Superintendent Dr. Springston Off to a Great Start in Park Hill

The Park Hill School District’s new superintendent, Dr. Scott Springston, hit the ground running when he started working here on July 1.

Dr. Springston’s agenda is full of meetings with school staff, parents and community members as he works to get to know the schools and the district.

“My priority is to get out as much as possible and visit with stakeholders,” he said. “The most important parts of my transition plan are getting to know the people here and understanding the high expectations in Park Hill.”

During all these meetings, Dr. Springston is doing a lot of listening as well as answering a lot of questions from people who wonder what they can expect from him.

“What they can expect from me is a high level of passion for what I do,” he said. “I’m going to be out as much as I can in the district, both as a parent and as an instructional leader.”

Dr. Springston and his wife, Leah, have two children who are now attending Park Hill schools. He said that the excellence of the schools in Park Hill were a major reason that he and his wife decided to move their family here.

Before he came to Park Hill, Dr. Springston was the superintendent of the Valley Center School District in Kansas. He took over that position in 2006, after serving two years as an assistant superintendent in Valley Center.

Before that, he was a middle school principal and assistant principal in the Blue Valley School District and a science teacher in the Hays School District.
GET CONNECTED ...

SOCIAL MEDIA
Be one of the first to know what’s going on in Park Hill. Follow the Park Hill School District’s Facebook page, Twitter feed or Google+ page. The links are on our website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

FIRST HAND E-MAIL NEWSLETTER
Get weekly updates on what is happening in the district and highlights from the Board of Education meetings. Sign up for the First Hand e-mail newsletter at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

FIRST HAND MOBILE
“First Hand Mobile” sends text message alerts about weather closings, emergency information or important news alerts directly to your text-messaging enabled mobile phone. To sign up, go to the district website at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

PARK HILL TV-CHANNEL 18
For an inside look at what is going on in the Park Hill School District, tune in to Park Hill TV-Channel 18 (for Time Warner Cable subscribers). Videos of the programs are also on the district website at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

PARK HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT WEB SITE COMMENT FORM
Park Hill is always looking for ways to improve. With that in mind, we have a comment form on the district website. Please check it out under “Quick Links” and share your comments, suggestions for improvement and even your compliments.

IMPORTANT DATES:
Highlights You Should Know ...

Park Hill South High School Homecoming Activities:
Sept. 14 game and Sept. 15 dance

Park Hill High School Homecoming Activities:
Sept. 21 game and parade and Sept. 22 dance

National Custodial Appreciation Day: Oct. 2

High School Parent Teacher Conferences: Oct. 3-4, 5-8 p.m.

Dig for a Cure Volleyball Game: Oct. 9, 7 p.m., PHS vs. PHHS

End of First Quarter: Oct. 12

Teacher Work/Professional Development Day: Oct. 15, no school

National School Lunch Week: Oct. 15-19

National School Bus Safety Week: Oct. 15-19

Education Foundation Community Breakfast: Oct. 30
New Faces In Park Hill Places

Dr. Bill Redinger
Assistant Sup. for HR

Dr. Jeanette Cowherd
Assistant Sup.

Dr. Chris Daniels
Dir. of Special Services

Derrick Unruh
Dir. of Technology

Josh Colvin
Dir. of Student Services

Dr. Chad Sayre
Asst. Prin. PHHS

Horace Tisdel
Assistant Principal
Congress MS

Kerrie Herren
Assistant Principal
Plaza MS

Shawn Fitzmorris
Principal
Tiffany Ridge Elem.

Lee Heinerikson
Principal
Chinn Elem.

Sasha Erwin
Asst. Principal
Renner & Hawthorn

Tim Kalis
Asst. Principal
Plaza & Lakeview MS

Gina Brooks
Asst. Principal
Chinn & Tiffany Rdg.

Dr. Becky Kroenke
Asst. Principal
Prairie Pt. & Eng. Ld.

Future Learner Project Gets Students Engaged

In fifth-grade classrooms at three Park Hill elementary schools, the first week of school was even more exciting than usual.

These students are participating in a pilot program for the Future Learner Project, or FLiP, which means that each of them received a laptop computer to use both at school and at home.

Already, these students are thrilled about learning lessons that allow them to use the laptops.

Increasing students’ access to technology is one of the keys to FLiP, but the laptops aren’t the point of the program.

“The laptop is absolutely an essential tool of the FLiP program, but learning, curriculum and students are at the center of FLiP,” said Susan Rizzo, coordinator of instruction technology.

FLiP will help Park Hill create more student-centered classrooms, where teachers act as facilitators and students take ownership of their learning.

As the Park Hill School District prepares students for the digital age of today, they need communication, collaboration, creativity and information-gathering skills to succeed. Research shows that jobs demand these 21st-century skills.

By focusing on these skills, FLiP will help Park Hill increase engagement, learning and relevance.

In order to make sure teachers feel prepared to shift their classrooms to this new way of learning, the district is providing extensive training opportunities.

In addition, efforts to improve the district’s technology support will make sure that these tools are working when students and teachers need them.

If funding allows, the district hopes to expand FLiP across the district with a strategic, four-year roll-out plan.
Park Hill South Receives Gold Star School Award
Park Hill South High School is one of only eight schools in the state of Missouri to receive the Gold Star School award this year. South is now in the running for the national Blue Ribbon School award.

Two District Graduates Named Scholar-Athletes
The Kansas City Star listed two recent Park Hill School District graduates among their 2012 Scholar-Athletes. Devon Belew from Park Hill High School and Katherine Riojas from Park Hill South earned the prestigious recognition for excelling in both athletics and academics.

Lakeview Has Grand Champion Choir
The Lakeview MasterClass choir received the Grand Champion title at the Six-Flags St. Louis Midwest Music Festival. It also earned first place in the Middle School Mixed Choir division.

Park Hill DECA Students Honored for Project
Park Hill High School DECA students Davon Thomas, Emily Northern and Teagan Anderson placed in the top ten among Missouri high schools for their community project. The team led a coat drive for the PTA Clothing Center and a food drive for needy local families.

Students Recognized in Poetry Contest
Park Hill South graduate Kia Square and Park Hill High School graduate Sergio Flores won their schools’ Poetry Out Loud contests and went on to the regional contest at Park University, where Square took second place.

Lakeview Principal Named Kansas City Secondary Principal of the Year
Lakeview Middle School Principal Becky Kiefer received the Secondary Principal of the Year award from the Greater Kansas City Principal Association. She accepted this honor during the group’s spring banquet.
Park Hill South Graduate Receives Scholarship
Park Hill South graduate Grant Aaron received one of the 2012 Congress-Bundestag scholarships for a full year abroad, living with two different host families and attending school in Germany.

Park Hill School District Earns Distinction in Performance Award
At a banquet in the spring, Park Hill School District accepted the Distinction in Performance Award from the state of Missouri for the 11th year in a row, making it one of the only districts in the state that has earned this honor every year since the state started giving it.

Students Earn Honors at National Speech and Debate Tournament
In Indianapolis, several district debate students found success at the National Forensics League’s National Speech and Debate Tournament, including Park Hill High School’s Graham Deckard, Spencer Culver and Grant Ferland and Park Hill South’s Aditya Joshi and Maisie Baldwin.

Gerner Center in the Running for Top Award
Park Hill’s Gerner Family Early Education Center is one of the top three finalists for the Early Childhood Program of the Year award from the Missouri School Board Association. The Gerner Center also won an honorable mention as one of the top five programs during the 2011-2012 school year.

DECA Students from Both High Schools Score at International Conference
Students from both Park Hill High School and Park Hill South received high marks at the DECA International Career Development Conference. Park Hill High School students Jill Kallenberger, Mitch McMahon, Kate Ryan, Delaney Stevenson, Maddy Dobbie, Brianna Donahue, Chloe Fey and Brieann Stiens went to the international competition, along with Park Hill South student Matt Gandy.

Broadcast Students Win at STN Event
At the Student Television Network’s annual event, several students from the broadcast journalism programs at both high schools took major awards. Park Hill South graduate Jon Holden won first place in weather coverage, and Park Hill High School senior Laura Votruba won first place in live interview coverage. PHHS junior Paxton DiBlasi took second in the nation for weather coverage.

Two District Buildings Receive New Names for the New School Year
At its May 10 meeting, the Board of Education voted to rename two of the district's facilities to honor people who were significant in the district's history.

Approving the recommendation of then-superintendent Dr. Dennis Fisher, the Board acted to rename the Early Childhood Education Center as the Gerner Family Early Education Center and the Park Hill Day School as the Russell Jones Education Center.

Russell Jones was the superintendent of the Parkville School District starting in 1946 and became superintendent of the district when it was formed by a vote of the people in 1951. He served as Park Hill's superintendent until 1969.

The Gerner family owned a farm on the property that now includes Park Hill High School, Congress Middle School, the Early Education Center and the district office. Doris Gerner served on the Board from 1972-1978.

Dedication ceremonies for both buildings will be planned for later this year.

Members of the Jones and Gerner families attended the Board meeting (pictured above).
State Changes Testing Window:
The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education moved the window for schools to take the 2012-2013 state MAP test. Instead of the first two weeks in April, Park Hill elementary and middle schools will take the test sometime between April 29 and May 10. This test is the measure the state uses for Park Hill’s performance.

District Opens Tiffany Ridge Elementary:
When school started on Aug. 15, the Park Hill School District’s 10th elementary school opened its doors for classes for the first time. Tiffany Ridge was designed to be environmentally friendly and energy efficient, and it is expected to save the districts thousands on utilities. Teachers there will use their building to teach students about the environment.

Board Approves Budget and Operational Levy:
In June, the Park Hill Board of Education adopted a $126.8 million operating budget for the 2012-2013 school year. After the district received notice of its local assessed valuation in August, the Board set the operational tax levy for this fiscal year at $4.9264 per $100 of assessed valuation.

This recaptures some of the levy that the voters approved but that earlier Boards had rolled back in better economic times. This will cost a homeowner with a $200,000 home an additional $47 per year, and this means the district will have to use less from its reserves than expected to offset costs for things like the opening of Tiffany Ridge Elementary and the FLiP one-to-one technology pilot. The operational levy is separate from the debt service levy, which will remain at $0.6107 per $100 of assessed valuation. The debt service levy pays for bond issues that voters approved.

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 page 2 for more information.

Community Education:

Online Courses: Take classes right in comfort of your own home at ed2go.com/phcomed.

Stained Glass: Learn Tiffany and leaded methods of stained glass.

Five-Ingredient Meal, Basic Skills Class: In this beginner class, learn basic knife skills and skillet sautéing.

NEW! Using LinkedIn to Search for Employment: Students will learn how to tap into this website to find their next great job.

NEW! Write and Self-Publish: Learn how to make your memoir, poetry, fiction or nonfiction writing interesting to your readers.

NEW! Kansas City Art Institute’s Cartooning for Kids: Create and develop your own cartoon characters.

For more information about Community Education classes, call (816) 359-4060. To view all classes and register, visit www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.
English Landing Elementary students burned energy on the playground during recess.

Prairie Point Elementary students who read during the summer were rewarded with a mad scientist assembly.

Hawthorn Elementary’s new therapy dog, Lotus, greeted students on the first day of school.

Renner Elementary fifth graders each received laptops to use at home and at school as part of the FLIP pilot program (see page 3).

Photos from Around the District:

Students at the Gerner Family Early Education Center gathered items from a nature walk and used them in their collage project the next day.

Park Hill South High School’s flag corps practiced its choreography for marching with the school band.

Renner Elementary fifth graders each received laptops to use at home and at school as part of the FLIP pilot program (see page 3).

Students in the SmartStart summer program, which gives students a learning boost, used laptops to complete assignments.

Line Creek Elementary students enjoyed a healthy school lunch on the first day of school.

Kindergarten students at Chinn Elementary were already learning on their first day of school.

English Landing Elementary students burned energy on the playground during recess.

Prairie Point Elementary students who read during the summer were rewarded with a mad scientist assembly.

Hawthorn Elementary’s new therapy dog, Lotus, greeted students on the first day of school.
 Reserve a Star Box Today!

Watch a high school football game from inside a Star Box at the district stadium with 26 of your friends.

The minimum contribution is $500 per Star Box, and a portion is tax-deductible. Proceeds go to the Education Foundation to fund educational opportunities, to foster innovations in teaching, and to support programs that further educational growth of our students.

Reservations Include:
• Access to one of two Star Boxes
• Football tickets for 26 guests

Call Susan Van Hooser at (816) 359-6227 or email her at vanhoosers@parkhill.k12.mo.us to reserve your Star Box today!

For a schedule of the games and for more details go to www.parkhillfoundation.org

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Mark Your Calendars

Calendar:

SEPT. 14
Park Hill South High School
homecoming game

SEPT. 21
Park Hill High School
homecoming parade and game

OCT. 3-4
high school
parent-teacher conferences

OCT. 5
No school for high school
students and teachers

OCT. 9
Dig for a Cure, PHS vs. PHHS

OCT. 12
End of first quarter

OCT. 15
No school for students

OCT. 19
PHS v. PHHS football game

OCT. 30
Education Foundation Community Breakfast

NOV. 11
Veterans Day

NOV. 21-23
Thanksgiving break

DEC. 7
Christmas on the River

(816) 359-4000
www.parkhill.k12.mo.us

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LEADERSHIP
Dr. Scott Springston, Superintendent
Dr. Jeanette Cowherd, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Jeff Klein, Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services
Dr. Bill Redinger, Assistant Superintendent for HR Services
Dr. Paul Kelly, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Tech.

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