



Park Hill School District

CONNECTION

www.parkhill.k12.mo.us

APRIL EDITION



Congress Middle School students fill the hallway after dismissal. The school's enrollment is approaching the building's functional capacity, which means programming options could be limited. We have plans to install mobile units in the fall at Congress Middle School, Tiffany Ridge Elementary and Park Hill High School to provide needed classroom space.

Park Hill Confronts Crowding Issues

If you look around our schools, you'll see we are serving more students than we ever have in our history.

We've recorded 32 consecutive years of enrollment growth, and 10 of 13 grade levels in 2015-2016 are at their highest enrollment ever. Our total enrollment is at a historic high.

To help us make sure we're meeting the needs of every student, we gather data every year and create a report called the demographic profile to help us budget and plan.

This report includes information from the latest census, historical and current enrollment data, enrollment projections and the estimated needs for more facilities in the future. To see the report, you can visit our website at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us and look under District Information.

The report's takeaway message is clear: Park Hill is growing, and we need to prepare for this larger student population.

Our K-12 student enrollment for 2015-2016 is 11,111, which is a 3.7-percent increase from 2014-2015. Kindergarten class sizes

have been at historic highs for six consecutive years. So what do these numbers mean for our future?

They tell us we're on track with our long-range plan, which says we'll need more facilities so we can keep serving our growing student population. You'll see this reflected across our district starting this fall — we will install mobile units at Tiffany Ridge Elementary, Congress Middle School and Park Hill High School to provide needed classroom space. The Board of Education is having early conversations about options for funding our future facility needs.

Our strong financial management and community put us in a good position to continue serving our students while being good stewards of tax dollars. This earned us an enhanced Aa1 bond rating from Moody's Investors Service, and our tax levy is the second lowest among 12 Kansas City suburban school districts.

For more information about the long-range facilities plan and how it will affect your family, visit the district website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us, where you'll find the plan under District Information.

STRAIGHT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Park Hill Community,

It is an honor to work in the Park Hill School District because of the commitment of our staff, families and community to provide an excellence educational experience in a fiscally responsible manner.

As you are aware, over the past 30 years, the district has seen a consistent and yearly increase in our enrollment. In fact, this past year our enrollment grew by 3.7 percent, our highest increase to date.

The good news is that, through careful planning, the district is fiscally well positioned to address challenges such as increasing student enrollment.

Evidence of our strong fiscal management includes:

- Recipient of the Meritorious Budget Award for nine years in a row
- A Moody's Investors Service enhanced Aa1 bond rating
- The second-lowest tax levy among our 12 local comparative districts
- Refinancing of past debt to save taxpayer dollars
- Efficient use of tax dollars and financial transparency embedded within the district strategic plan
- Careful management of our budget for many years, which allowed us to pay for a major classroom expense this year while keeping some money in our reserves to protect our future financial stability. This is technically called a "deficit budget," but we planned ahead and covered the cost with our reserves, not by taking on new debt.

As we face the future, these conservative and strategic processes help us meet our goals of transparency, efficient use of tax dollars and responsible planning, allowing us to *Build Successful Futures ~ Each Student ~ Every Day!*

Sincerely,

Jeanette Cowherd
Superintendent



Dr. Jeanette Cowherd
Park Hill Superintendent

NEWS WORTH KNOWING

District Info That Could Affect Your Family

School Board Candidates

Five candidates filed to run in the April 5 election to fill two seats on the Park Hill Board of Education. Todd Fane (incumbent), Susan Newburger (incumbent), Jeffrey Kingsley, Joshua Catton and David Blackburn will appear on the ballot in the order they filed. See the district website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us, for information about the candidates.

Strategic Plan Update

Park Hill is on track to meet the goals in our strategic plan, reported Dr. Mike Kimbrel, executive director of quality and evaluation. The strategic plan, known as the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan, has detailed goals and measurable objectives to direct the district's improvement efforts in each of our strategic focus areas (finance, academics, climate and employees).

Summer School Plans

Park Hill Summer School is a free, fun, caring place for your child to learn during the summer. In response to parent feedback, Park Hill Summer School will once again go for a full day, include transportation and offer meals for purchase. See the website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us, for more information.

For the latest, most up-to-date news about the Park Hill School District, subscribe to our email newsletter, follow us online or watch our TV broadcasts. See the back page for more information.

DISTRICT SUCCESS STORIES

District Recognizes Nine National Merit Honorees

Our 2016 National Merit Finalists are Grace Heinerikson, Ellie Holder, Mohammed Jaffri, Keegan Justis, Shaelyn Kessler and Grant Pace from Park Hill South and Jacob Cogley from Park Hill High School. Our National Merit Commended Scholars are Ian McBride and Christopher Winkie from Park Hill High School.

Park Hill South Student Earns ACT's Missouri Student Readiness Award

Kessler also earned the Missouri Student Readiness Award from the ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign because of her preparation for college and her future.

Plaza Team Named Most Innovative for Exhibition Design Work

Twelve sixth graders from Plaza Middle School won the Most Innovative award from the Northland Center for Advanced Professional Studies program. They worked with Exhibit Associates Inc. in Kansas City, Mo., to mock up a design for a trade booth for a Canadian agribusiness. Visit www.parkhill.k12.mo.us to read the full list of the team members.

Congress Teachers Named Collaborative Teachers of the Year

Seven teachers from Congress Middle School earned the 2015-2016 Collaborative Teachers of the Year award. Visit www.parkhill.k12.mo.us to read the full list of honorees.

Exemplary New Principal

Renner Elementary Principal Dr. Melissa Hensley received the Exemplary New Principal award from the Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals. MAESP honors second- or third-year principals who reflect the best in educational leadership with this award.



BRIDGE TO SUCCESS: Park Hill South High School sophomores Ethan Wissmann and Trent Neutgens earned first place in the high school division at the University of Missouri-Kansas City's RooBuilders bridge-building competition.



VAS IN VICTORY: Lakeview Middle School eighth grader Peyton Wiewel won the Park Hill School District Spelling Bee and will now advance to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Maryland, May 23-28. Visit www.parkhill.k12.mo.us to read the full list of spelling bee winners.

Park Hill High School Senior Receives Culinary Award

PHHS senior Halena Procopio Ross earned the National ProStart Certificate of Achievement from the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. Procopio Ross is the first Park Hill School District student to receive the award.

Park Hill Students Receive Good Citizen Award

PHHS senior Jillian Roepe and Park Hill South senior Margaret Moyes received the 2015 Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen Award.

Park Hill High School Wrestling Team Wins State Championship

The PHHS wrestling team won the state championship for the fourth year in a row. Visit www.parkhill.k12.mo.us to read the full list of wrestling winners.

Park Hill South Swimmer Wins Two State Championships

Park Hill South senior Tori Beeler won two events at the Missouri Girls Swimming and Diving Championships and set a state record.

Park Hill South Swim Coach Wins Missouri Coach of the Year

Tim Busenhardt, Park Hill South girls swim coach, was named coach of the year by the Missouri Interscholastic Swimming Coaches Association for the third year in a row.

Calendar:

April 5

Board of Education election

April 9

Northland Ethnic Festival, from 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Park Hill South High School

April 12

Board of Education meeting

April 28

Board of Education meeting

April 30-May 1

District Art Festival, from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday and 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday at Park Hill High School

Get Connected:

Our website has lots of ways for you to engage with Park Hill schools. Find them all at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Social Media

Follow the district's Facebook page and Twitter feed.

First Hand E-mail News

Get district news and highlights from Board meetings.

First Hand Mobile

Get text message alerts about weather and emergencies.

Park Hill TV

See our videos on YouTube and Time Warner Cable channel 18.

Online Comment Portal

Share your comments, suggestions for improvement and even your compliments.



Park Hill School District

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Kansas City, MO 64153

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In an effort to keep the community informed, the "Park Hill Connection" goes to every home in the Park Hill School District, even those without students in our schools. Thank you for your support of your community's schools!

Digging for District Savings: Park Hill to Save Millions by Building Fiber-Optic Network



A crew outside Park Hill High School works on preparing the district to own a fiber-optic network. The network will increase bandwidth and enable easier expansion. Owning our own network will save the district as much as \$7.8 million over the next 20 years. Taking advantage of new federal E-rate funding regulations and partnering with the city of Kansas City, Mo., reduced the cost.