

Springfield News-Leader

Future of the Ozarks: Missouri State student Lennox Young launches apparel business as a ministry



Lennox Young has found a second home at Missouri State University, where he studies business.

He considered majoring in finance but opted instead to pursue a marketing management track with an emphasis on the supply chain.

Lennox said he has learned a lot in class but his studies do not end there. He also has a hands-on method.

In the past year, he launched an inspirational and motivational apparel business online called "Last Run."

"I always wanted a business but I didn't know what type of business," said Lennox, 21, adding the idea came to him in a dream.

The **graduate of Hazelwood Central High School**, who grew up in Florissant, said living through a difficult senior year of high school and attending college during a pandemic helped inspire the exact business model.

Corey Friedman: School Censors Lose Another Battle

School boards, superintendents and principals in New Jersey are on notice: No more censorship thinly disguised as teaching.

New Jersey became the 15th state to enact **New Voices** legislation on Dec. 21, when **Gov. Phil Murphy** signed state **Senate Bill 108** into law. High school student journalists now have the right to report the news without administrative interference.

The victory for free speech and press freedom didn't come easily.

Legislators first introduced a New Voices bill in December 2015 following two censorship controversies — one school removed a newspaper adviser who stood up for his students and another tried to block the publication of an investigative story on the district superintendent's alleged misconduct.

In the latter case, Adelina Colaku, a student at **Northern Highlands Regional High School** in Allendale, spent five months cultivating sources with knowledge of formal complaints filed against the superintendent and agreed to protect their identities to shield them from retaliation.

The principal and school board prevented the Highland Fling student newspaper from printing the story, citing its use of anonymous sources among several other excuses.

The **Student Press Law Center** went to bat for Colaku, noting that much of her story “was sourced to school board meetings and corroborated by school climate surveys.”

After attorneys represented her pro bono in a three-month negotiation with the school board, Colaku's story was finally — and grudgingly — cleared for publication.

Elected school board members found the hard-hitting story more embarrassing than their own juvenile attempts to bury it, so they responded by proposing “even sharper prior review policies after the controversy, including a wholesale ban on anonymous sources and a ban on appealing censorship,” the SPLC explains on its website.

Such shenanigans are now against the law in New Jersey, but unless you live in California, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont or Washington, they can happen anytime at your local high school.

The culprit is **Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier**, a wrongly decided 1988 **U.S. Supreme Court** case out of suburban St. Louis. In a 5-3 ruling, justices decided that officials can censor student speech in school-sponsored media if the reason is “reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns.”

COVID-19 cases surge in St. Louis County Schools



Sharifah Simms-Williams, director of communications for the Normandy School District, just doesn't get it.

According to recent data released by the county, the number of students with COVID-19 in St. Louis County schools has doubled, with the number of infected staff almost tripling. As of Dec. 11, Normandy had 82 confirmed cases of COVID among students and 22 among staff members.

Yet, with signs the Delta variant is surging through North County and the region, Simms-Williams is perplexed with the pushback from parents and politicians opposed to mask mandates.

St. Louis County parents have staged protests demanding their mask-less students be allowed in public schools. In late November, a Missouri judge ruled local health orders imposed to curb the spread of COVID-19 in the state are illegal and should be lifted. Since that ruling, multiple county school districts are considering ways to scale back COVID-19 mitigation policies. Lindbergh, Rockwood, Francis Howell, Parkway, and the Mehlville school have all adopted resolutions to make masks mandates optional.

Simms-Williams, a mother with twins in the **Hazelwood School District**, said she finds the resistance to mask mandates "unnerving."

"It really floors me how people have made a public health crisis political," she said. "Children are subject to what their parents want, and there are parents who don't want to vaccinate their children. I understand that, somewhat, but the numbers of those infected are children, and we don't know the long-term effects of COVID. There are a lot of questions and a lot of controversy over things that should not be controversial."



LAPS Superintendent Search Narrowed To Three Candidates



Keith Bausman



Brett Bunch



Dr. Jose Delfin

We are proud to introduce the candidates.

Keith Bausman currently serves as the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources for the **Hazelwood School District in St. Louis, Missouri**. His 22-year career in education includes stints as a teacher, high school principal, director of human resources and assistant superintendent. As a classroom teacher, he maintained a focus on building positive, student-centered organizations where all stakeholders are valued in order to promote high achievement for all students. He has also led numerous leadership, curriculum development, and school culture initiatives. He has advanced teaching and learning in schools and districts in part through his role on the New Mexico Mathematics and Science Advisory Council. He is currently participating in a diversity, equity, and inclusion committee initiative to help identify and implement strategies that support the needs of all educators, students and families.

A native of the Southwest, Mr. Bausman completed both a bachelor's degree in mathematics and a master's degree in secondary curriculum and instruction at Arizona State University before completing his second master's degree and administrative credentials at Lubbock Christian University. He enjoys spending his free time with his children and traveling to new destinations.



New Jersey Becomes 15th New Voices State

Student Press Law Center commends New Jersey and Gov. Phil Murphy for codifying student press freedom

WASHINGTON — The Student Press Law Center (SPLC) commends the State of New Jersey and Gov. Phil Murphy for their recent passage and yesterday’s signing of S108, “New Voices” legislation to restore and protect the press freedom of New Jersey’s student journalists. New Jersey is the 15th state to adopt such legislation.

The bill, which was first introduced in 2015 and passed the legislature unanimously earlier this year, prohibits the censorship of student journalists except in narrow circumstances. It will also protect student media advisers from retaliation when they refuse to illegally censor their students. The bill takes effect immediately.

The adoption of New Voices is critical to reversing the impact of the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1988 **Hazelwood School District** v. Kuhlmeier decision which created an intentionally vague and problematic standard for censorship of student-produced work. It is commonly used by school administrators to censor student journalists for vague and subjective reasons often related to the reaction of adults to student media rather than the quality of the media itself. In New Jersey this has included suppression of articles critical of a school superintendent, discussing the smoking of students in school bathrooms, and even an article about the censorship of student media. Today’s action by Governor Murphy ensures student journalists can pursue quality journalism on the issues of importance to their schools and their communities.

“Congratulations to New Jersey for becoming the 15th state to codify student press freedom through New Voices legislation,” SPLC executive director Hadar Harris said. “Signing S108 is an important step but it is only the beginning. We need robust implementation of the new law and need administrators, students and advisers to understand it. SPLC will remain vigilant and be a vital resource to student journalists and their advisers in New Jersey. When censorship happens, we’ll be there standing up for the rights of student journalists.”

The Student Press Law Center along with New Voices advocates will work to ensure every New Jersey school understands how the new law impacts the rights of student journalists. We’ll need your support to do so. Anyone interested in joining the implementation efforts — particularly students and advisers — should contact Hillary Davis at hdavis@splc.org.

AG Schmitt has sent COVID-19 mandate cease and desist letters to 52 school districts



EXCLUSIVE — Attorney General [Eric Schmitt](#) has sent cease and desist letters to 52 [school districts](#), instructing them to halt [COVID-19](#) mandates that may have been nullified by a recent court ruling.

The letters come on the heels of the [attorney general's request for parents' help](#) to identify schools with COVID-19 mandates still in place. Thus far, the office has received more than 7,500 emails — the majority of which are from parents concerned about mask and quarantine orders, the Attorney General's Office said.

“Soon thereafter, [Schmitt said school officials](#) do not have the authority to implement mask, quarantine, or other public health orders. In a [letter to districts](#), Schmitt said local public health agencies had been instructed to halt their COVID-19 orders following the Cole County order and told districts to “stop relying on, enforcing, or publicizing any such orders immediately.”

However, Schmitt's office wanted to make clear that the judge's ruling does not impede local public health offices from still conducting COVID-19 tests or tracing.

“The Attorney General's Office said because of the letters sent, “a number of school districts have either already rescinded or plan to rescind their masks mandates [and] quarantine orders.”

Still, the Missouri School Boards' Association (MSBA), in a recent email, said while the judge's order impacted orders from local health departments, “a school district's authority and obligation to prevent the spread of contagious diseases in schools has not been impacted.”

The email pointed to Missouri statutes that allow for school boards to implement health and safety regulations.

“MSBA encourages school boards to continue to maintain safe and healthy learning environments for students and staff by consulting advice issued by contagious disease experts such as the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services or the Centers for Disease Control,” the email said.

The school districts that have received letters from the attorney general are:

- Webb City R-VII School District
- Bolivar R-I School District
- Franklin County R-II School District
- Marshall School District
- Dunklin R-V School District
- Rolla School District
- **Hazelwood School District**
- St. Joseph School District

Rockwood and Lindbergh schools vote to go mask optional

BALLWIN, Mo. — Two more St. Louis-area school districts voted to end their mask mandates Thursday night as COVID cases continue to surge in the region.

The Rockwood and Lindbergh school districts will switch to mask optional policies in January, allowing families to decide whether their children will wear face coverings to school.

Lindbergh's new policy will take effect on Jan. 5, while Rockwood plans to make the switch on Jan.18.

Number of kids hospitalized with COVID in St. Louis area hits 3-month high

Students and teachers spoke passionately about the mask-optional plan during Thursday night's school board meeting for Rockwood.

"It's not your role to tell students what they should do with their physical and mental health," a second-grader said.

Mary White, an orchestra instructor at Eureka High School, voiced her concerns about ending the mask mandate.

"We must protect our people," she said. "The changes proposed in the new plan are at best reckless and at worst deadly."

Several parents also spoke about the policy. The room was seemingly split.

Hazelwood School District votes to keep mask mandate

"My view is that the existing covid policies have served the district well," said one parent.

Just this week, the Hazelwood School District decided to keep its mask rules in place, and the Parkway School District voted to go mask-optional. Another school district that will be going mask-optional is the Mehlville School District.

This as the St. Louis Metropolitan Pandemic Task Force reported 24 children are currently hospitalized with COVID-19 in the area, five of which remain in the ICU. It's the highest number since late September.

CM girls hit Waterloo early, remain undefeated



The Civic Memorial girls basketball team remained undefeated and did so with an early hit on Waterloo Thursday night and rolled to a 69-43 Mississippi Valley Conference win in Bethalto.

The CM Eagles are 11-0 on the season and 4-0 in the conference. Waterloo dropped to 10-3 overall, 2-2 in the conference.

The Eagles jumped out to a 26-5 lead at the end of the first quarter to put the issue to rest early. Waterloo was able to play CM toe-to-toe the rest of the way, but the Bulldogs couldn't climb out of the deep hole.

CM had three players score in double figures. Kelbie Zupan led the way with 15 points, followed by Kannah Meiser with 12 and Aubree Wallace with 11 points and seven steals.



Rockwood and Lindbergh schools vote to go mask optional

HAZELWOOD, Mo. — The Hazelwood School District voted to keep its mask order in place as the number of children hospitalized with COVID-19 continues to rise in the St. Louis area.

Several other school districts in the region are also weighing whether or not to ease up on masking regulations. This comes amid heavy pressure from Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt.

A Cole County judge recently ruled that only elected officials can enact health orders, which makes most school mask orders illegal, according to Schmitt.

The St. Louis Metropolitan Pandemic Task Force reported that 24 children are currently hospitalized with COVID-19, the highest number of pediatric hospitalizations since September.

“We clearly just haven’t convinced people that they’re in harm’s way,” said Dunagan. “Our political system has put this in turmoil, and it is very unfortunate that politics has overridden science.”

Several St. Louis-area school districts look to end mask mandates

In a statement, Schmitt responds to the task force, saying: “The St. Louis Pandemic Task Force can continue to stoke fear, but St. Louis public schools and other area school districts have had mask mandates for over a year, which proves that masks don’t work if they’re reporting a ‘surge’ in cases. It’s time that we recognize that this virus is endemic and that people should have the ability to make their own choices for their kids.”

Some Hazelwood parents said they support the mask requirement, while others questioned its effectiveness.

“It would make me feel uneasy because you don’t know what other parents are doing for their kids or where they’ve been,” said parent Adrien Teepe.

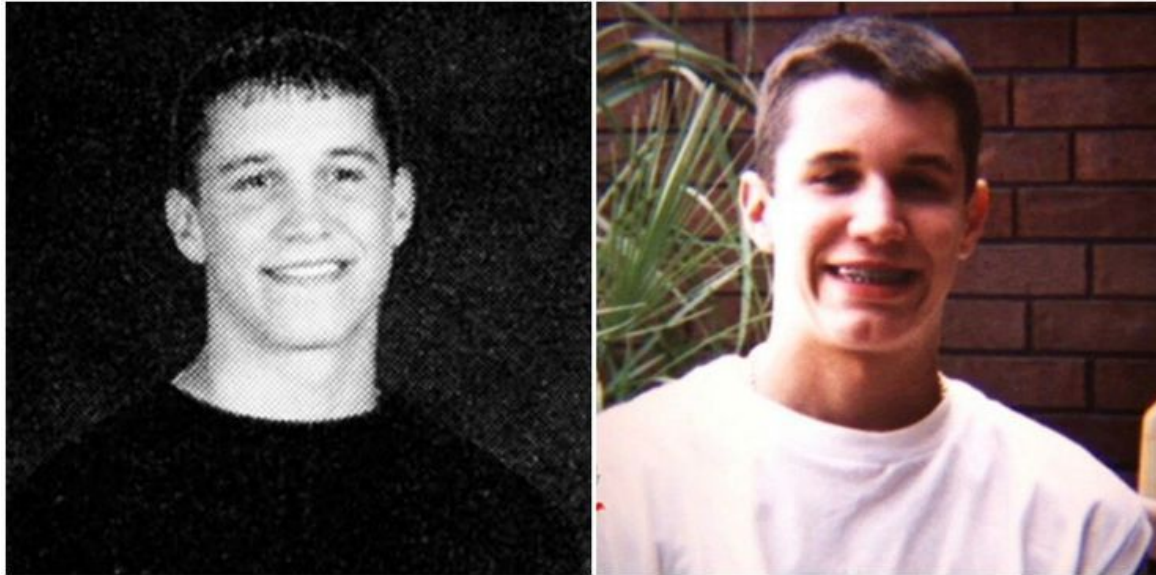
“They should wear a mask, but think about a kid, how many kids are going to keep a mask on their face?” said parent Edward Crumer.

Hazelwood is the first, but certainly not the last school to discuss this.

On Thursday, Rockwood and Lindbergh will also vote on a mask optional plan for next semester. The Parkway School Board will meet tomorrow.

12 Pictures Of WWE Superstars In High School

Randy Orton



Randy Orton is one of the best wrestlers in WWE history, his commitment to the company and his love for sports entertainment are admirable. However, he wasn't always the Viper or a legend killer, as he too went through high school, as we all did.

In 1998, Orton graduated from Hazelwood Central High School, where he had his first amateur wrestling matches.

Second annual Mix, Mingle and Mentor Luncheon Dec. 20



The Greater St. Mark (GSM) Community Empowerment Foundation will host its second annual Mix, Mingle and Mentor Luncheon at 11 a.m., Monday, Dec. 20, at St. Louis Community College Florissant Valley.

Former state Rep. Tommie Pierson Jr. said the event's goal is to inspire and support recent high school graduates and college students from throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area.

"I recall being a college student and wishing I had access to more mentors with whom to connect and seek guidance," Pierson said. "I realize that high school graduates need that extra support and positive network." Pierson, who has a child in college, wants all students in the community to be successful, regardless of career or academic path. He graduated from Parkway North High School in 1991, earned his bachelor's degree in applied mathematics in 1995 from Washington University and a Master of Arts in theological studies from Covenant Theological Seminary in 2009.

Pierson is a former math teacher at Hazelwood East Middle School, serves as lead pastor of inStep Church in St. Charles, and is a statistician with BioRankings, a consulting group focusing on statistical analytics and innovation.

"Whether transitioning to a skilled trade program or pursuing a traditional degree, our young people are deserving of mentorship to set them up for success," he said.

A 2017 College of Charleston study titled "Why mentoring matters: African-American students and the transition to college," reports, "African-American students have experiences quite different from their majority counterparts. African-American undergraduates may have feelings of disengagement, withdrawal, isolation, and less campus involvement than their classmates. Mentoring programs, with an emphasis on interpersonal reinforcement, can buffer the effects of low belongingness and disconnection from the campus community."

The 2021 Mix, Mingle and Mentor Luncheon is free and sponsored by Armstrong Teasdale LLP and St. Louis Community College.



School districts to decide if mask mandates will be kept in the new year



ST. LOUIS (KMOV.com) -- School administrators are now voting and making plans on the possibility of mask mandates in the new year.

The big question is will mask be required in the classroom after winter break?

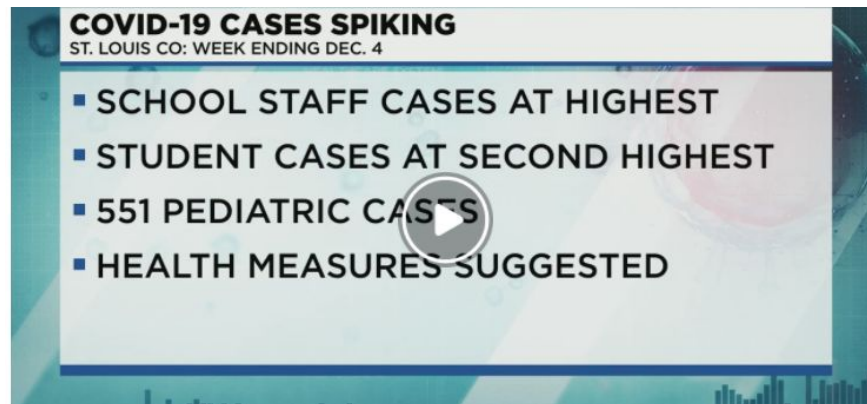
The Parkway School District said no matter what the case, students will be wearing masks until Jan. 17. The superintendent sent a letter to the parents and staff of the district proposing the board consider recommending students wearing masks not requiring. He said he wants families to have time to complete vaccinations and boosters before this takes place.

Another recommendation is to no longer quarantine students and staff who have been in contact with a positive case. If someone is to test positive, they must stay home. Masks will be required for two weeks if there is an outbreak. Parkway's plan will be reviewed every 30 days if it passes Wednesday night.

Hazelwood School District voted to keep their mask mandate and Rockwood will vote Thursday.



St. Louis County reports most weekly pediatric COVID cases since November 2020



ST. LOUIS COUNTY (KMOV.com) – The number of COVID-19 cases among students and staff in St. Louis County schools continues to rise, according to a [new Department of Health analysis](#).

Wednesday morning, St. Louis County officials announced that for the week ending Dec. 4 staff cases were at their highest of the current school year with 95. That same week, student cases were at their second highest at 402 for the current school year. The county’s health department reported 1,514 students and staff were in full or modified quarantine due to school-related exposure.

Throughout the county, there were 551 pediatric COVID cases for the week that ended Dec. 4. The report states this was the most cases seen in a single week since November 2020.

As cases increase, school districts are weighing the possibility of mask mandates. The Parkway School District has said students will wear masks until Jan. 17. The [Hazelwood School District](#) has also voted to keep their mask mandate.

Recap: Lutheran North tops Hazelwood East

Lutheran North topped **Hazelwood East** 61-50 Wednesday at Hazelwood East. Hazelwood East turned the ball over 14 times compared to Lutheran North's six. David Moore was the leading scorer for Lutheran North with 16 points and Jacinth Prude added 15. Brian Lee led Hazelwood East with 17 points and Semaj Jacobs added 15. The leading rebounders for Hazelwood East were Semaj Jacobs (10) and Mekhi Holmes (9).

Lutheran North (1-4) hosts MICDS on Friday, January 7 at 7 p.m. Hazelwood East (3-3) goes on the road to play Mehlville on Tuesday, January 4 at 7 p.m.



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Several St. Louis-area school districts look to end mask mandates

ST. LOUIS COUNTY, Mo. — Several St. Louis-area school districts have proposals to end mask orders for students as the number of children hospitalized for COVID-19 reaches a three-month high in the region.

The **Hazelwood School Board** weighed masking options Tuesday night, following the lead of districts across St. Louis County.

“People are getting beyond the mandates,” said Missouri Gov. Mike Parson. “I think we see that on the federal level, the state level. I think it’s time for parents to make decisions about what’s best for their kids.”

Fourth-quarter comeback lifts Eureka past Hazelwood Central in conference opener



EUREKA — Dakota Joggerst knew it was only a matter of time before the outside shots would come.

And they finally did.

Eureka came into Tuesday night's Suburban Conference Yellow Pool boys basketball opener against **Hazelwood Central** with 31 made 3-pointers in 75 attempts through just four games to start this season.

The Wildcats were held to just seven 3-point attempts through the first three quarters Tuesday, but they broke out with five makes in six tries from long distance in the fourth quarter to rally past the Hawks for a 55-53 win.

“To start conference 1-0, defend the home floor and beat a program like Hazelwood Central, I'm proud of the way they stuck together,” Eureka coach Austin Kirby said. “We were down 10 at one point, but we've got so many seniors and you could tell they've been in the battles and they just stayed the course.”

Joggerst, who scored a game and career-high 22 points, had two 3-pointers in the final quarter, including what ended up being the game-winning shot with 24 seconds left. It was the Wildcats' ninth 3-point make of the game and 40th through the first five games.

“We know if we get past a guy downhill, there will be guys waiting around the perimeter to shoot the open shots because that's what coach wants us to do,” Joggerst said.

Central coach Brandon Gilmore was pleased with the play of his defense in the first three quarters when the Hawks limited the Wildcats to just four made 3-pointers and 33 points.

“Our defense was really good, but we gave up five 3s in the fourth quarter, so that kind of hurt,” Gilmore said. “We've just got to lock in and put together a full game. Practice has been good, but we've just got to get better. That's gonna be on me to get my kids better prepared.”

Ameresco completes LED lighting project in St. Louis County



Clean energy company Ameresco, of Framingham, has completed a lighting project as part of an ongoing project relationship with **Hazelwood School District** in St. Louis County, Missouri, the company announced on Wednesday.

The project included retrofitting interior and exterior lighting with LED lighting technology across 34 buildings in the district.

Hazelwood is expected to amass extensive cost savings as a result of the installation, according to Ameresco.

The district has worked with Ameresco on energy efficiency projects for nearly two decades, according to a press release.