OKC Schools Compact Launches ReadOKC Initiative

Members of the Oklahoma City Schools Compact launched their first collective project to benefit Oklahoma City Public Schools (OKCPS) last month. ReadOKC, an initiative to promote the love of reading in the community, challenges elementary students to “get in the game” and read 20 minutes a day, for a total of 1,200 minutes during the summer.

“Our students work so hard all year to improve their reading, and we don’t want to see them hit the ‘summer slide,’” said OKCPS Superintendent Aurora Lora. “Taking a few months off of reading can hurt future academic performance. We’re glad so many people came together to show students reading really matters.”

Students who meet the reading goal will be eligible for prizes and recognition, but most importantly, they will limit

Aerospace Industry Has History of Success in OKC

From the legacy of Wiley Post and Will Rogers to the thousands of Oklahomans working at Tinker Air Force Base, the aerospace industry plays an important role in Oklahoma City’s history. As the Oklahoma City community celebrates the 75th anniversary of Tinker Air Force Base in 2017, the next two issues of the POINT! newsletter will focus on the history of aerospace – both military and commercial – and the role it has played in Oklahoma City’s success.

Before the Wright brothers’ first successful flight in 1903, Oklahoman Ben Bellis attempted to build a flying machine in Muskogee, Oklahoma, foreshadowing an era of passion and dedication to the aviation industry in the state. In 1910, Charles F. Willard solidified the arrival of the air age to Oklahoma when he flew his biplane for 50 feet in an open field in south Oklahoma City.
As early as 1919, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber organized an aviation committee to build interest in bringing more aviation opportunities to Oklahoma City, and in 1926, the Chamber sought a bond issue of $10,000 to improve the airport. The Chamber also worked with other communities to establish 24 landing fields throughout Oklahoma.

The Chamber also went to great effort to secure regular air mail routes. The first service began on May 12, 1926, when the Chamber guaranteed a minimum of 30 pounds of originating air mail each day. When the weight was going to be under, Chamber staff members would wrap and mail a brick to bring up the total weight and ensure continued service.

The Chamber assumed management of one of the city’s earliest air fields in 1927, but it became apparent that a larger airport was needed. After oil was discovered, it was hard to find empty tracts of land that had not been leased for oil development. The Chamber did find some land and leased it immediately with an eye on the future of Oklahoma City aviation. After issuing a bond for airport development, Will Rogers Field opened on April 1, 1932, with service from six airlines in nine directions. In 1936 an Air Reserve Training Station moved to the airport, foreshadowing the growth of military operations.

One of Oklahoma’s biggest contributions to aviation in the form of national attention was the two round-the-world flights made by Wiley Post. After circumnavigating the globe with Harold Gatty in 1931, Post purchased the Winnie Mae and the Chamber started a campaign to raise money for a solo trip by Post. On July 15, 1933, Post started the trip and seven days, 18 hours and 49.5 minutes later, Post became the first person to circumnavigate the globe alone. Before his death, Post also helped developed the world’s first practical pressure suit that made high-altitude flights possible.

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Keeping our visitor industry strong

In May, the Oklahoma City Convention and Visitors Bureau celebrated National Travel and Tourism Week by honoring the Hometown Heroes that have elevated Oklahoma City’s appeal as a visitor destination. The Oklahoma City CVB honored eight individuals and organizations that have exceedingly supported and promoted Oklahoma City tourism and travel.

Awards were presented to deadCenter Film Festival; Downtown OKC, Inc.; Jason Cocomise, national convention manager of Philadelphia Church of God; Julie Porter Scott, community director of Yelp.com; Shari Goad, project coordinator with Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education; Larry Taylor, Oklahoma Wind Volleyball Tournament director; Steve Henry, director of programming for OKC Tennis Center; and Science Museum Oklahoma.

The CVB’s own Sandy Price was also recognized during National Travel and Tourism Week by the Oklahoma Travel Industry Association. For more than 30 years, Sandy has served the Oklahoma City CVB and the industry as a dedicated tourism professional, using her expertise to promote both Oklahoma City and the state as a prime destination. For her service, Sandy was awarded the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award at the recent Redbud Awards, Oklahoma’s highest honor given in the tourism industry.

Like most things in business, the success of Oklahoma City’s visitor industry is a team effort. The success of the hospitality industry in Oklahoma City is a credit to the individuals, businesses and organizations who work tirelessly, and I applaud their efforts to keep our visitor industry strong.

Sincerely,
Roy H. Williams, CCE
President & CEO

Leadership Notes
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LOVE’S
The Chamber’s Total Resource Development Campaign is in full swing, and you still have plenty of opportunities to connect with the Chamber’s targeted audience of business and community leaders. The Chamber’s publications and websites get your message to the right people – the decision makers within a company. Advertising opportunities include:

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP PACKAGE**

Promote your company’s product or service in a special bulk mailing delivered to more than 4,000 Chamber members. This annual thank you package is the perfect opportunity to reach members from a variety of industries and new members as they join throughout the year.

Rates: $2,000 - $3,500

**ANNUAL REPORT**

This year-in-review features the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber’s progress on growing the economy, advocating for business, marketing our city and much more. The Annual Report is an important communications vehicle to share the Chamber’s mission and accomplishments. This publication is distributed throughout the year and included in an annual publications mailing to main representatives at more than 4,000 Chamber member companies.

Rates: $1,000 - $3,250

**A BETTER LIFE WELCOME PROGRAM**


Rates: $1,000 - $3,000

**LEADERSHIP GUIDE**

The Leadership Guide is referenced throughout the year by more than 800 Chamber leaders. It is a directory of contact information for Board of Advisors and Board of Directors that is provided exclusively to members of each group.

Rates: $500 - $1,500

**PUBLIC POLICY GUIDE**

This one-of-a-kind publication features photos and contact information for all Oklahoma elected officials, district maps, a voting guide, Chamber PAC information and the Chamber’s legislative agenda. It is distributed at the Chamber’s Legislative Breakfast in January and included in the Chamber’s publication mailing to more than 4,000 Chamber members in February.

Rates: $1,000 - $3,250

**THE POINT! NEWSLETTER**

With a monthly print circulation of 5,000, The POINT! newsletter communicates topics that are relevant to the business community. Local business leaders circulate this newsletter to their employees and clients each month. Feature stories cover Chamber and community events, economic development issues, current initiatives, local accolades, legislative updates and visitor statistics. The POINT! newsletter is also emailed as an interactive magazine to Chamber members each month.

Rates: $375 - $13,000

**WWW.OKCCHAMBER.COM**

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber website is the first stop for many local leaders who want to know what is going on in OKC. The site is responsively designed so advertisers are visible on phones, tablets and desktop computers. The site boasted 90,028 unique visits in 2016, with an average of 247 visits per day. People spend an average of 2:22 on the site per visit. Chamber members can increase their online presence and promote their products and services in several different ways throughout the site.

Rates: $300 - $750

For more information about the Chamber’s advertising opportunities, contact Kaylee Terracina, kterracina@okcchamber.com or 297-8955, or contact a TRDC volunteer listed at www.okcchamber.com/trdc.
UPCOMING EVENTS

InternOKC Starts This Month

Does your company have interns? Make sure they stay in Oklahoma City after graduation by enrolling them in the Greater Grads InternOKC program. In addition to offering professional development curriculum, InternOKC also highlights the benefits of starting a career in Oklahoma City. Interns will hear from speakers from the Oklahoma City business community and have the chance to network with their peers and other members of the business community.

A cost of $125 per intern includes lunch and/or refreshments at five sessions throughout the summer, beginning on Wednesday, June 14. For more information or to register, visit www.GreaterGrads.com/summerintern. The sessions will take place throughout June and July at the following locations:

- Kickoff - June 14, 3 to 5 p.m., Chevy Bricktown Events Center
- Session 2 - June 21, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Embassy Suites Oklahoma City Downtown/Medical Center
- Session 3 - June 28, 3 to 5:30 p.m., Chevy Bricktown Events Center
- Session 4 - July 12, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Cox Convention Center
- Finale - July 19, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum


Attend This Event if You Are New to the Chamber

The Chamber wants to help you maximize your membership and learn about the mission of the Chamber, so it hosts a monthly Member Orientation to help you get involved. At each event, senior staff members of the Chamber will give an overview of the benefits of Chamber membership and how the Chamber works within the community.

Attend Member Orientation on the following days:

- June 13, 4 to 5:30 p.m., Chamber offices
- July 11, 8:30 to 10 a.m., Chamber offices
- Aug. 8, 4 to 5:30 p.m., Chamber offices

There is no cost to attend this event. Please register online and view more information at www.OKCChamber.com/events.
Upcoming Networking Opportunities

With more than 20 events each year specifically designed to help members network and promote their business, your Chamber membership allows you to promote your business, build new relationships and make valuable business connections. Don’t miss these upcoming networking events:

**Sunset Reception: June 6**

Grab your coworkers and head to Chisholm Creek, 13230 Pawnee Drive, from 4 to 6 p.m. on June 6 for the Chamber’s monthly Sunset Reception. This free event includes food, one drink ticket, networking and is the perfect opportunity to introduce your business contacts and friends to the Chamber. This event is open to the public and no registration is necessary.

**MegaLunch: July 26**

MegaLunch is a quarterly speed networking event that connects Chamber members in a creative way. Using a computerized rotation schedule, attendees will have the chance to give their 90-second “elevator pitch” to other business professionals at the event. In July, MegaLunch will be held at Hidden Trails Country Club, 6501 S Country Club Drive, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on July 26. MegaLunch is only open to Chamber members. To maximize networking opportunities, only one person per member company may attend. Tickets are $40 per person, and advance registration is required with a registration deadline three business days prior to the event. Visit www.okcchamber.com/events to register or for more information.
Oklahoma City Retail Market Sees Success

Oklahoma City’s retail market continues to experience success, both in recruiting national retail chains to locate in Oklahoma City and in organically producing a distinctive local retail culture. With the goal to further that success – and boost the city’s retail sales tax collections – a delegation from the Chamber and the City of Oklahoma City attended the International Council of Shopping Centers’ RECon conference last month to connect with more than 36,000 retailers, business owners and developers.

During the conference, representatives from Oklahoma City were able to meet prospective retailers and developers. Also during the conference, The Outlet Resource Group (TORG) announced the new brand for the OKC Outlets, formerly called The Outlet Shoppes of Oklahoma City.

TORG and Singerman Real Estate announced the $130 million purchase of OKC Outlets from Horizon Group Properties, Inc., in early May. Currently, OKC Outlets includes more than 90 stores including Nike, Vera Bradley, Michael Kors, Polo Ralph Lauren and Under Armour. TORG plans to add more brands to the retail mix in the future, and the rebrand will also include a new color palate and the addition of more green space to the 400,000-square-foot center.

Oklahoma City’s sales tax collection is vitally important to the services that the City is able to provide. To shed more insight on the importance of retail and Oklahoma City’s retail recruitment strategy, read a Q&A with Tammy Fate, manager of retail development and recruitment, below.

Oklahoma City Retail Market Sees Success

Why is retail important?
Fate: Retail is the lifeblood of our community that ultimately funds critical services like police and fire departments and enhances our quality of life. That means every dollar you spend in OKC keeps our city going.

Beyond that, retail helps give areas a sense of place. Whether it is local or national retailers, places like the Plaza, Bricktown, Western Avenue, Uptown 23, Midtown, Penn Square and the Memorial corridor, creating an experience and gathering spot is a way to keep retail alive and vibrant.

What makes Oklahoma City attractive to national retailers?
Fate: National retailers are really number-driven. Average household income, number of people within a given area, traffic counts and commuter patterns are crucial to identifying the perfect site. Competition is another factor that weighs in on decision making. Retailers are attracted to a city with a positive population growth and a vibrant and affordable quality of life. Having a healthy downtown core resonates throughout the city and makes Oklahoma City an attractive market.

What is Oklahoma City’s strategy in recruiting retail?
Fate: We want to attract new-to-market, destination retailers and work with developers to create experienced-based retail options in our community. Given the size of Oklahoma City, grocery stores continue to be an important component in growth areas in our city. In addition to recruiting new concepts, we work with existing retailers to provide research, data and a variety of tools to help grow and identify opportunities in our market.

How does local retail fit in the picture?
Fate: Local retail is extremely, extremely important to us. So much of our local identity is defined by our unique/one-of-a-kind local restaurants and boutique shops. We are thrilled every time we can recruit a Trader Joe’s or Cabela’s to the metro. However, lots of cities have Trader Joe’s. Concepts like Big Truck Tacos, Kitchen No. 324, Plenty Mercantile and Black Scintilla help create the fabric of our community that people identify OKC with when they visit our market. It’s a part of our DNA. It takes a healthy mix of local and national retailers to cultivate a city and provide a variety of diverse offerings to you as the consumer.
Compact Focuses on Reading (cont’d from page 1)

educational regression over the summer and will be more prepared for school in the fall. In order to make reading resources as accessible to students as possible, ReadOKC has dozens of community partners, including the Metropolitan Library System, Scholastic, myOn, Cox Communications, The Oklahoman, the Oklahoma City Dodgers and Oklahoma City Energy FC.

The program is part of the Compact’s mission to create, stimulate, promote and drive community ownership of Oklahoma City Public Schools and its outcomes. Compact members include the Oklahoma City Public Schools, the City of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma City Public Schools Foundation, United Way of Central Oklahoma and the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber.

According to Mary Mélon, president of the Foundation for Oklahoma City Public Schools and chair of the ReadOKC committee, the Compact focused on reading achievements for their first project because of the impact it can have on every aspect of education.

“Without literacy, it’s nearly impossible for a student to learn math, science, history, health or any other subject area,” Mélon said. “Learning to read, and reading consistently throughout the year, leads to better educational outcomes and sets children up to succeed in whatever arena they choose.”

As Oklahoma City continues to grow, Mélon mentioned that focusing on education attainment directly impacts Oklahoma City’s future economic development opportunities.

“Oklahoma City can’t reach its full potential without an educated citizenry to fill the jobs and break the cycles of generational poverty that exist in our community,” Mélon said.

Mélon said that businesses can support the effort by promoting it to employees, offering a safe space for students to read during the summer, and by valuing reading. Businesses can find more information and digital art for promotional items at www.okcps.org/ReadOKC.

Another Compact task force is also discussing how to improve the mental health of students. After assessing what resources are available to help students, the task force will provide additional support in the fall of 2017.

THANK YOU

Because of your support to our Annual Campaign, we were able to raise

$1,344,326

to take on the challenges ahead of us and give everyone the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.

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June 2017 Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce
Congratulations to these Chamber members on their recent Grand Openings! All Chamber members are welcome to attend Grand Openings. To view more photos, see the schedule of upcoming Grand Openings or subscribe to the Grand Openings calendar, visit www.okcchamber.com/grandopenings.

Ribbon-cutting ceremonies are a great member benefit. If your company wants to celebrate a new location, expansion or renovation, contact Amanda Bowen, abowen@okcchamber.com or 405-297-8961.

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OKC Ranks No. 1 for Best Large Cities to Start a Business

WalletHub compared the 150 most populated U.S. cities searching for the “Best Large Cities to Start a Business.”

WalletHub ranked Oklahoma City No. 1 using 16 key metrics such as office space affordability, educational attainment of the local labor force and five-year survival rate.

OKC ranked No. 1 for energy costs and No. 3 for cost of doing business for metropolitans with more than one million people, according to Moody’s North American Business Cost Review, 2016.

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Source: WalletHub, 2017

Members Upgrade Their Support of the Chamber

Board of Advisor and Lead Investor companies play a key role in the Chamber’s work in Oklahoma City. To increase your investment, contact the membership division of the Chamber at 297-8949 or info@okcchamber.com.

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Janitorial Services
Mr. Joe Acosta ...... 840-4444
5909 Northwest Expressway, Suite 325
Oklahoma City, OK 73132
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For comprehensive Economic Indicators and Regional Data, please visit your Greater Oklahoma City Chamber Economic Development Division www.greateroklahomacity.com/economicindicators or contact Eric Long, Research Economist – (405)297-8976; elong@okcchamber.com
RETAINING TOP TALENT

BY RANDY CHANDLER
Vice President, Cox Business Oklahoma

FOR MANY ENTREPRENEURS, FINDING THE RIGHT TALENT IS ONE OF THE HARDEST PARTS OF THE JOB. UNFORTUNATELY, RETAINING STRONG EMPLOYEES IS EQUALLY TOUGH. ACCORDING TO A RECENT STORY IN THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, COMPANIES OFTEN PAY TWICE AN EMPLOYEE’S ANNUAL SALARY TO FIND AND TRAIN A REPLACEMENT. FOR SMALL BUSINESSES, THAT CAN BE A HIGH PRICE TO PAY. RANDY CHANDLER, VICE PRESIDENT OF COX BUSINESS, SHARES THE FOLLOWING TIPS TO HELP ENTREPRENEURS BUILD BETTER TEAMS AND TAKE THEIR STARTUPS FROM VISION TO REALITY.

Encourage employee growth

Micro-management is one of the quickest ways to chase away talent. You’re bringing in a highly-skilled individual to perform a job. Coaching and feedback is important, but you should also maintain a healthy “hands-off” approach.

Many managers also fail to stay connected and may become unaware of their team members’ shifting interests. The programmer you hired three years ago may have developed an interest in digital marketing. Is he/she someone you want in your company long-term? Encourage growth by offering him/her a chance to explore that newfound interest. Otherwise, you risk losing them.

Show them money - and time

All employees want to feel valued. What better way to invest in them than with company resources and your personal time? Begin by setting up weekly one-on-ones with an employee to talk about professional growth. Make this a concentrated discussion around their work experience, including the employee’s likes, dislikes and areas of interest. Coach that employee when necessary. Then, once a month, grab a casual lunch directly after your one-on-one, and make work a forbidden topic.

Through these conversations, you will better identify employees’ areas of interest. Challenge your employees to find a relevant conference or workshop and send them to it. Investing your time to learn more about their work experience while also making a material contribution to their development will go a long way in making them feel invested in and of value to your company.

Work for more than the dollar

Today’s employees are interested in far more than just earning a paycheck. They want their work to make a difference. A 2016 study from Deloitte showed that both millennials as well as older generations increasingly see businesses as capable of making a positive impact on social issues.

Even if your company isn’t deeply rooted in a social impact area, you can still incorporate a corporate social responsibility plan into your business. Identify a cause that has an intuitive connection to your corporate mission, and then provide opportunities for your employees to engage with it. When your employees feel like their work contributes to the greater good, they will find greater satisfaction and deeper meaning in their daily work.

WHETHER YOUR BUSINESS IS JUST GETTING OFF THE GROUND OR GATHERING MOMENTUM, COX BUSINESS PROVIDES COMMUNICATIONS SOLUTIONS THAT WORK FOR YOUR GROWING NEEDS. Visit www.cox.com/business to learn more.