-type immersion allowed them to make connections between technical careers offered at each school and high-wage, high-skill, demanding jobs in the county.

According to the Georgia Department of Economic Development, these international companies employ more than 600,000...

Field trip continued on B2

MORE DETAILS

TOP 10 COUNTRIES WITH BUSINESS FACILITIES IN GEORGIA

Japan	403
Germany	314
England	306
France	234
Canada	204
Switzerland	110
Ireland	104
China	85
Netherlands	81
Republic of Korea	75

TOP 10 COUNTRIES BY EMPLOYEES IN GEORGIA

Japan	23,878
Germany	21,677
England	16,640
France	18,737
Canada	16,481
Republic of Korea	9,286
Ireland	8,045
Sweden	5,807
Switzerland	5,777
Belgium	5,475

SOURCE: GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GIDEONS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

October 2018	378
October 2017	364+
October 2016	315
October 2015	300
October 2014	458
October 2013	517
October 2012	481

*First year of Kinder School operation
Source: Georgia Department of Education

What began as a contentious and combative relationship, has now evolved into a model example of healthy and collaborative partnership between a state-charter school and its local school system.

Utopian Academy for the Arts will expand its reach, adding a second school (elementary grades) beginning August, 2020!



Questions?

