



Park Hill School District

CONNECTION

www.parkhill.k12.mo.us

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER EDITION

Board Begins Superintendent Search

The Board of Education is searching for the Park Hill School District's next superintendent.

Board members started by naming Dr. Jeanette Cowherd interim superintendent through the 2015-2016 school year.

"Dr. Cowherd's experience, qualifications, familiarity with the district and leadership will allow her to step smoothly into this role during this transition period," Board President Boon Lee said.

The Board hired School Exec Connect to help with the search, which is open to both internal candidates and external candidates from across the nation.

"Hiring an executive takes an enormous amount of skill, so it is important we find experts to help us do this right," Lee said. "Part of what we expect from the search firm is to help us communicate openly with the public about this process and to help us get feedback from our stakeholders about what they want in a superintendent."

To get your feedback during the search for Park Hill's next superintendent, the Board will post several opportunities to get involved on the website, including . . .

- Taking an online survey about desired characteristics of our superintendent,
- Participating in focus groups about desired characteristics of our superintendent and
- Applying to serve on committees to help evaluate the final three candidates, once we get to that part of the process.

To get involved or for more information, check out the "Superintendent Search" page on the district website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Superintendent Search Timeline

September:

School Exec Connect begins to market the position and starts the search process

September and October:

School Exec Connect administers survey, conducts focus groups

October 22, 5-6:30 p.m.:

School Exec Connect reports to Board on focus group and survey information, the proposed new superintendent profile and potential interview questions.

September to November:

School Exec Connect recruits, accepts and screens candidates

November 10:

School Exec Connect presents candidates to the Board

November:

Board interviews first round of candidates and selects three finalists

December 1, 2 and 3:

Board and committees of parents, citizens, staff and students evaluate the three finalists

December:

Board selects final candidate

December and January:

Board negotiates contract, conducts reference checks and finalizes details

January:

Board takes action on new superintendent's contract

July 1, 2016:

New superintendent assumes duties

STRAIGHT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Park Hill Community,

When you get this newsletter, we will have been in school for about three weeks.

To prepare for this, our custodians, maintenance workers and construction crews worked through the summer to get our buildings shiny and beautiful.

Our projects this summer included remodels at Congress Middle School, roofing and wiring at Southeast Elementary, a few updated classrooms at Plaza Middle School, a better parking lot at Union Chapel, a gym floor at English Landing Elementary, a heating and cooling system at Line Creek Elementary, and new carpet at several schools. This is an important part of our commitment to maintain our facilities.

Our teachers came back early to sharpen their skills through targeted professional development and trainings.

Thanks to all their work, the year is off to a great start. Students were already learning on the first day of school.

We can see that everyone's work is paying off not just through the hum of learning in our classrooms but through the scores we received back from the state of Missouri and from the ACT. Our MAP and ACT test results were not only higher than the average, they were among the very highest in our region.

This is a result of our high-achieving students, skilled teachers, involved parents and supportive community. Thank you for all you do to support our students and our schools. Together, we are *Building Successful Futures ~ Each Student ~ Every Day.*

Sincerely,
Jeanette Cowherd



Dr. Jeanette Cowherd
Park Hill Interim Superintendent

Park Hill

NEWS WORTH KNOWING

District Decisions That Could Affect Your Family

District Expected to Save Up to \$800,000 by Refinancing Debt

The Board approved a resolution to refinance some of the district's debt, which is expected to save up to \$800,000. This debt was from past no-tax-increase bond issues that paid for projects like construction of schools and facilities maintenance. Refinancing debt also gives future Boards more options for the long-range facilities plan.

Board Considers Keeping Tax Rate at Same Level as Last Year

When this edition of the "Connection" went to print, the Board was reviewing the recommendation to keep this year's operating tax levy at \$4.9543, the same rate as last year's.

For the 11th year, this is below the voter-approved rate of \$4.9970. Assistant Superintendent Dr. Paul Kelly also recommended setting the debt service levy at \$0.6107 instead of the \$0.6574 ceiling set by the state auditor, in order to keep our promises to voters in 2006 and 2011 that we would have no tax increase for these bonds.

Watch for more information in the next edition of the "Connection."

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

Assistant Principal is Emerging Leader

ASCD named English Landing Elementary and Prairie Point Elementary Assistant Principal **Matt Wachel** to its 2015 class of Emerging Leaders. Matt is one of 46 educators from across the world named this year.

Blue Star Award Winners

Park Hill South High School junior **Nathan Jurries** received the Blue Star Award for outstanding actor in a featured role in "Seussical the Musical." Park Hill High School orchestra received the Blue Star Award for outstanding orchestra for "Once on this Island."

State Honors Scholar Athletes

The Missouri State High School Activities Association recognized several Park Hill School District athletes and teams for their scholastic achievement during the winter and spring season. See the list of students under "News" at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Renner Wins Healthy Schools Award

Renner Elementary received a 2015 Bronze National Healthy Schools Award from The Alliance for a Healthier Generation. This award goes to schools that implement changes to create healthier school environments.



FUTURE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY LEADER: The Board of Education recognized Park Hill South sophomore **Taylor Gunther**, who attended the 2015 Congress of Future Science and Technology Leaders in Boston, Mass. in June. Astronaut Buzz Aldrin nominated Gunther based on his academic achievement, leadership skills and passion for science and technology.

Grad Receives Walter Cronkite Award

Park Hill South graduate **Shaefer Schuetz** earned the Walter Cronkite Scholarship award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Mid-America chapter for his achievement in broadcast journalism while he was at Park Hill South. This group, which also gives out the EMMY award, gives the Cronkite award to students who demonstrate potential as future broadcast journalists.

Students Attend Missouri Girls State

Three high school students attended Missouri Girls State this year, including seniors **Madi Loescher** and **Alicia Buehler** from Park Hill South and senior **Izzy Wussow** from PHHS. Loescher is the Missouri Girls State governor and Wussow is the Missouri Girls State lieutenant governor for the 2015-2016 school year.

Students Attend Missouri Boys State

Three high school students attended Missouri Boys State, including seniors **Bryson Grau** and **Ian McBride** from PHHS and senior **Bjorn Carlson** from Park Hill South. Boys State participants selected McBride as one of two delegates from Missouri Boys State to represent Missouri at American Legion Boys Nation in Washington, D.C.

Graduate is All-State in Scholar Bowl

Park Hill South graduate **Will Graff** earned an all-state award at the 2015 MSHSAA State Scholar Bowl tournament. He received a medal from the Missouri Academic Coaches Association and was one of the top nine students to earn an award in Class 4.

South's Yearbook Earns High Honors

Park Hill South's yearbook, South Paw, earned the All-Missouri designation from the Missouri Interscholastic Press Association.



HIGH SCHOOL DANCE: Both high school dance teams earned first place in several categories at the UDA Elite Dance Camps they attended in July. Both teams qualified to compete at National Dance Team Championship in January 2016. See the "News" section of the district website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us, for the list of students honored.

Calendar:

September 7

No school, Labor Day

September 8

No school, professional development day

Sept. 30 - Oct. 1

High School Conferences

Renner is 50:

Renner Elementary celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Join us for the celebration at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 1 at Renner. We're collecting memorabilia and memories, so please share yours by contacting Debbie Rich at (816) 359-6349 or at richd@parkhill.k12.mo.us.

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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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!

Welcome Back to School, Park Hill!



Plaza Middle School students Nico Weber and Nathan Carrillo converged in the gym before school started on the first day of school.



English Landing Elementary kindergartner Ezekiel Swift gave his teacher, Mindy Hellbusch, a big thumbs-up on the first day of school.