

FALL EDITION | ISSUE NO. 13

CONNECTION

BACK TO SCHOOL

Violet DiPeri and Kolten Plumb at Chinn Elementary have started strong for the 2022-23 school year in Nicole McDaniel's 3rd grade class.

IN THIS EDITION

***THANK YOU FOR INVESTING
IN OUR COMMUNITY***

**LEARN ABOUT OUR BOND
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE**

**BOARD APPROVES DRIVERS
AND NARRATIVES FOR OUR
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION,
AND BELONGING WORK**



Park Hill School District

PARK HILL CONNECTION GOES TO EVERY HOUSEHOLD IN THE PARK HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF OUR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS.



Straight from the Superintendent

Dear Park Hill Community,

These first few weeks of school in the Park Hill School District have been full of learning, fun, and new adventures for our students, families, and staff. I've had a chance to be in all our schools and have visited many classrooms. The level of learning and engagement is high and elevates the mission of our school district.

As I helped kindergarten students open milk cartons during lunch on the first day of school at our elementary schools, I couldn't help but think about all the help our educators and staff members will provide throughout this school year. We are a school district that supports and builds successful futures for each student, every day.

Bond Projects:

Late this summer, our Board of Education approved a bond sequencing timeline so we could begin gathering architects and construction managers for implementing our bond projects. This fall we will start to engage our students, families, staff, and community in design processes for each of our school projects. In this edition of our *Connection*, you can read more about each of our projects and the estimated timeline for completion.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging:

In this edition you can also read more about our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) work. Our DEIB Council, made up of students, families, staff, and community members, has been meeting throughout the last year to build our Drivers and Narratives around the DEIB process. These Drivers and Narratives were approved at our August 25 Board meeting and will continue to guide our work in this area.

Thank you for your continued investment in our high achieving schools. Your support and your connection to our schools is valued and appreciated. We look forward to seeing you at our school events and activities.

Here's to the 2022-23 school year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Mike Kimbrel

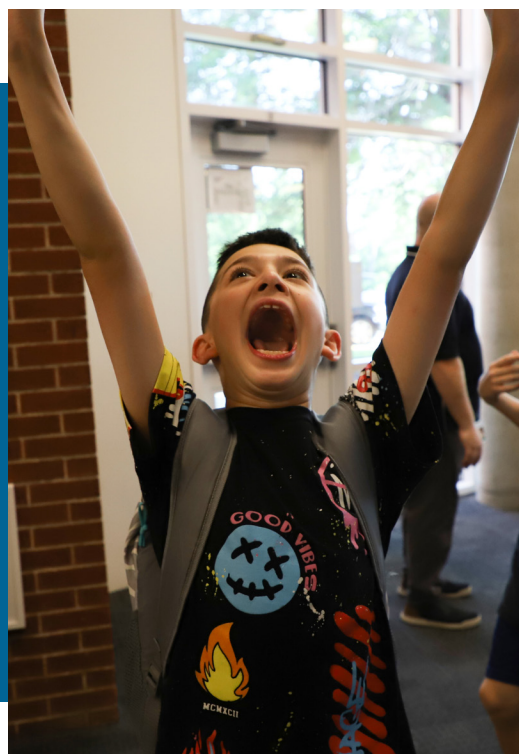
Superintendent

Welcome to the New *Connection*!

Connection is a publication of the Park Hill School District. The *Connection* magazine is distributed quarterly, without charge, to patrons within the Park Hill School District boundaries. Our new magazine format is being launched in the fall of 2022.

Park Hill Board of Education

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Brandy Woodley, Treasurer
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Bart Klein, Member
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Park Hill Welcomes Our Students and Families for the 2022-23 School Year

WELCOME BACK!



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WALDEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Park Hill Bond Implementation Timeline Takes Shape



Thank you for supporting our community schools through Proposition I and Proposition N.

On April 5, 2022, Park Hill voters approved Proposition I and Proposition N. We continue to be grateful for this investment in our schools and our community.

With this no tax rate increase, these propositions allow us to maintain the community’s investment in our facilities and bring them up to date. This investment allows us to build a 12th elementary school to help us move students out of classroom mobile units and maintain healthy class sizes. These investments also help us maintain our high-quality school operations, including keeping our staff salaries competitive, so we can recruit and retain the best teachers and support staff.

In August, our Board of Education approved the bond implementation timeline. Because of current economic conditions, lead time to get materials and some labor shortages, the bond projects timeline has been intentionally organized to account for a variety of factors. Projects are arranged to minimize disruptions to teaching and learning while maximizing district funds and resources.

“We would certainly like these projects done immediately,” Superintendent Dr. Mike Kimbrel said. “But this is a four to five-year plan. It will take longer to work through all of our projects in today’s climate.”

At the same time, we are looking forward to beginning the process of selecting architects and construction managers and engaging our students, staff, and community to shape our projects.

“There’s a lengthy timeline for all of the design,” Assistant Superintendent Dr. Paul Kelly said. “We want to create design teams for each project at each school and get stakeholders’ input in the process.”

We will be forming these project teams with students, staff, and our community throughout the fall. These project teams will provide a space for student voice, staff voice, and community voice in the process.

Each of our schools will be positively impacted by these investments in our school district.

As the projects begin, stay up to date by visiting the Bond Projects Updates page on the district website.

PROJECT BUNDLE	SCOPE OF WORK	BUDGET ESTIMATE	TIMEFRAME
A	- Develop a 10-Year Long Range Facility Plan with a focus on renovating or replacing aging facilities.		April 2023 - August 2024
1	- Design/Construction of Elementary School 12 - Expansion of Russell Jones Education Center - Various Facility Improvements at Tiffany Ridge Elementary Hopewell Elementary	\$ 51.2 million	November 2022 - June 2025
2	- Various Classroom and Facility Improvements at Chinn Elementary Congress Middle School English Landing Elementary Gerner Family Early Education Center Graden Elementary Hawthorn Elementary Lakeview Middle School Line Creek Elementary Plaza Middle School Prairie Point Elementary Renner Elementary Southeast Elementary Union Chapel Elementary	\$ 22.9 million	April 2023 - August 2026
3	- Various Classroom and Facility Improvements at Park Hill High School Park Hill South High School - Outdoor Playfield Improvements at Park Hill High School Park Hill South High School	\$ 59.8 million	November 2022 - March 2026



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING IN PARK HILL SCHOOLS

Board approves Drivers and Narratives for our work

In the Park Hill School District, we've been working through what it means to live our work in providing a sense of belonging for each of our students. Our vision statement requires us to build successful futures – each student – every day. This work of building successful futures for each student, every day, includes creating an environment where all students feel ownership and voice in their school experience.

Park Hill's work with Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) began in 2015 and continues to this day. In 2015, district leadership teams studied culturally responsive teaching and worked with the UMKC Institute for Human Development on cultural competency.

During the next few years, the district leadership teams would also study AVID culturally relevant education and "Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain" by Zaretta Hammond.

At this time, the District developed a new Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP), including a new core value of equity and a goal focused on ensuring success for all students, regardless of background. To support this work, the District established the Superintendent's Advisory Council for Equity and Inclusion and ultimately hired a Director of Access, Inclusion and Family Engagement to begin in the 2021-22 school year.

DEIB is an integral piece of our work in Park Hill, including being embedded in our strategic plan, instructional vision, and a multi-tiered support

system in every school. We work to increase learning opportunities for each of our students, removing barriers that might stand in their way.

We are evaluating our hiring practices and continually searching for ways to diversify our workforce so our staff better reflects our student body.

Earlier this year, the DEIB Advisory Council, comprised of students, staff, parents and community members, collected more than 750 pieces of feedback through listening forums with the Park Hill community.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I think we would have that number of pieces of feedback," Dr. Terri Deayon, Director of Access, Inclusion and Family Engagement, said. "We listened – intentionally, strategically and with engagement – to the voices of the community. We listened to do something about it, to be informed and to be better."

After thoughtful and deep reflection throughout the year, the council created actionable steps. We are calling these our Drivers and Narratives Statements.

"It took hours and hours and hours to get down to our Drivers and Narratives," Deayon said. "We continuously went back to what the community said. That was at the forefront of the process."

The statements are not only what we aspire to be as a district but are part of the council's goal to increase trust in the community and increase community involvement. The Drivers and Narratives will also be an integral part of the goals, action steps and measures in the next Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP).

(Continued on Page 5)



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

DRIVERS, NARRATIVES AND TERMS IN PARK HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Create safe and welcoming spaces

We will create a place where all people feel safe and valued for who they are by promoting welcoming spaces and practicing inclusivity in all actions.

Cultivate meaningful connections

We commit to cultivating meaningful connections by engaging all stakeholders in DEIB work to increase trust and community involvement.

Expect accountability

We will create a culture of accountability through restorative practices, including repairing hurt/harm/damage, engaging in uncomfortable conversations, learning from, and addressing our mistakes.

Ensure inclusive representation

We will ensure inclusive representation with intentional and meaningful DEIB practices in our workforce, curriculum, and programming, so they mirror the communities we serve.

Engage in purposeful learning and conversations

We will engage in purposeful learning and conversations, measure our progress, and help each other as we build a more inclusive Park Hill community.

Share our stories and be clear in our communications

We will honor the stories of our Park Hill community and promote our commitment to DEIB practices by clearly communicating our successes and learning opportunities.



**“There is a sense of hope in
the community”**

Board Member Brandy Woodley



Straight From Our Staff

Meet Kyle Lackey, Park Hill's 2022 Teacher of the Year. Mr. Lackey has been with the Park Hill School District for eight years, all of which have been at Park Hill South High School.

Park Hill: What was your reaction to being named Teacher of the Year?

Kyle: Honestly, it was a rush of emotions and just an amazing moment to remember the awesome students I've had over the years. In 2020, I placed over 75 pictures on my wall of thespians who had graduated since I started teaching at Park Hill South, and it was just good remembering how much enjoyment I've had in this position.

PH: What does this honor mean to you?

K: It's been fun celebrating the theatre program that we've built at Park Hill South. I've had hundreds of students that have made a huge impact on this program. It's an honor to be seen this way and to have this opportunity to reflect on my time here.

PH: Why did you choose to teach in the Park Hill School District?

K: I'll be honest; I didn't think I would be hired. I was making the jump from a nearby district's middle school to a major high school. Park Hill has a reputation as the best district in the area, and I was interviewing for the experience to interact with the school district.

That was eight years ago and I'm grateful to be here. My wife and I are also proud to be raising our children in the Park Hill School District. Our oldest is a kindergartener this year. How cool is that?

PH: What's one thing you'd like the Park Hill Community to know about the work you do?

K: There are a ton of amazing performances throughout the year from our Performing Arts programs. If you see a choir, band or orchestra concert on the calendar, take your kids to see it! It's amazing exposure to unique forms of art.

And, of course, come see *The Little Mermaid* at Park Hill South High School in February or *Little Shop of Horrors* at Park Hill High School in November. Or both!

PH: How do you make connections with your students?

K: I learned early on that a strong connection with students increases their engagement in our classroom projects and in our classroom community. I make it a goal to talk to each of my students one-to-one every day in some capacity.

Beyond that, a few years ago, our Principal Dr. Kerrie Herren, discussed the importance of using students' names every day. I know that pushed me to go even further in making connections with all my students.

PH: How have you incorporated culturally relevant teaching in your classroom?

K: I've worked to incorporate culturally relevant teaching in every area of my classroom practices, including the after-school theatrical program. I want every single student who walks into Park Hill South High School to feel like they have a home here, that they belong here.

It's important to promote equity and inclusion in the theatre department. Our students come from every walk of life, and I want to make sure they can thrive here and have a real sense of identity.

PH: What advice would you share with someone interested in becoming a teacher?

K: The impact of a teacher is incredible and far-reaching. If you really want to feel like you are making a positive difference in the world – teaching is 100 percent for you. I see my colleagues and friends making an impact every day.



Straight From Our Students



Ryann Banks

Park Hill South High School Junior who attends LEAD Innovation Studio co-chairs the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Council as a student representative.

Park Hill: Why did you want to be a part of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Council?

Ryann: I really liked the idea of being able to help make a positive change for our district. When I was offered the opportunity, I was skeptical because I wasn't sure how much of a difference we were going to be making. After the first meeting, I knew that this was the kind of work that I wanted to do and that I was going to want to stick with it.

PH: What made you want to be a student co-chair?

R: I really wanted to be able to be a voice for the students in the district and be able to make a bigger impact. I definitely know the time and place to speak up, and I'm not afraid to speak up for what's right. I wanted to be able to do that not only for myself but for all the students in the district.

PH: What does this work mean to you and your peers?

R: This work means that I'm helping to create a safe space for myself and my peers so that everyone can feel like they belong.

PH: How would you explain the Council's work to the Park Hill community?

R: Our work is to ensure that everyone within the community feels like they belong and that they have a place here. We are working to make a change, and while that won't happen overnight, it's going to happen.

PH: What's the best part of being on the Council and the work you're doing?

R: I feel like I'm making a huge impact. I can help my peers and future generations feel like they belong and have a safe space here.

PH: What's the most challenging part of being on the Council and the work you're doing?

R: Understanding that the change isn't going to be immediate and having to be patient.

PH: Is there something you've learned from your Council work that has surprised you?

R: I have learned that more people are willing to share their stories and willing to help in our work than I had expected.

PH: What else would you like to share with our Park Hill community?

R: This work isn't going to go by fast. We are going to take the necessary time to ensure that everyone feels like they are included and that they belong. Once we start making changes, we aren't going to stop.



Park Hill: Why did you want to be a part of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Council?

Bralen: I chose to be a part of the DEIB Council simply because I am already a part of the Park Hill community, and this work is necessary. School districts should be dedicated to creating comfortable learning environments for all their students and DEIB is the framework for this idea.

PH: What made you want to be a student co-chair?

B: I wanted to be a student co-chair when the position was offered to me because I want to have as big of an impact on the community as possible regarding this work.

PH: What does this work mean to you and your peers?

B: To me, this work means that I can impact students and future students, to protect them from negative experiences and hardships that they should not have to go through in a school setting.

PH: How would you explain the Council's work to the Park Hill community?

B: I would explain this work as the district taking steps toward creating a culture of accountability for its community members by encouraging those tough conversations.

PH: What's the best part of being on the Council and the work you're doing?

B: The best part of the work that we are doing is being able to see our work and ideas from last year come together as drivers for the district's Strategic Plan. This work often feels like a constant uphill battle, but seeing that our stories as a community have initiated positive change within the district serves as a morale boost.

PH: What's the most challenging part of being on the Council and the work you're doing?

B: The most challenging part of the committee is knowing that members of our community stakeholder groups are unaware of or are actively against the exact progress we are advocating for. We are seeking conversations, understanding and perspective. We don't think this should be a challenge, but seeking perspective can be a challenge for some.

PH: Is there something you have learned from your Council work that has surprised you?

B: Through my work with the committee, I have learned the value of an individual's story. You can argue about anything, but firsthand experiences cannot be negated.

PH: What else would you like to share with our Park Hill community?

B: I encourage community members and parents to get involved in the work. When parents get involved in school systems, it opens the floor for communication, and when students see that this work is important to their parents, they will also prioritize the work and feel supported in their DEIB learning.



Bralen Ashley

Park Hill High School Junior who attends LEAD Innovation Studio co-chairs the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Council as a student representative.

Park Hill Celebrates Success Around our District



Lucy Hamilton's Original Sounds

Congratulations to Park Hill South High School student Lucy Hamilton for being recognized as a 2022 winner of The University of Missouri's Creating Original Music Project; a statewide competition that recognizes Missouri students (K-12) who compose original works in a variety of musical styles.

Because of Lucy's award, Park Hill South's orchestra department will receive a \$750 check to help the program.



Trusted Learning Environment

Our technology department successfully renewed its CoSN Trusted Learning Environment Seal. The CoSN Seal embodies the commitment of our district to safeguard the privacy of student data.



Meritorious Budget Award

The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) recognized our district for excellence in budget presentation with the Meritorious Budget Award (MBA) for 2022-23.



National Certified School Nurses

Congratulations to our school nurses, recently named National Certified School Nurses (NCSN) by the National Board for the Certification of School Nurses (NBCSN).

Stephanie Angle - nurse at Union Chapel Elementary

Stacy Blahnik - float nurse

Melissa Burghardt - nurse at Hopewell Elementary

Heather Robbins - float nurse

Connie Smith - nurse at Chinn Elementary

In addition to meeting eligibility education and practice requirements, these nurses successfully passed the national certification exam, which validates specialized knowledge in school nursing, indicating clinical competence and rigorous practice standards.



HOSA - Future Health Professionals State Officer

Ysabella Olsen, a junior at Park Hill South High School, was elected to represent the State of Missouri as the HOSA - Future Health Professionals Vice President of Membership. She will be traveling to Jefferson City several times throughout the school year and will help to plan State Leadership Conferences and other events.



An Academic Ace

Congratulations to the Park Hill High School 2021-22 girls volleyball team for earning the Team Academic Award from the United States Marine Corps and the American Volleyball Coaches Association for the seventh year in a row!

The Team Academic Award honors teams who matched their dedication in the classroom with their dedication on the court. This means that the PHHS volleyball team maintained a year-long GPA of 3.7 on a 4.0 scale.

Lindsey Hood - Varsity Coach



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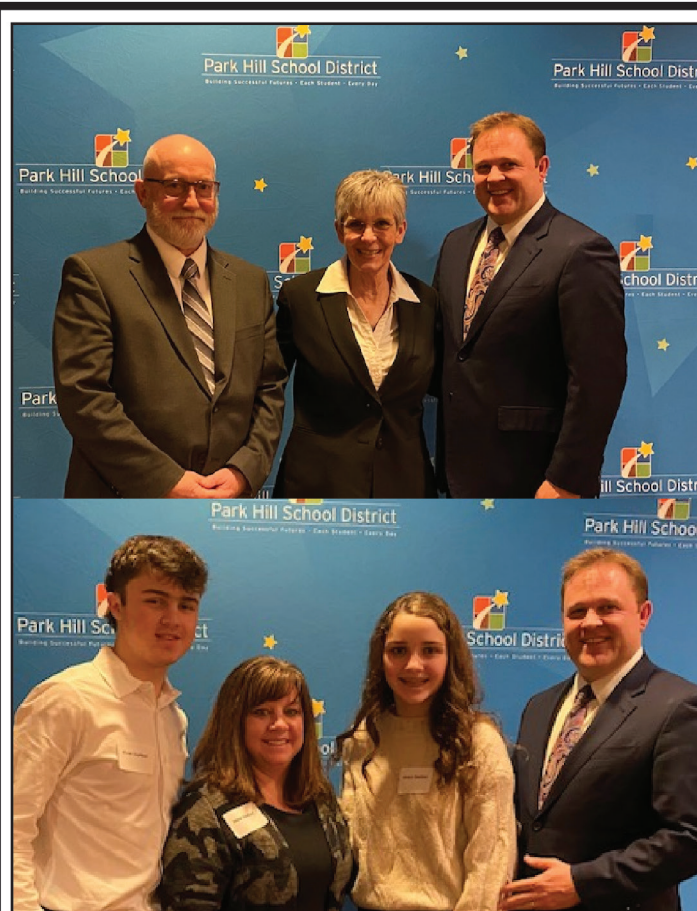
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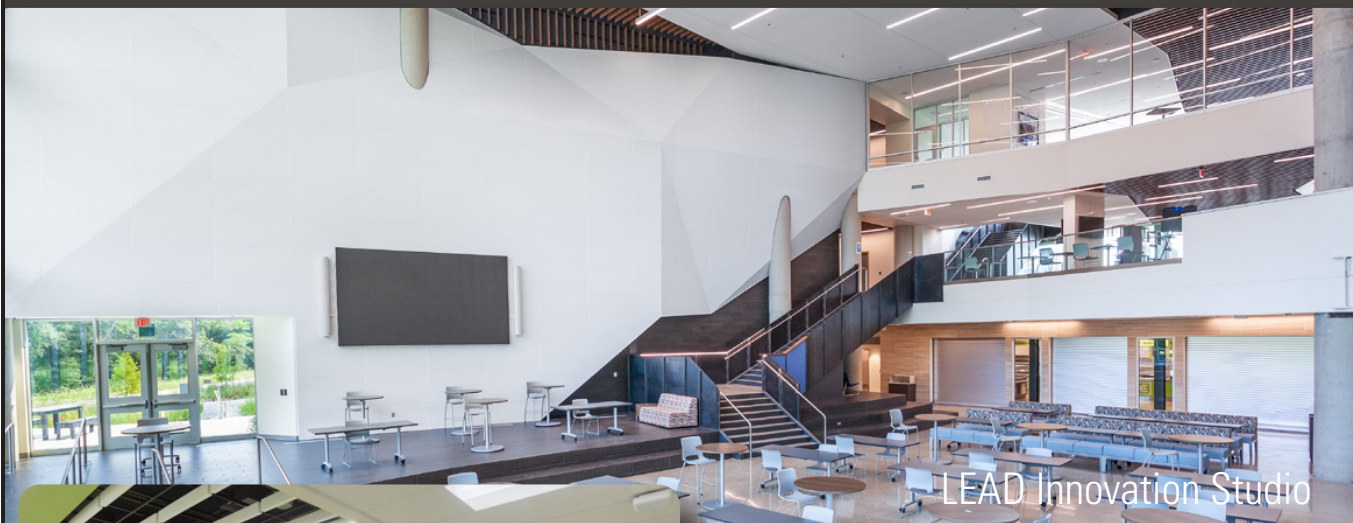
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We recently increased the pay for these positions, and our Adventure Club school-age childcare program and nutrition services positions will get a \$1-an-hour bonus twice a year, paid on January 15 and July 30.

If you know of someone who would make a great addition to our Park Hill School District family, please let them know about these opportunities.

Apply here: <https://parkhill.tedk12.com/hire/index.aspx>



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Building Our Future

Join us for a delicious breakfast as we hear our new superintendent, Dr. Mike Kimbrel's Report to the Community. It's all happening at the:

**18th Annual Community Breakfast
Thursday, October 27, 2022**

Details Here



Park Hill School District

**Education
Foundation**

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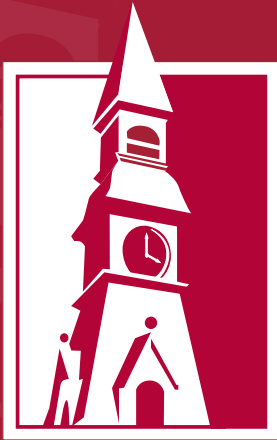


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Park Hill Highlight

We ended the first week of school on a high note!

KMBC's NewsChopper 9 and Johnny Rowlands flew in to feature Park Hill High School's marching band, cheer squad and dance team as part of the station's "Banding Together" back-to-school special.

Rowlands chatted with Ky Hascall, Park Hill High School's Band Teacher, before the band wrapped up its performance.

**For more moments
like this, be sure to
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