In today’s colleges and workplaces, work involves computers. But in many Park Hill classrooms, there just aren’t enough computers for our students. This means our teachers are stuck using old teaching methods, where they stand and lecture at students and find it difficult to meet all the different learning needs of their students.

However, in our Future Learner Project, or FLiP, classrooms, teachers create a more interactive learning environment, and students take responsibility for their learning. By using computers, teachers can keep students engaged and provide more individualized instruction.

Park Hill plans to expand FLiP to all students. Right now, each fifth grader has a laptop. This one-to-one model will include sixth grade next year. The following year, seventh and eighth graders will all have computers. In the 2016-2017 school year, all students from fifth through 12th grade will have a laptop to use. Already, we have a computer for every four students in kindergarten through second grade, and we have a computer for every two students in third and fourth grades.

To pay for the staggered, four-year rollout of FLiP, the Board of Education first made cuts to the district budget to free up funds, shifted money from the budget for traditional textbooks, and even started exploring an advertising program to bring in more revenue.

When this wasn’t enough, the Board put a question on the April 8 ballot, asking for a 32-cent levy increase.

The expert said Park Hill has very safe schools, but there were some suggestions to make us even safer if there is ever a crisis. These included improvements to our building access controls, video surveillance, emergency communication equipment and threat reporting systems.

While most proceeds from the levy increase would go to teaching 21st-century skills through FLiP, the rest would move these safety projects ahead.
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, Instagram account or Google+ page. The links are on our website, www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

FIRST HAND E-MAIL NEWSLETTER
Get 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. You can see our videos on the district website at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us, on YouTube and on Time Warner Cable’s channel 18.

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.

Enroll Your Kindergartner Now

Children who turn five on or before July 31 are eligible for kindergarten for the 2014-2015 school year. Parents will need to bring their child’s certified, state-issued birth certificate, immunization records and two proofs of residency to enroll.

Please check the district website at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us to get the enrollment packet and locate your school, or call (816) 359-4000 for more information.

Mark your calendar for the Kindergarten Roundup event at your elementary school on Monday, May 5 from 5:30 - 7 p.m.
Q: What are the costs for FLiP?
A: In addition to the costs for laptops, we must budget for the necessary technology support to make sure the devices work properly, and we must invest in training to help our teachers learn how to successfully update their instruction techniques.

Q: What is the actual language on the ballot?
A: “Shall the Park Hill School District of Platte County, Missouri be authorized to increase its adjusted operating tax levy 32 cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation, and to use such funds for instructional technology programs and improvements (including the Future Learner Project, “FLiP”), safety programs and improvements, and the operation of its schools? If this proposition is approved, the adjusted operating tax levy of the District is estimated to increase from $4.9217 currently to $5.2417 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.”

Q: What is the actual language on the ballot?
A: “Shall the Park Hill School District of Platte County, Missouri be authorized to increase its adjusted operating tax levy 32 cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation, and to use such funds for instructional technology programs and improvements (including the Future Learner Project, “FLiP”), safety programs and improvements, and the operation of its schools? If this proposition is approved, the adjusted operating tax levy of the District is estimated to increase from $4.9217 currently to $5.2417 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.”

Q: What are the costs for FLiP?
A: We are still working with law enforcement and district administrators to begin an advertising program to start bringing in additional revenue.

As a result of careful planning, the district is getting more for less money.

For example, the district found savings by
- Reducing administrative costs
- Cutting two percent from non-personnel expenditures
- Reallocation of funds from textbooks to online resources
- Switching from a law firm to in-house counsel
- Using purchasing cards to get rebates on regular district expenditures
- Taking advantage of interest rates and selling bonds ahead of schedule

Q: If we know that we need to do certain things for our safety program, why don’t we just drop everything else and do those things?
A: We are still working with law enforcement and district stakeholders to go through the dozens of possible solutions to the suggestions the safety audit presented to us in the categories above. We have an existing budget to address safety improvements, but the levy would allow us to accelerate our implementation.

“Our Hill is already safe,” said Brad Spicer, the national expert who conducted our safety audit. “This is just taking steps to make kids even safer.”

Q: Why did we start with the elementary grades instead of the high schools?
A: The national experts at Educational Collaborators said the most successful model is starting with the fifth grade, where we teach most the subjects in one classroom. Fifth graders are sophisticated enough to make use of the technology and young enough to be open to a new way of learning. Rolling out the other grades a little at a time allows us to ramp up our technical support and teacher training to make sure we are ready to be successful as the program expands.

Q: Why did we start with the elementary grades instead of the high schools?
A: The national experts at Educational Collaborators said the most successful model is starting with the fifth grade, where we teach most the subjects in one classroom. Fifth graders are sophisticated enough to make use of the technology and young enough to be open to a new way of learning. Rolling out the other grades a little at a time allows us to ramp up our technical support and teacher training to make sure we are ready to be successful as the program expands.

Q: Why did we start with the elementary grades instead of the high schools?
A: The national experts at Educational Collaborators said the most successful model is starting with the fifth grade, where we teach most the subjects in one classroom. Fifth graders are sophisticated enough to make use of the technology and young enough to be open to a new way of learning. Rolling out the other grades a little at a time allows us to ramp up our technical support and teacher training to make sure we are ready to be successful as the program expands.

Q: Didn’t voters authorize a $4.99 operating tax levy in 2002? Why is it so much lower now?
A: Since 2002, the Board took voluntary rollbacks when we did not need the entire levy and complied with the state’s requirement that we roll back the levy when local property assessments increase. This is to prevent districts from benefitting from these reassessments. In recent years, we needed the entire amount, so our levy is now at $4.92, the ceiling set by the state auditor.

Q: How will we protect the computers from being lost, damaged or stolen?
A: So far, in the pilot and the first full year of implementation, the students are amazingly responsible with their laptops. However, accidents do happen, and our lease agreement allows for replacement of computers. If the problem is negligence, our students’ families are financially responsible.

Q: How will we protect the computers from being lost, damaged or stolen?
A: So far, in the pilot and the first full year of implementation, the students are amazingly responsible with their laptops. However, accidents do happen, and our lease agreement allows for replacement of computers. If the problem is negligence, our students’ families are financially responsible.

Q: How will we protect the computers from being lost, damaged or stolen?
A: So far, in the pilot and the first full year of implementation, the students are amazingly responsible with their laptops. However, accidents do happen, and our lease agreement allows for replacement of computers. If the problem is negligence, our students’ families are financially responsible.

Q: How will we protect the computers from being lost, damaged or stolen?
A: So far, in the pilot and the first full year of implementation, the students are amazingly responsible with their laptops. However, accidents do happen, and our lease agreement allows for replacement of computers. If the problem is negligence, our students’ families are financially responsible.

Q: How will we protect the computers from being lost, damaged or stolen?
A: So far, in the pilot and the first full year of implementation, the students are amazingly responsible with their laptops. However, accidents do happen, and our lease agreement allows for replacement of computers. If the problem is negligence, our students’ families are financially responsible.

Q: How will we protect the computers from being lost, damaged or stolen?
A: So far, in the pilot and the first full year of implementation, the students are amazingly responsible with their laptops. However, accidents do happen, and our lease agreement allows for replacement of computers. If the problem is negligence, our students’ families are financially responsible.

Q: How will we protect the computers from being lost, damaged or stolen?
A: So far, in the pilot and the first full year of implementation, the students are amazingly responsible with their laptops. However, accidents do happen, and our lease agreement allows for replacement of computers. If the problem is negligence, our students’ families are financially responsible.

Q: How will we protect the computers from being lost, damaged or stolen?
A: So far, in the pilot and the first full year of implementation, the students are amazingly responsible with their laptops. However, accidents do happen, and our lease agreement allows for replacement of computers. If the problem is negligence, our students’ families are financially responsible.
District Earns International Budget Award for Effective Use of Taxpayer Dollars

For the seventh year in a row, the Park Hill School District received the Meritorious Budget Award from the Association of School Business Officials International. The district received this award because its 2013-2014 budget demonstrates effective use of taxpayer dollars in a user-friendly format and adheres to strict standards for good fiscal management.

Broadcast Students Chosen to Present at Conference

The Student Television Network chose 15 students to be presenters at its national conference. Park Hill South High School junior Shafer Schuetz will present at the closing ceremonies, and Park Hill High School sophomore Jordan Elder will introduce the keynote speaker.

Students Place at DECA

Many district high school students competed at the District DECA Career Development Conference against students from 16 high schools in northwest Missouri. District winners qualified for the state DECA Career Development Conference.

Student Advances to National Spelling Bee

Plaza Middle School sixth grader Peyton Wiewel won the Northwest Regional Bee and will now advance to the National Bee in D.C. Park Hill School District students took three of the top four spots at the Platte County Spelling Bee. Wiewel (right) won the county bee, and Congress Middle School eighth grader Ashley Gilland (second from right) took second. Plaza sixth grader Quinn Bieberly (left) took fourth.

Students Qualify for State SkillsUSA Competition

Twelve Park Hill School District students qualified for the state SkillsUSA competition through their performance at the district competition that took place in February. Those that place first at the state competition will advance to the national competition this June at the Kansas City Convention Center.

PHHS Wrestling Wins State

The PHHS wrestling team took first at state for the second year in a row. The team included Ethan Koan, Canton Marriott, John Ernesto, Ke-Shawn Hayes, Sean Hosford, Colston DiBlasi, Emmerson Gardner and Anthony Enriquez. DiBlasi, Hayes and Hosford took individual state titles.

South Girls Swim Team Places High at State

Park Hill South’s girls 200 medley relay team took first place in state swimming. The team included Tori Beeler, Anna Riekhof, Helen Yeater and Olivia Mclain. Beeler also won the state championship in the 200 individual medley.

Winter Guard Takes First

The PHHS winter guard took first place at the MCGGA competition in Smithville.
Show Me the Data About the Levy
See How Our Levy Measures Up and How We Measure the Success of FLiP

21st Century Learning Skill Index

Our students who participated in the FLiP pilot showed significantly higher levels of problem solving, engagement, communication, creativity and relevancy than the students who weren’t in FLiP last year.

Growth Scores

Students in the FLiP pilot grew more in their performance on the state MAP test than students in the other schools, reversing the pattern from before the pilot. (normal curve equivalent)
NEWS WORTH KNOWING
Important Information from the Park Hill District

Board Extends Dr. Springston’s Contract
The Park Hill Board of Education President Susan Newburger announced that the Board voted unanimously to extend Superintendent Dr. Scott Springston’s contract through 2016-2017. “We were pleased to offer Dr. Springston this extension, and we look forward to working with him for years to come,” Newburger said.

Board Approves Summer School
The Board voted to approve a new program for summer school, which will include partnering with the Newton Alliance, providing transportation services and extending to a full-day program. Summer school will start the day after the last day of school. Right now, the last day of school is a half day on June 2, but if there are more snow days, this could change. Visit the district website for more information at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.

Board Hears Student Residency Report
Dr. Josh Colvin, director of student services, reported on the district’s residency program, sharing that we have more than 500 students who attend our schools because they live with district residents, either with or without their families. To ensure that all students in Park Hill really live in the district, he proposed requiring all families to verify their residency each year.

Northland CAPS to Expand
Donna Deeds from the Northland Center for Advanced Professional Studies, or Northland CAPS, reported to the Board that this program is already making a difference for students. High school students in this program spend their class time immersed in a local business, learning job skills for high-demand careers by producing real-world projects. Next year, Northland CAPS will expand, and career fields will include engineering, technology, healthcare and business.

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.

Fund Classrooms, InvestNOW

INVESTNOW

Make a difference in Park Hill in an area that is meaningful to you. Through the Park Hill Education Foundation’s InvestNOW program, you can now choose one of several teacher requests to help fund.

This online grant program allows you to help meet the educational needs of students by funding a specific classroom request from a teacher. Search the needs online and partially or fully fund your chosen grant online or through the mail. Educators can submit throughout the year, so be sure to visit our website often and InvestNOW at www.parkhillfoundation.org.

New Courses Coming Soon

The team in Park Hill Community Education, including administrative assistants Jennie Fortuna (left) and Carmen Scott, is hard at work preparing the summer course catalog. Watch for exciting new opportunities to learn new skills or get some exercise. If you would like to teach a course, contact Community Education at (816) 359-4060. Visit us online at www.parkhill.k12.mo.us.
Line Creek Elementary Student Ambassadors organized a coin drive to benefit the Park Hill Clothing Center. The drive raised $1,096.

Graden teachers Stacy Mills (left), Brenda Vernon (center) and Tara Garcia received four Park Hill Education Foundation grants totaling $5,184 for their classroom program, “Watch My Language.”

Orchestra students from both high schools visited Plaza Middle School students to promote the middle-school music program. The older students played for the sixth graders and showed them how the instruments work.

English Landing Elementary and Lakeview Middle School held a blood drive for the American Red Cross in honor of English Landing Media Specialist Angela Van Batavia, who needs regular blood transfusions to treat her common variable immune deficiency.

Union Chapel Elementary students surprised their PE teacher, Jason Parr, who is running the Boston Marathon. The students, parents and staff raised funds for his charity team and wore “Team Parr” T-shirts.

Photos from Around the District:

Hawthorn first graders performed a bedtime-themed musical for their classmates.

Chinn Elementary first graders Morgan Heilman and Erik Mason practiced comparing numbers to see which is greater, using the interactive board in their classroom.

Gerner Center students had a superhero-themed celebration and dance party as a reward for their positive behavior.

Generation teachers Stacy Mills (left), Brenda Vernon (center) and Tara Garcia received four Park Hill Education Foundation grants totaling $5,184 for their classroom program, “Watch My Language.”
The April 8 ballot will ask voters for a levy increase to expand our Future Learner Project, or FLiP.

This will include technology, technology support and instructional support. It would also pay for important upgrades to our district safety and security.

Research shows that jobs demand 21st-century skills, which our students will learn through FLiP.

Get more information on pages 1, 3 and 5.

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!