FLiP Changes Improve Learning

Last year, when Southeast Elementary teacher Megan Beck taught her fifth graders in a different district about Native American tribes, it was a long process.

Researching the tribes and regions took a while, because students didn’t have enough computers. Students worked in groups, and many students stepped back and allowed others to take charge of the project.

This year at Southeast was different. The class not only covered the lesson two weeks faster than last year’s students, they learned more and got more out of the experience.

Students each had a laptop to conduct research, and they shared their findings with each other using online tools. Those who might have been tempted to let others do the work now had the opportunity to shine, as technology allowed each student to take a role in the project.

Because they were taking responsibility for their learning, students got excited about the lesson and took on more work than Ms. Beck assigned. One student discovered that some Native Americans lived in long houses, so he did his own research about those dwellings and how people lived in them.

And while they were learning the social studies lesson, students were also learning important digital citizenship lessons.

“Kids took ownership of their research and took pride in having accurate information from good sources,” Ms. Beck said.

The Park Hill School District’s Future Learner Project, or FLiP, is making a big difference in classrooms like Ms. Beck’s.

By changing instruction to make it more student-driven, Park Hill teachers are helping students get a deeper understanding of their lessons. Providing each student with a laptop for use at school and at home allows teachers to spend more class time helping students understand concepts and less time lecturing.

Right now, all fifth-grade classrooms in the district have a laptop checked out to each student, and several middle- and high-school classrooms have class sets of laptops. Over the next three years, Park Hill will expand FLiP to all grades.
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.

Help Us Prepare for the Future

Please join us on Engage Park Hill, our new online engagement tool provided by MindMixer.

On this site, you can join the discussion of our long-range facilities planning process. Give us your ideas, or just comment and vote on other people’s ideas.

This feedback will help us set the direction for the district’s facilities over the next several years.

Join in at engageparkhill.mindmixer.com!
Scores Show High Achievement
Park Hill Achievement Results Rank Among Highest of Comparison Districts

The scores tell the story: Park Hill School District students are learning, achieving and growing, and they are doing better than students in comparable districts.

To find out how well our students are learning, we use a whole menu of assessments.

When we look at all our results from the different tests, there are three main things we look for: how much students grow each year, how well our achievement compares to comparable districts, and which direction our scores are trending.

In growth, Park Hill students not only meet our expectations in every subject and at every level, they actually get added value, growing even more than expected in most areas.

When we compare ourselves with other, similar districts, we are not only above average, we are in the top third in every single category.

And our scores are heading in the right direction, with stable results or even improvements.

In fact, in 27 different areas, our scores were the best they’ve ever been.

Although we use this information from our assessments to share our performance with the community, the primary purpose for these tests is making our schools better for students.

Teachers and district leaders take the results of student assessments and they use the information to change their teaching practices and to identify areas students need more assistance.

“We’re trying to use this information to make teaching better and to make sure students are as prepared as possible when they graduate.”

- Dr. Mike Kimbrel

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“We’re trying to use this information to make teaching better and to make sure students are as prepared as possible when they graduate,” said Dr. Mike Kimbrel, the district’s director of research, evaluation and assessment.
Students Score Big On AP College Exams

More than 100 students from the Park Hill School District received AP Scholar Awards for demonstrating college-level achievement through Advanced Placement courses and exams. AP exams, which students take in May after completing college-level courses, are graded on a five-point scale (five being the highest). Most colleges and universities award credit, advanced placement or both for scores of three or higher.

High Schools Raise Money for Cancer Charities

The Kick Out Cancer soccer game between Park Hill High School and Park Hill South at the district soccer stadium supported PHHS student Nick Hibbeler and Park Hill South Coach Joe Toigo’s wife, Kim, who are both battling cancer. The game raised $4,791.50, which was donated to the Sporting Kansas City Victory Project.

Duke Talent Identification Program Honors Students

Several students earned academic excellence in the Duke University Talent Identification Program. Many seventh and eighth grade students from last year took the ACT or the SAT tests, which are intended for college-bound high school students. Several students earned recognition from Duke for their high scores.

The students from Lakeview Middle School who earned state recognition are Jonathan Amthor, Meghan Cashell, Sophia Dominguez-Heithoff, Marti Heit, Anna Hermelink, Alec Higgins, Alexandra Linsday, Mara Peek, Jackson Pielstick, Kaitlyn Pruett, Robert Showers, Abigail Waller and Ethan Wissmann, and the students who earned grand recognition are Robert Showers and Alexandra Lindsay.

The students from Congress Middle School who earned state recognition are Peyton Criddlebaugh, Grace Fink, Gillian Hance, John Hurd, Justin Keehler, Bret Marckx, Lauren McBride, Declan O’Connell, Hannah Scott, Kai Shafe, Lawrence Suba, Jackson Turner and Zachary Weinreich, and the student who earned grand recognition is Lawrence Suba.

Sophie's Run Gives Proceeds to District Special Education Team

The Sophie’s Run, a 5K run and walk around Lake Waukomis on June 8, benefited Park Hill’s assistive technology program. The run, which honors the memory of student Sophie Edwards, helps provide hardware and software for students with special needs to help them communicate, use computers, see, work and learn.
Park Hill South Student to Compete at Special Olympics USA Games
Team Missouri selected Park Hill South senior Morgan Coombe to compete with the bocce team in the Special Olympics 2014 USA Games in Princeton, N.J. Coombe is one of 110 female athletes from around the country selected to compete in bocce ball and one of 3,500 athletes to compete overall. She lettered in Special Olympics at Park Hill South.

Volleyball Players Raise Money to Fight Cancer
Park Hill High School and Park Hill South High School girls volleyball teams raised $1,958 at their Dig for Pink game this October. They donated the funds to the Side-Out Foundation, which fights breast cancer.

Twelve Students Named National Merit Honorees
Several Park Hill School District seniors scored so high on their PSAT exams last year that they received recognition from the National Merit Scholarship program this year.

Five are 2014 National Merit Semi-Finalists: Sarah Hardin, Stephen Komar, Emerson Lee, Adam Marrs and Joseph Philpot from Park Hill South. They are among approximately 16,000 semi-finalists who now have the opportunity to compete for 8,000 National Merit scholarships worth more than $35 million next spring.

The National Merit Commended Scholars are Sarah Hogan, Caitlin Warren and Andrew Herdmn from Park Hill High School and Skye Tackkett from Park Hill South.

Nathan Keller from Park Hill High School is a National Achievement Scholar.

Michaela Davis from Park Hill South and Wisdom Nwike from Park Hill High School are Outstanding Participants in the National Achievement Scholar program.

Students Earn Grant for Anti-Drug Campaign
Park Hill High School students received a $300 grant for their campaign against teen drug and alcohol use. Tri-County Mental Health awarded the grant to only two schools out of all the schools that attended this summer's Northland Leadership Summit.

High School Marching Bands Earn High Marks
Both high schools' marching bands ended the season in triumph. The Park Hill High School band won the best marching trophy and took first place in the field show at the 5A competition in Trenton, Mo., where the school's drumline took second place in the indoor category. PHHS also took sixth place at a competition in Lincoln, Neb. Park Hill South's band took second place in the 4A division and third place overall at the Missouri Western State University Marching Festival Tournament of Champions.

Park Hill Teacher Selected as one of 50 Emerging Leaders
English Landing Elementary media center specialist Angela Van Batavia is one of the American Library Association’s 2014 Class of Emerging Leaders. The ALA chose one Emerging Leader from each state. Through this honor, she will work with problem-solving groups, network with peers and have an opportunity to serve the profession in a leadership capacity.

Dr. Miller Named Missouri Assistant Principal of the Year
Park Hill High School Assistant Principal Dr. Deborah Miller is the 2014 Missouri Assistant Principal of the Year.

An official from the Missouri Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) surprised her with the award, saying Dr. Miller provides collaborative leadership; she is involved in curriculum, instruction and assessment; and she personalizes education for students at PHHS.

PHHS Principal Dr. Brad Kincheloe said, “Dr. Miller has been key in establishing and broadening a culture of high academic expectations. She has deepened our culture of academic success in traditional, college-bound students and has been even more successful in broadening that culture of success in college and career preparation in historically less successful populations.”

Dr. Miller came to the Park Hill School District in 1996 as a counselor, and she became an assistant principal in 2002. She will be honored the MASSP fall conference and is now in the running for the National Assistant Principal of the Year award.
Meet Classroom Needs Through InvestNOW

In honor of our 15th Anniversary, the Park Hill Education Foundation is pleased to introduce InvestNOW, an online grant program that provides a wonderful opportunity for individuals and organizations to help meet the educational needs of students in the Park Hill School District.

Teachers can ask for help with an educational project that is not covered with district funds and donors can make it a reality.

Search the online grant requests and then donate online or via mail. Once a grant is fully funded, the educators will implement the project. Educators can submit proposals throughout the year, so be sure to visit our website often and InvestNOW at www.parkhillfoundation.org.
Educators from Honduras visited the Park Hill School District and Renner Elementary through the Friends United program to learn about U.S. education.

Chinn Elementary students celebrated World School Milk Day with a cup of cold milk and a mustache.

Veterans and students stood in honor of those who gave their lives for our country during a performance of “Taps” at the Park Hill High School Veterans Day assembly. Schools throughout the district participated in Veterans Day with various celebrations.

Lakeview Middle School science teacher Vanessa Prindle was thrilled to find out she was selected for the Future Learner Project (FLiP).

Graden Elementary students celebrated Grandparents Day with their guests at lunch.

Hawthorn Elementary students pledged to stay away from drugs and bullying during Red Ribbon Week.

Union Chapel Elementary second graders participated in a fall fitness fun run around the playground walking trail.

The Farmhouse restaurant Chef Michael Foust trained Park Hill food service staff on the best way to prepare fresh, local, seasonal produce.

Lakeview Middle School science teacher Vanessa Prindle was thrilled to find out she was selected for the Future Learner Project (FLiP).
Through partnerships with the Platte County Sheriff’s Department and Riverside Public Safety, the Park Hill School District has police officers in our high schools and our middle schools. Officers educate students about safety issues in addition to their law enforcement duties.

(Pictured) Park Hill South School Resource Officer Matt Westrich discussed building safety with seniors Blake Youngdahl and Olivia Ortiz.

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!