Getting Better All the Time:
Park Hill Schools Work on Continuous Improvement

Even though Ingram's magazine recently named the Park Hill School District the top Missouri school district in the Kansas City area, our schools are still working to be better.

From the preschoolers at the Gerner Center to the administrators at the district office, everyone in the Park Hill School District is working on continuous improvement.

There are charts on classroom walls, colored in with crayons, showing students' progress toward their goals. There are teachers collaborating with each other to find the best ways to help their students. And there are reports to the Board of Education each month, sharing how district programs' results stack up against their targets.

In addition to the individual students, teachers and staff, the district as a whole is working on continuous improvement as well.

Using quality tools and the criteria from the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, we are improving our processes for everything we do.

We take feedback from students and parents, and we use it to set our district goals. Then we find measures to track our progress toward those goals. Based on our results, we find ways to improve our work processes.

To get some expert feedback on our efforts, we are applying to the Excellence in Missouri Foundation. This group will analyze our leadership, strategy, customer engagement, knowledge management, workforce environment, operations and results.

Then we'll receive a detailed report that will help us with our continuous improvement efforts, so we can keep getting better.
Dear Park Hill Community,

I am pleased to report to you that it has been a successful school year throughout the Park Hill School District. Our students continue to perform at a high level academically, with more graduates than ever qualifying for scholarships and post-secondary training programs. We are proud of the 2015 graduates and wish them a successful future!

At the district level, we continue to identify new ways to wisely use our tax dollars and improve the work we do each day (please see the story about continuous improvement on the front page).

As many of you know, I was recently named by the Board of Education as the interim superintendent for the 2015-2016 school year. I appreciate the Board’s confidence in me, and I am excited to work with Park Hill’s team of dedicated professionals to move through this transition in a seamless manner.

I want to assure you that our focus remains on providing a meaningful and relevant education to our students, and we are continuing to Build Successful Futures – Each Student – Every Day.

Thank you for your continued support of the Park Hill School District!

Sincerely,
Jeanette Cowherd

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**Board Plans Superintendent Search**

Board of Education President Boon Lee said the Board will start the superintendent selection process in the fall. This will include hiring a firm with expertise in conducting a national superintendent search, in order to access a wider pool of the best candidates. Lee said the Board will consider an internal candidate if any apply.

“We will continue to keep the public informed as we make progress in this process,” Lee said. “We will also seek input from our stakeholders about the leadership attributes and personal characteristics they desire in the new superintendent.”

**District Studies Demographics and Enrollment Projections**

At a recent Board meeting, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Paul Kelly presented his annual demographic profile, a study of enrollment data and trends for the school district and community. Enrollment continues to grow at a slow, steady pace.

Dr. Kelly said the district will use the report’s enrollment projections, along with the recently approved long-range facilities plan, to help the district plan for the future. Both the demographic profile and the long-range facilities plan are on the district website, under “District Information.”

**District Readyies Budget for 2015-2016 School Year**

Dr. Kelly recently reported to the Board about revenue and expenditure projections for the 2015-2016 budget. He also shared that it appears the district will bring in more revenue and spend less in 2014-2015 than expected. Dr. Kelly will make a final recommendation to the Board about the upcoming budget on June 25.

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.
Students Win PTA Reflections Contest
Park Hill South junior Grant Pace, Park Hill High School sophomore Nathaniel Cline and Chinn Elementary fifth grader Sailor Dreps had first-place winning entries in the Missouri PTA Reflections contest and advanced to the national contest. Pace won the top prize in fine art at the national level.

South Teacher is Coach of the Year
South teacher and boys basketball coach Daniel Parra is the 2015 Paul Lambert Coach of the Year. The 2014-2015 season was Coach Parra’s 15th as a high school head basketball coach and his first at South.

Journalism Students Win State Awards
Students on the newspaper, yearbook and broadcast staffs at both high schools brought home awards from the Missouri Interscholastic Press Association’s Journalism Day 2015, held at the University of Missouri-Columbia. See the list of students under “News” at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Students Named to MO Scholars 100
South senior Jake Mazeitis and PHHS seniors Annie Chen and Mrudula Gandham are a part of the 2015 Missouri Scholars 100, a statewide program honoring 100 of Missouri’s top academic students in the graduating class of 2015. South senior Nicholas Eischens earned an honorable mention in the 2015 Missouri Scholars 100 program.

MO Scholars Academy Students Named
The students are Jasmine Crawford, Brett Francis, Claire Riddell and Carson Schutter from South and Dayten Rose, Tessa Mussman and Korinne Masters from PHHS were selected to the Missouri Scholars Academy.

Students Win Broadcast Award
South’s broadcast program “South Side Scoop” will receive a Student Pillar of Excellence award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, which is the same organization that gives the Emmy Award.

First Flags: The Park Hill High School Winter Guard placed first at the state competition in Springfield, Mo. The winter guard instructor is Chelsea Mogg.

DECA Students Go to Top Conference
Several PHHS students qualified for the International Career Development Conference in Orlando, Fl. See the list of students under “News” at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Senior is Debate Student of the Year
South senior Jake Mazeitis received the Heart of America District Student of the Year from the National Speech and Debate Association for his success and commitment to debate.

Students Qualify for National SkillsUSA
PHHS junior Carter Kreutziger, senior Hannah Raynor and South junior Daireus Thomas qualified for the national SkillsUSA competition by placing first at state competition. Students elected PHHS junior Abigale Leu a Missouri officer for SkillsUSA.

Music Students Earn Honors
Band, orchestra and choir students from both high schools earned top honors at the Missouri State High School Activities Association District Music Festival and Large Ensemble Festival. See the list of students under “News” at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Students Qualify for Debate Tourneys
Several students qualified to compete in the National Forensic League’s National Speech and Debate Tournament and the MSHSAA State Speech and Debate Tournament. See the list of students under “News” at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

South Student Council Earns Award
South’s student council received the Missouri Association of Student Councils Gold Award. The students also hosted councils from across the state when the state conference came to South.

And Much More!
We have so many exciting student and staff success stories, we could not fit all of them in this issue. Watch for more this summer!
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!

All Students Must Verify Residency

Missouri law requires that we educate only students who live in the Park Hill School District. This is one reason we are increasing our residency checks to make sure our students live in our district.

In order to be more efficient with taxpayer dollars, we must ensure all students live in Park Hill as required by state law.

We have been verifying residency of all newly enrolled students and of returning students in third, seventh and ninth grades. We will now verify residency for all students.

We will provide plenty of opportunities during the summer to complete this step, since students cannot start school without this verification.

For more information about verifying your residency, including what to bring as proof of residency, look at the district website under “Parent Resources.”

The Art of Business

Park Hill South student Alaina Toliver helped press designs into T-shirts for Panther Prints, which is a collaboration between students in the marketing, design and career connections special education classes. The students learn hands-on job skills while keeping school dollars for club T-shirts in the school.