For Savana, a Park Hill High School senior, support from her school helped her achieve success and find her strength. Students learn best when they feel positive about themselves and their futures, which is why the Park Hill School District works to support their mental health and emotional needs.

Savana approached her school social worker, Ms. Torre Tipton, who made her feel comfortable enough to reveal that her mother had disappeared without a word while Savana was spending the night at her friend's house. The stay with her friend's family would stretch into a year, and Savana didn't know if her mother was alive or dead.

Savana told Ms. Tipton how her mother struggled with depression and erratic behavior. She said, “I’m the kid, and I’m supposed to be taken care of by a parent, and Mom’s not there. I was confused.”

Ms. Tipton made sure Savana’s teachers knew, so she could receive ongoing support. All of this made her life feel less chaotic, and she worked hard to improve her grades and make the adults around her proud.

Savana said, “I felt more comfortable in school because I knew that if something in class happened, I could easily come and get help or assistance, so I wasn’t as stressed.”

Ms. Tipton said, “She has grown so much in her confidence. Her grades have improved tremendously, and her self-confidence has grown quite a bit.”

Even though her mom contacted her from another state, Savana still lives with her friend’s family. Several universities accepted her, and she is considering one of the state schools.

Savana told Ms. Tipton, “You guys do a really good job of showing that you care.”

For more information, please see Superintendent Dr. Jeanette Cowherd's letter on Page 2.
Dear Park Hill Family,

As you can read in our front-page story, educators are often students’ first line of defense when they face social or emotional challenges. Our staff members and students share positive and safe relationships, which provide opportunities for our students to learn social and emotional skills that lead to lifelong resilience. Our strategy for serving students’ mental health includes supporting students, training staff and using partnerships to help educate parents on mental health issues.

**Student Support**
- The K-12 counseling curriculum at all our schools includes social-emotional learning.
- We offer the Signs of Suicide Prevention Program in all of our middle schools and high schools.
- Students experiencing mental health crises receive assessments and referrals on-site from a Tri-County Mental Health professional.
- We maintain a Mental Health and Healthy Living web page on our website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us, under Parent Resources.

**Staff Training**
- Our staff members receive training on suicide prevention and mental health.
- All of our school counselors and social workers receive mental health and mindfulness training to give students support and strategies.

**Parent Support**
- We collaborate with Tri-County to provide parent nights to discuss mental health issues.
- We host webinars with local and national experts to share insight on mental health issues with parents.

We recognize a student’s mental health impacts learning and achievement. Thanks to your support, we can continue to make Park Hill a safe, caring environment to learn and help students with their mental health challenges.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeanette Cowherd
Superintendent

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**AROUND PARK HILL**

Second-grade students at Chinn Elementary learned about famous people in history. Oliver Pagel, Dhreya Suresh and Zahria Holbrook put a presentation together on what they learned about Amelia Earhart, a famous pilot.
TOP ACT SCORES
The Park Hill School District once again earned the highest ACT composite scores in the Kansas City, Missouri, region; the scores were also above both the Missouri and national averages.

The district-wide ACT composite score was 21.8, cementing the school district’s spot at the top of the region once again. With nearly every graduating senior taking the standardized test at least once, Park Hill South and Park Hill high schools reported scores of 22.4 and 21.4, respectively. The district’s score also came out ahead of the Missouri average composite score of 20, as well as the national score of 20.8.

TOP AP SCORES
Twenty-two 2018 graduates from Park Hill and Park Hill South high schools received national recognition for their AP scores from the 2017-2018 school year.

ALL-STATE MUSIC HONORS
Five musicians earned top All-State honors: Park Hill South: Robert Traphagan, trombone (first chair) and Kiana Fernandes, clarinet (14th chair). PHHS: Kassidy Wagner, piccolo (first chair); Blake Harris, timpani (first chair); and Arkadeep Ghosh, trombone (second chair).

NATIONAL JOURNALISM HONORS
Four journalism students from Park Hill South earned national recognition at the Journalism Education Association/National Scholastic Press Association Fall National High School Journalism Convention. Superior award: Noelle Alviz-Gransee; Excellent award: Caroline Morgan; Honorable Mention award: Annie Buckles and Kendra Kernel.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT AWARD
Alexis Nigro, Mary Garrett and Jacob Womack from Park Hill South earned third place in Missouri Interscholastic Press Association’s Annual PSA Challenge. The challenge’s topic was single-use plastics and plastic pollution.

GOOD CITIZEN AWARD
Savannah Riffle from PHHS and Lauren Ingraham from Park Hill South received the 2019 Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen Award. The award recognizes high school seniors who demonstrate good citizenship qualities in their homes, schools and communities.

TOP AREA PRINCIPAL
Dr. Steve Archer, Union Chapel Elementary principal, was selected as the 2019 Clay-Platte Missouri Distinguished Principal, which highlights his excellent educational leadership.
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!

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
Find us on Facebook and YouTube, and follow us on Twitter and Instagram at @ParkHillSchools.

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 Spectrum Cable channel 18 and Google Fiber TV channel 140.

Park Hill Listens
Share your comments, suggestions for improvement and even your compliments.

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Park Hill High School junior Ayden Mertz (right) shared his capstone project with local pharmacist Brett Nelson during an evening highlighting our Professional Studies Program. Ayden interned at St. Luke’s Medical Center last semester in the Aspiring Medical Professionals strand of Professional Studies, and his project highlighted all that he’s learned. Overall, the program had 130 students from Park Hill High School and Park Hill South High School.