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Area districts plan for 2020-21 school year

By Colleen Williamson
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Area school boards are one by one approving their return-to-school plans for the 2020-21 school year.

All of the plans are developed to inform students, parents, teachers and administrators about what learning options, requirements and guidelines are in place for each school.

Every school in the area is requiring face masks to be worn in

accordance with the state mandate. As well, all schools are implementing at least two options: in-person/traditional learning and some form of remote learning should a parent determine that is the best option for their student.

The Oswego USD 504 Board of Education unanimously approved a back-to-school plan at a special board meeting last week. Teachers will report for duty on Aug. 17 and will have seven in-service days to prepare for the school year. The first day of school for

Oswego students will be Aug. 26.

Additionally, the USD 504 board approved the leadership team's recommendations to provide two learning options for students. The two options are: traditional on-site face-to-face learning and remote learning.

Additional details in regard to the USD 504 learning plan will be released in the upcoming days.

"The USD 504 Board of Education, administrators, teachers and staff are committed to providing the best and safest learning envi-

ronment possible as outlined by the state and local health departments," Superintendent Douglas Beisel said. "I'm incredibly proud of the Oswego USD 504 leadership team and their professionalism. They pulled together to develop a back-to-school plan that is in the best interest and safety of our students and staff. It was exciting to be part of the special BOE meeting ... because it was a large group of people working collaboratively to benefit our students. Sometimes we are at our

best in difficult times, and the way our board of education, teachers and administrators came together in an effort to get our back-to-school plan done was nothing less than awesome.

"Thanks to everyone who played a part in this process. Additionally, it was great to see our teachers support the 2020-21 USD 504 calendar change with a unanimous vote. Thank you to the USD 504 teachers for stepping up and unifying in difficult times. It's

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Man overcomes odds in accident recovery



By Colleen Williamson
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ALTAMONT — Joshua Clemens sat on the edge of his bed, reading aloud a framed message from his mother, Jennifer Stringer, reminding him he is braver than he knows, stronger than he seems, smarter than he thinks and loved more than he knows.

He looked up and smiled from under the helmet that protects his head from further trauma should he fall while walking. Portions of his skull have not yet been surgically replaced, leaving his brain vulnerable. The T-shirt he wore summarizes his situation: "I Survived A Brain Injury. What's Your Super Power."

In the room, the walls are lined with posters welcoming him home and letting him know he is loved by others in the community. They were delivered while he was at the hospital and during two recent drive-by welcome home events in front of his mother's Altamont home, where he is staying while recovering. The posters provide comfort through the struggles he faces, as do the Facebook messages affirming he remains in people's thoughts and prayers.

Clemens, 27, who had worked in construction in Florida and Maryland for about six years before returning to Southeast Kansas, was set to start working for the city of Parsons when his accident occurred. He doesn't remember anything about what happened.

Clemens was at Riverside Park in Oswego, enjoying a mid-spring day skateboarding with friends down the paved road leading to the water plant. The road

Colleen Williamson/Sun photo

Joshua Clemens of Altamont sits on the edge of his bed at home this week and reads a framed letter from his mother, Jennifer Stringer, reminding him of his strength, courage and intelligence as well as her great love for him to help see him through his brain injury recovery.

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Peck still leads

By The Sun Staff
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Virgil Peck continued to gain ground in the 15th District state Senate race as advance ballots rolled into county clerk's offices and were counted.

As of Friday evening, Peck had 5,052 votes to Sen. Dan Goddard's 4,980, a 72-vote lead.

Friday was the last day that advance ballots could be received at county clerk's offices and counted if they were valid.

The 15th District includes Labette, Montgomery and Neosho counties. Goddard was elected to the post in 2016 and is seeking reelection.

Canvasses by county boards of canvassers will determine the final outcome of the Aug. 4 primary balloting.

Woman pleads innocent to chase charges

By The Sun Staff
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A Parsons woman allegedly involved in a 28-mile chase with law enforcement in September pleaded not guilty to a variety of felonies and misdemeanors on Friday.

Following the plea, Labette County District Judge Steve Stockard set a pretrial hearing for Katrina Marie Beach, 34, 2605 Partridge. Beach is charged with nonresidential burglary, interfering with a law officer, fleeing and eluding, all low-level felonies. She also faces charges of possession of stolen property (items taken from

the bathroom/concession stand at Winway Park), possession of marijuana, possession of drug paraphernalia, all misdemeanors, and two traffic infractions.

Beach faces charges in another case related to forging checks. On two occasions in February 2019 Beach allegedly forged and cashed checks — one for \$740 and the other for \$875 — belonging to Parsons Livestock Market (now Parsons Livestock Auction). One was passed in Parsons and the other at Columbus. Mark McKee, the livestock market owner at the time, said no one gave Beach permission to write checks on the business account. He also testified that someone

had stolen 18 checks from the business.

The chase charges are related to an incident at 3:13 a.m. Sept. 1, 2019, in which police investigated suspicious activity at the Winway Park ballfields. Someone allegedly carried property (toilet paper and other items) from the bathrooms of the building that also houses a concession stand. A citizen gave a vehicle description, a red 2001 Ford Ranger pickup, and a Parsons police officer found the vehicle and attempted to pull it over.

The officer pursued the pickup east of Parsons

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COVID-19 CASES IN SOUTHEAST KANSAS (cumulative)

LABETTE	MONTGOMERY	CHEROKEE	CRAWFORD	NEOSHO	WILSON
CASE TOTAL: 126	CASE TOTAL: 166	CASE TOTAL: 109	CASE TOTAL: 395	CASE TOTAL: 62	CASE TOTAL: 9
CURRENT CASES: 20	CURRENT CASES: 28	CURRENT CASES: 25	CURRENT CASES: N/A	CURRENT CASES: N/A	CURRENT CASES: N/A
RECOVERED: 106	RECOVERED: 133	RECOVERED: 76	RECOVERED: N/A	RECOVERED: N/A	RECOVERED: N/A
HOSPITALIZED: 6	HOSPITALIZED: N/A	HOSPITALIZED: N/A	HOSPITALIZED: N/A	HOSPITALIZED: 0	HOSPITALIZED: 1
TESTS: 1,784	TESTS: 2,818	TESTS: 1,457	TESTS: 4,536	TESTS: 1,024	TESTS: 569
DEATHS: 0	DEATHS: 5	DEATHS: 1	DEATHS: 1	DEATHS: 0	DEATHS: 0
POP%TESTED: 9.09	POP%TESTED: 8.85	POP%TESTED: 7.31	POP%TESTED: 11.69	POP%TESTED: 6.40	POP%TESTED: 6.67
POP%ILL: 0.642	POP%ILL: 0.521	POP%ILL: 0.544	POP%ILL: 1.017	POP%ILL: 0.388	POP%ILL: 1.038

KANSAS: 30,638 cases; 1,751 hospitalizations; 380 deaths; 316,512 tests; 10.84% population tested; 1.05% ill.
 NATIONAL: 4,928,802 cases; 161,052 deaths; 60,415,558 tests; 18.27% population tested; 1.49% ill.

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