



Park Hill School District

CONNECTION

www.parkhill.k12.mo.us

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER EDITION



Passing period can be crowded at Park Hill High School. Growing enrollment at all our schools is the reason Park Hill is planning for the future with a long-range facilities plan, which you can see on the district website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Park Hill Plans Ahead for Facility Needs

Over the next few years, we expect about 2,000 new students to come to the Park Hill School District, and we need to find room for them. Park Hill has grown slowly and steadily for more than 30 years. In the 2015-2016 school year, we have 11,111 students, and experts tell us that our enrollment will continue to grow over time, until we have about 13,000 students.

We are planning ahead for that growth, so we can provide safe, effective places for students to learn while being careful stewards of taxpayer dollars.

In spring of 2013, Park Hill started gathering feedback from students, staff, parents and community members about our future facilities. The Board of Education used the feedback when approving criteria for the plan, and our experts used the feedback to develop a long list of possible options.

Parents and staff helped us narrow down that list to three options. We held four open houses and an online discussion to get more public feedback.

In March, the Board selected one of the options and approved the long-range facilities plan. The plan calls for adding two elementary schools, as our enrollment in the younger grades grows.

The plan also calls for educating sixth, seventh and eighth grades in four middle schools.

At the high-school level, the idea is for additional space to offer special, innovative programs for all district high-school students. This would expand our offerings and ease crowding at both high schools as we grow.

We also need a new support-service facility, because our warehouse is too small for a district of our size, and we could save money if we build our own facility for school buses.

Now that we have a Board-approved plan, we are constantly looking at our enrollment numbers, so we can figure out when we will need to add mobile units or build schools. The timeline for the changes depends on enrollment.

In order to keep building successful futures, each student, every day, we must make sure our schools and facilities keep up with our enrollment growth. This long-range facilities plan maps out the way for us to do just that.

To see the plan, just visit our district website at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

STRAIGHT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Park Hill Community,

As you might have noticed, we work very hard to involve you, our community, in the decision-making process.

So far this school year, we've used phone surveys, online surveys, focus groups and advisory committees to get input from district residents, as well as students, parents and staff.

We use this feedback to help us make decisions that reflect the needs and preferences of our stakeholders. The Park Hill School District is your district, and your opinions are important to us. For example, the district used feedback to update and improve our strategic plans, the Board is using feedback to help with its superintendent search, and the technology team is using feedback to determine what our needs are for student data storage.

We are always open to feedback. If you ever have a comment or suggestion for us, look for the "comment portal" on our district website.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts to help us continuously improve our schools. With your help, we are Building Successful Futures ~ Each Student ~ Every Day.

Sincerely,
Jeanette Cowherd



Dr. Jeanette Cowherd
Park Hill Interim Superintendent

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NEWS WORTH KNOWING

District Decisions That Could Affect Your Family

Refinancing Debt Will Save the District More Than \$1 Million

"It was a very good day for the Park Hill taxpayer," Assistant Superintendent Dr. Paul Kelly said, as the Board approved a resolution to refund bonds. This refinancing of some of the district's debt at a much lower interest rate will save the district more than \$1 million. Reorganizing this debt allows the district to plan for future growth while continuing to be responsible with tax dollars.

Board Leaves Tax Levy at Same Rate as Last Year

The Board approved a recommendation from Dr. Kelly 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. The Board also set 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 from 2006 and 2011 that we would have no tax increase for these bonds.

District Uses Baldrige Framework for Continuous Improvement

The district recently submitted an application to the Excellence in Missouri Foundation, which evaluates organizations based on the Malcolm Baldrige framework and criteria. The foundation's review of our application resulted in Park Hill qualifying for a site visit, which was in late September. Next, the district will receive a detailed feedback report listing our strengths and opportunities for improvement.

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.

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ACADEMIC CELEBRATION WEEK

The week of September 14-18 was Park Hill Academic Achievement Week, when we celebrated the hard work of our staff and our students, as well as the support of our community.



Interim Superintendent Dr. Jeanette Cowherd thanked Park Hill High School media assistant Marlene Reuter for her contribution to student academic achievement. Board members and administrators thanked teachers and support staff around the district for their work.

Academic Celebrations:

The Park Hill School District had the highest ACT score of all Kansas-City-area Missouri school districts.

The Park Hill School District qualified for Accreditation with Distinction in Performance for 14 years in a row, scoring 98.2 percent of the possible points.

The Park Hill School District consistently scores in the top 10 percent of all school districts in the state of Missouri on state achievement tests.

Park Hill School District students scored in the top third in a group of similar school districts in every content area. We are the only district in the group to accomplish this in every area.



See what we have to celebrate in this video.



Prairie Point gave staff members like counselor Andrew Wideman treats from the ice cream truck to celebrate their contributions to student success.



Academic Celebration week wrapped up with a staff, student and parent tailgate before the Park Hill South vs. PHHS football game.



Line Creek kindergartners Triston Gantt and Maddison French celebrated our academic successes.

Calendar:

October 27

Education Foundation community breakfast

October 28-29

Elementary and middle school parent teacher conferences

October 29

No school for elementary and middle school students

October 30

No school for elementary and middle school students and teachers

November 5

Coffee for Park Hill retired employees at 9:30 a.m. at Tiffany Ridge Elementary

Get more info and RSVP by calling Beverly Leach at (816) 359-6022.

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!

Nominate an Employee for Park Hill Star Award

Each month, we present the Park Hill Star award to a pre-K or elementary teacher, a secondary teacher and a support employee.

Please nominate an employee for the Park Hill Star award by finding the nomination form on our district website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.



Nominate an Alumnus for the Hall of Fame

Each January, the Park Hill School District inducts one or more alumni into the Alumni Hall of Fame. This award honors those district graduates whose lives and careers are models of achievement and community service.



Do you know an alumnus or alumna who deserves to be in the Park Hill Alumni Hall of Fame? The nominee must be a graduate of Park Hill High School or Park Hill South High School who graduated five or more years ago. Posthumous nominations will be accepted as well.

Make your nomination online, at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.