Levy Would Fund FLiP & Safety

The way we must prepare students for the college and careers of today and tomorrow looks entirely different from how we prepared students in the past.

Our Future Learner Project, or FLiP, is changing our classrooms to provide students with the 21st-century skills colleges and employers demand.

In addition, as we constantly strive to keep our schools safe to learn and work, we find there is even more we must do.

To address these needs (see page 3 for the specifics), the Park Hill Board of Education looked for funding.

The Board found efficiencies in the budget (see page 5 for more details) and directed administrators to begin an advertising program to start bringing in additional revenue.

But this did not cover the need, so the Board put a question on the April 8 ballot asking voters to increase the levy by 32 cents.

The Board has the opportunity to only take half of that amount from 2014-2016, because the district will not need the full amount right away. The Board has a history of only taking what we need and no more.

Park Hill’s levy is lower than most other districts in the area, ranking 11 out of 12.

Southeast Elementary fifth grader Kennedy Berry finds learning more engaging in her Future Learner Project classroom.
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 children’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.
FLiP Makes a Difference in Learning
Future Learner Project Provides Deeper Knowledge and Teaches 21st-Century Skills

As Robin Smith, an executive at Cerner Corporation, recently told us, “Technology is in everything we do today. Any industry a student might want to go into in their future, whether it’s banking, finance, retail, art or sports, has technology fundamentally imbedded in it now. If we don’t understand what it’s like to not only use technology well but also create and innovate around it, we’re not going to be able to compete in the global economy.”

We have a slow, careful implementation plan that started with a pilot program last school year and moved to all fifth grade classrooms this year. Next year, FLiP will include sixth grade, and in 2015-2016, it will add seventh and eighth grades. In 2016-2017, the high school grades will have FLiP as well.

This methodical approach and our focus on changing the classroom rather than just adding devices set us apart from the many other districts who are also adding classroom technology.

To make sure FLiP works well in our classrooms, we use data to measure our success and make improvements at each step before moving forward (see the levy page on the district website for our data so far).

One of the reasons FLiP is working so well is that we are investing not only in devices for our students but in training for our teachers to help them create classrooms where students get involved with their learning.

We are also investing in technical support and infrastructure, so that the devices we use in our classrooms work properly when we need them.

This is why the levy costs not only include the laptops, they also include the necessary technology support to make sure the devices work properly, and they include training to help our teachers learn how to successfully update their instruction.

Safety Comes First
Park Hill Works on Security Improvements

Over the last few years, Park Hill invested in safer entrances, video cameras and other security enhancements, but we are always looking for ways to improve our school safety.

Each year, we evaluate our crisis response plan, but after the tragedy at Sandy Hook, we commissioned an independent safety audit of our buildings and our security practices. We learned that we were doing many things right, but there was also room for improvement.

This is why the levy question includes funds for improvements to our building access controls, video surveillance, emergency communication systems and threat reporting systems.

English Landing Elementary teacher Kitchell Schneider worked with fifth grader Alexzander Smith as he collaborated with other students on his writing assignment.

Campus Supervisor Miguel Gonzalez monitors the security cameras at Park Hill South High School to help keep the school safe.
High School Students Named Quest Scholars
Park Hill South senior Mariah Ramirez and PHHS senior Caitlin Warren are national Quest Scholars. This award includes scholarships to some of the nation’s best colleges and universities.

Students Excel at National Journalism Competition
Students earned top awards at the JEA-NSPA National High School Journalism Convention. Park Hill South senior Derek Braun earned first place for his newspaper page-one design, and Park Hill South’s “South Side Scoop” won the Pacemaker award, NSPA’s highest honor.

Seniors Named U.S. Presidential Scholar Semifinalists
Park Hill South seniors Emerson Lee and Joe Philpot are semifinalists in the 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars program. They are two out of 560 semifinalists in the nation picked for academic achievements, leadership qualities, personal character and involvement in community and school activities.

District Teachers Receive National Board Certification
Teachers Jessica Morgan, Southeast Elementary; Megan Palmer, Park Hill South High School; and Pamela Carver, Prairie Point Elementary, earned National Board Certification. There are now 67 teachers in Park Hill with this achievement.

Park Hill South Student Earns Perfect ACT Score
Park Hill South senior Stephen Komar scored a perfect 36 on his ACT this year, making him one of only 1,162 of the more than 1.8 million students who took the test to earn a perfect composite score.

Students Win Regional Scholastic Writing Awards
PHHS senior Candice McCoy and Park Hill South junior Mikala Petillo received 2014 Missouri Regional Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Petillo received the prestigious Gold Key award and McCoy received an honorable mention for her work.

Elementary Principals Receive Regional Awards
Tiffany Ridge Elementary Principal Shawn Fitzmorris is this year’s Clay-Platte Distinguished Principal for the Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals. Chinn Elementary Principal Lee Heinrikson received the Clay-Platte Outstanding New Principal award.

GroundsKeeper Honored
The Park Hill School District’s Head Groundskeeper Eric Jones won the Field of the Year Award for the softball field at Park Hill South High School from the Sports Turf Managers Association.
Alumni Hall of Fame Honors Excellence


Bucker is the dean of the College of the Arts at Portland State University in Oregon, and his career achievements include several leadership positions in academic arts programs throughout the country.

Garcia is an award-winning teacher here in the Park Hill School District. In addition to leading her third graders at Graden Elementary, she is a recognized leader in the district, serving as a professional resource to other teachers.

McLendon recently retired from a career in law enforcement, which included serving as the assistant chief of police in North Kansas City and serving in leadership roles throughout the region and the state.

In addition to the alumni inductions, we honored several others at the January ceremony.

We gave the Park Hill Business of the Year award to Reed Portrait Group and the Partner of the Year award to Tri-County Mental Health.

We also honored all the current students who received national awards in 2013, from National Merit finalists to perfect ACT scores to elementary current events contest winners.

District Finds Savings

The Park Hill School District is known for its responsible management of taxpayer dollars. This is one of the reasons the district earns the Meritorious Budget Award every year from the International Association of School Business Officials.

The district constantly looks for ways to spend as little as possible while still meeting the community’s expectations.

To cut costs in recent years, we reduced administrative costs, decided to cut two percent from non-personnel expenditures, reallocated funds from textbooks to online resources, switched from a law firm to in-house counsel, used purchasing cards to get rebates on regular district expenditures, and took advantage of interest rates to sell bonds ahead of schedule.

Bridget Kellam, energy education specialist in the district monitors district energy use to keep us as efficient as possible. So far, this program has allowed us to avoid spending $3 million in utility costs.

The three alumni we inducted into the Alumni Hall of Fame were Bob Bucker, class of 1967; Tara Garcia, class of 1997; and Jess McLendon, class of 1968.
Help Fund Innovative Programs Through Education Foundation

INVEST NOW

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 through online payment or through the mail. Educators can submit throughout the year, so be sure to visit our website often and InvestNOW at www.parkhillfoundation.org.

Community Education Classes

The winter semester for Community Education classes is already underway. Community Education offers a great selection of new classes for adults and after-school clubs for children. Enroll now; space is limited and classes fill up fast. Visit www.parkhill.k12.mo.us for more information and to enroll.
District secondary teachers learned innovative teaching techniques for their Future Learner Project, or FLiP, classrooms. Instructional Technology Facilitator Lindsay Stutzman showed Lakeview teacher Ashley Rider some helpful resources.

Congress students taste-tested nutritious foods in order to help the food service department pick foods for next year’s menu.

Graden Elementary received first place in Missouri in the Keep America Beautiful Recycle Bowl Competition for its recycling program. Graden recycled 5,528 pounds of paper and other recyclables in October and November.

Park Hill South Campus Supervisor Laura Heflin checks in with cars before they can enter or exit South’s campus.

At the Union Chapel Student of the Month celebration, first grader Chloe Leiker shared a note with her parents that her teacher wrote about her achievements.

Jones Center students each researched and wrote a report about a famous person. At the end of the assignment, they had a class lunch, where they dressed up and spoke as their chosen famous person.

Park Hill High School DECA students campaigned against marijuana by hosting a lunchtime dance competition and asking their classmates to sign a pledge not to use the drug.

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At a Park Hill High School assembly, several female students and teachers donated their ponytails to make wigs for women fighting cancer. Male students and teachers raised money to fight cancer by shaving their heads.

PHHS Students Raise Money, Fight Cancer

At a Park Hill High School assembly, several female students and teachers donated their ponytails to make wigs for women fighting cancer. Male students and teachers raised money to fight cancer by shaving their heads.