



KSB Update

Bi-Monthly Activity Report of the
Kentucky School for the Blind

September-October, 2010

Families Learn and Network at Conference

There was a lot of energy among the 19 Kentucky families who attended the Statewide Family Conference on Oct. 8-9. Parents and grandparents eagerly attended sessions, perused exhibits and networked with other families at the event on the KSB campus.



Kevin O'Connor gives tips to parents on how to effectively interject their thoughts and ideas during their student's IEP meetings.

The conference got off to a great start on Fri. evening. Visually Impaired Artist Tina Blatter spoke about growing up in a family that refused to accept the fact that she was blind. As she grew up and formed relationships with students who were visually impaired and consumer groups, she learned that she could benefit from their experiences. She spoke passionately about her tenacity in following her artistic dreams. And, she urged parents to be balanced in their decision making by assuring their child is well equipped with good vision skills and services. Afterward, she led the families in an art activity.



Steve Hash (left) and Philip Matheny listen attentively during a presentation.

On Saturday, Kevin O'Connor provided valuable tips to parents to help them become a vital member of their child's educational team. As the past president of the National Association of Parents of the Visually Impaired (NAPVI), O'Connor

Left: The Tyler's work on an art activity. Right: KSB Regional Consultant Kenny Jones explains about sports opportunities available to children who are blind and visually impaired.



teaches at Loyola University, is a corporate consultant and has authored six books. He is also the father of a 21-year-old son who is blind and a student at George Washington University.

"It's great to learn tips on how to deal with people, school and teachers to benefit our child," noted a parent.

Vision Specialist Mindy Ely from Hearing and Vision Connections (HVC) led a session to help parents plan for the future. Other presentations included an independent living skills activity led by KSB regional consultant Teri Ritchie, transition to preschool and kindergarten by TVI Barbara Kelley, VIPS and Training Coordinator Rhonda Logsdon spoke on parent advocacy and special education law. While the adults were in session, the children enjoyed a day of recreational programming and making crafts.

Another parent said, *"We gained so much information we did not have before we came here."*

The conference is a KSB Outreach initiative, coordinated by the Family Support Center and funded by the KSB Charitable Foundation.

Brightside NatureScape Paves the Way for Tree Planting Project Conducted by Boy Scouts

KSB Boy Scout Troop #10 and Adventure Crew, along with Crescent Hill United Methodist Boy Scout Troop #1, planted ten trees on campus. This was a major task to replace "significant" trees that had been lost on campus over the past ten years due to adverse weather conditions and to plant a few new ones. Planting day was Wed., Oct. 27.

Earlier in the year, KSB was awarded a \$1000 **Brightside NatureScape** Grant for the tree planting project. Louisville MetroParks Landscape Architect John Swintosky was consulted on selecting the trees and has been working with the Scouts to teach them about planting and maintenance techniques. Swintosky and other MetroParks landscape architects assisted the scouts in planting of the trees. Troop #10 will maintain the trees.

Chartered in 1911, Troop 10 is the oldest scout troop in the nation for students with disabilities. Scout master for the troop is Ottis Florence.



KSB and Crescent Hill Boy Scout Troops, along with KSB's Adventure Crew planted ten trees on campus. The KSB Troop will be responsible for maintaining the trees.



KSB Charitable Foundation Exec. Director Rick Ricks (right) speaks with a family during the Vendor Exhibits.

KSB Employees Give Generously through KECC

In spite of a weak economy and mandated furlough days, many KSB employees reached a little deeper into their pockets and gave generously during the Kentucky Employee Charitable Campaign (KECC). **The total contribution total was \$3,941.** As of Oct. 18, that was the second highest total among KDE offices. ***Congratulations KSB contributors!***

Final Phase of Steamline Project Underway

If you've been on the campus lately, you probably noticed the maze of trenches that have been dug between Evans Hall and the Scoggan classroom building. This is the final phase of a project that began last year to replace the campus steam-line. **It is scheduled for completion on Nov. 15.**

Eleven Students Participate in Low Vision Clinic



Left to right: Brooklyn Smith, a Whitley County student, listens attentively during her low vision evaluation with Dr. Jenny Wood. Center: Brooklyn checks out a handheld dome magnifier. Right: Dr. Jenny Wood shares her findings with Brooklyn's mother.

The Fall Low Vision Clinic was held on Sept. 17-18 on the KSB campus. Eleven students from local school districts and KSB were given low vision evaluations by Jenny Wood, OD, FAAO. Accompanied by their parents and in some cases by their teacher of the visually impaired (TVI), the students were evaluated to determine whether or not they could benefit from optical and non-optical devices, as well as adaptive techniques, to enhance their visual functioning. The parents and teachers were extended a warm welcome and encouraged to be a part of the child's experience. The Low Vision Clinic is funded by the KSB Charitable Foundation and is coordinated by KSB Director of Outreach for Statewide Support Services Meg Stone. Students attending were from the following counties: Lincoln, Whitley, Boyd, Jefferson, Bullitt, Pulaski, Caverna Ind. and Oldham.

Don't Miss Musical Showcase and PSSO Dinner

Students **Taryn Seif, Jessica Van Bruggen, Samantha Hubbard, Justin Hedges, Alex Stine, Mari Durrett, Shane Lowe, Zack Adams, Michael Davis** and **James Lewis** will present "A Musical Showcase" on **Thurs., Nov. 11** in Richie Auditorium at 6:30 PM.

The concert will be preceded by a Soup and Sandwich Dinner sponsored by the Parent, Student and Staff Organization (PSSO). Dinner will be served from 5-6:30 PM in Hartford Hall. Tickets for the dinner are \$3 and may be purchased in the classroom office.

Students Recognized for Academic Achievement

In April 2010, Kentucky students completed the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) in five content areas: reading, math, science, social studies, and on demand writing. Students in grades 3-7 also completed the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in the areas of reading and math. The results of the assessments were released in September.

KSB is extremely pleased to recognize its Super Star and All Star performers.

Super Stars consist of students who received a distinguished or proficient rating on all of their tests. These students are: **Michael Davis, D.J. Bachman, Brooke Berger, Bradley Horton, Bobby Townsend, Brianna White, Donnie Risner** and **Chris Zeigler**.

All Star performers received at least a distinguished or proficient rating on at least one of the areas tested. The **All Stars** are **Taryn Seif, Alex Stine, Shane Lowe, C.J. Phipps-Gibson, Shawn Smith, Justin Hedges, John Brewer, Damon Boards, Michael Douglas, Cheyenne Harper, Garrett Kawa, Jay Knott** and **Amanda Livers**.

Photos of these students have been affixed to the wall in the classroom lobby in recognition of their academic achievement. *Please join us in congratulating these fine students.*

Staff News

- **Social Studies Todd Johnson** took part in an intensive 13-day all-expense paid study tour of Germany on Sept. 25-Oct. 8. He was one of 12 high school teachers and university professors from Kentucky selected for the trip funded by Atlantik-Brücke.
- The leadership roles of the KSB Outreach Department have been redefined. **Kristen Hammond has taken on the role of Outreach Director of Regional Services and Programs** and is responsible for supervising regional consultants and overseeing the Gateways and Insight programs. **Meg Stone is Outreach Director of Statewide Support Services** and will oversee Braille Production, KIMRC and the Family Support Center.



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