

Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association

Assisting Community Transformation

A guide to how your church
can be a blessing to
your community.



VISION



2020

Blue River-Kansas City Baptist Association

The Assisting Community Transformation (ACT) team's mission is to impact our communities in ways that improve the lives of our neighbors while sharing the gospel as opportunities arise. The issues that our communities face are huge. Many people attempt to face these challenges alone. We believe that the Gospel is the source of lasting transformation and offers a plan for a holistic and integrated approach to community development and world change.

The issues that families face are diverse and complex. The ACT Team seeks to provide hope and healing by involving our congregations in programming that is simple yet can provide an open door for future projects. We can reach unreached local populations... one need at a time.

Goal: Increase the educational progress for children within our Association's borders.

Action Plan:

1. Minister through the Adopt-A-School Program. Publicize the work and purpose of the Adopt-a-School program.
2. Encourage local churches to adopt a school in their community.
3. Provide tutors for after-school and summer program sites.

The United States maintains a separation of church and state, including the public schools, but that doesn't mean faith communities can't play a powerful role in helping students navigate the challenges in their lives. SBC churches can make a difference by participating in the following programs.

Adopt-A-School Project

Adopt-A-School is a nationwide initiative designed to share expertise and resources to support our youth and schools.

The Adopt-A-School Initiative allows churches, businesses and community volunteers to enhance educational programs along with staff and students in elementary, middle, and high schools. The Adopt-A-School Initiative provides effective grass roots partnerships between the Kansas City, Missouri schools, churches and business communities.



Goal/Objectives of the Initiative

- Support, motivate and supplement programs that affect students and families of at-risk, impoverished, under functioning and/or educationally disadvantaged.
- Encourage community involvement and linkages with educational groups and organizations.

- Provide support, funding and incentives to enhance and encourage student achievements.
- Provide access and quality experiences that may be out of reach of the scholars, their families and community support networks.

Adopt-a-School relationships are only limited to the imagination of the congregations that choose to become involved. Typical ways that SBC churches have been involved include:

- Tutoring & Mentoring students
- Hosting recognition events
- Participating in Back-to-School Rallies
- Monitoring hallways and classroom areas
- Serving as emergency evacuation locations
- Eating lunch with students
- Painting classrooms, landscaping and cleaning services
- Monitoring bike/walking routes and bus drop-off sites
- Providing recreational activities
- Praying for students, parents, teachers and administrators

Contact: Irene Von Collins / 816-418-8615 / ivoncoll@kcmsd.net

One-on-One

Reading has been identified as a key deficiency among urban children. Volunteer tutors work one-on-one with 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade students. Tutoring activities include reading with students one-on-one, working with students on homework help and assisting teachers with classroom activities. A few hours per week can make a huge difference.

In 2007, a Johns Hopkins survey revealed that on average, students gain one academic year in reading during the eight weeks spent in class in the summer program. Additional gains in reading are made in after-school program settings.

Program sites are located in churches in the urban core.

Contact: Colleen McEvoy / 913-339-8332 / mcevoy.colleen@gmail.com

Back-Snack Program



More than 86,000 children in the Kansas City area are enrolled in free and reduced-price school meals during the week, but what do they eat on the weekend?

Harvesters offers the BackSnack program, which provides backpacks of food to low-income children for the weekend to combat weekend hunger. The program creates a partnership between Harvesters, a par-

ticipating school and a local corporate, civic or religious organization.

Harvesters provides the food, and the partnering organization provides the volunteers every week to pick up the backpacks, clean them out and pack them with food. School staff distributes them on Friday to the kids, who bring them back on Monday to start the whole process again.

An evaluation of the BackSnack program by the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership found that the program is helping elementary students improve their academic performance, school attendance and behavior.

The center evaluated the impact of the program by surveying students, teachers, school staff and parents.

Key findings included:

- BackSnack students' grades improved significantly, especially in math, English and science.
- Teachers and schools reported students were getting more homework done.
- Parents reported that children better understood what they were being taught in school.
- BackSnack participants' attendance improved, with 23 percent fewer absences.
- 62 percent of parents reported their children were healthier after participating in BackSnack.
- Schools reported that discipline incidents were cut in half.
- Students reported feeling in trouble less.
- 39 percent of parents reported their children behaved better at home.
- 49 percent of parents agreed their children's sense of responsibility increased.

Become a community partner: Community partners are needed to adopt schools for which they will clean, pack and deliver backpacks every week during the school year.

Contact: Ryan Kepley / 816.929.3041 / rkepley@harvesters.org