

# PARKWAY today

News and information for residents of Parkway School District

Spring 2012

Accredited with Distinction



## ALL OUR CHILDREN

Creating professional learning communities to help each child succeed in school.

### PLUS

- BUDGET CHALLENGES
- SUMMER SCHOOL
- SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

Bellerive Elementary teachers with student Rubina Thomas

# All Our Children

Creating professional learning communities to help each child succeed in school.

**S**outh High Principal Gary Mazzola was surprised at the test results. He prides himself on hiring the very best teachers, and like other principals across the country, he always thought one outstanding teacher could propel an entire class into an educational stratosphere of sorts.

## ► A Principal's Surprise

But the test results showed something slightly different. The test results showed greater success when teams of teachers worked together in "professional learning communities" (PLCs) to help all students.

Ever since his English II teachers had come to him four years ago and asked if they could start a PLC, South High English II student test scores had improved on end-of-course exams. The jump in test scores was for everyone, from lower-level students who typically struggle in English II, to the highest achieving students.

## ► Everybody Wants "In"

Noting the success, the English I teachers came to the English II teachers and asked for advice on how to start a PLC. After the collaboration, test scores improved for all English I students. Then the Algebra and geometry teachers wanted in on the action. And so on. Through it all, Mazzola made sure the teachers had plenty of time in summer and throughout the year to implement the PLC model, which also includes supplying lots of intervention for students.

## ► Students Move Up One Level on the MAP

As a result, roughly every student moved up one level in every subject on the MAP test from one year to the next (2010-11) at South High.

South High is one of several Parkway schools to pilot PLCs, and its success is similar



Bellerive Elementary Teachers Carrie Noonan and Courtney Mask discuss test results with Rubina Thomas.

## On Student Success with PLCs



“We are winning the game with this. Supporting my teachers in implementing PLCs has been my most rewarding job as principal.”

GARY MAZZOLA,  
SOUTH HIGH

to schools across the country. Nationally, students in school districts that have implemented PLCs have experienced tremendous academic growth.

Parkway will begin implementing PLCs district-wide in the 2012-13 school year, as an important part of its strategic plan. Using professional development days, teachers will meet for two hours on the first Wednesday of most months. Teams of teachers will:

- Scrutinize data about their students' academic performance;
- Identify students who need extra help;
- Identify students who need more challenging work;
- Review teaching strategies that will help all students; and
- Take action to help each child improve.

They will focus on how best to help individual students. If one teacher, for instance, is extremely adept at explaining circumference to accelerated learners in geometry

class, he will share his teaching strategies with other geometry teachers on his team.

As the team continues to meet monthly, teachers will monitor individual student progress through test scores. If the circumference strategy doesn't work, it will be revised.

## ► The Case for Reteaching

"These teams measure their effectiveness on the basis of results for students, rather than intentions or good ideas," says Liz Morrison, coordinator of professional learning at Parkway.

"We won't be flooding our kids with tests, but we will check their understanding frequently with a variety of assessments," says JoAnn Brenner, an Algebra II and Trigonometry teacher at South High. "And we will share and pool strategies to reach the kids. Often, it is reteaching, reteaching, reteaching a particular concept in four

*continued on page four*

## Every PLC is Guided by Five Questions

1. What do we want students to understand after each unit, course or grade level?
2. How will we know if they understand it?
3. What will we do if they don't understand?
4. What will we do if they already understand?
5. What are the proven "best practices" we can use in the classroom to benefit all students?

# superintendent's corner

## Budget Challenges

Dear Parkway Community:

We live in historically challenging economic times, when housing prices continue to plummet and the GDP is the lowest it has ever been.



**Superintendent  
Keith Marty**

These economic challenges have been really tough on school districts across the country. Many of our neighboring school districts have already been cutting and it has finally caught up with Parkway.

In February the Parkway Board of Education voted to cut the budget by 3 to 5 percent over the next two years. (See budget story on page three.)

Budget cuts are very difficult, but our ad hoc budget committee worked very hard to protect our core academic programs and to ensure Parkway's standards remain high so our students will receive a quality education. I'd like to thank

the committee members for providing the road map for our budget and academic foundation based on our strategic plan.

Rest assured that Parkway is on solid financial ground. We continue to receive an excellent AAA bond rating from Standard & Poor's. Few school districts can say this.

Another part of Parkway's strategic plan involves implementing professional learning communities (PLCs) starting with the 2012-13 school year. Essentially, PLCs are groups of educators who are committed to working together to help each child be more successful in school.

Nationally, students in school districts that have implemented PLCs have experienced tremendous academic growth.

In Parkway, several schools over the past few years have piloted professional learning communities. South High, for example, has already seen a jump in MAP scores for roughly all students as a result. I invite you to read more about PLCs in this edition of Parkway Today (pages one and four).

I am confident you will be as excited as I am about the boost in achievement

**"Our standards remain high so our students will receive a quality education. Parkway continues to receive an excellent AAA bond rating from Standard & Poor's. Few school districts can say this."**

for our students.

As always, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Keith Marty

## What is this Black and White Puzzle?



You will see a lot of these black and white puzzles in *Parkway Today*. They are officially called "qr code readers," meaning "quick response code readers."

You can scan one with your smart phone or iPhone to be taken directly to a particular location on a website. If you scan the qr code on your left, for instance, you will be taken to the budget story on the Parkway website. The

actual website link for the budget story is [www.parkway-schools.net/budget/faq.cfm](http://www.parkway-schools.net/budget/faq.cfm). The qr code saves you the time of having to enter all the letters into your phone's browser.

We have placed qr codes next to stories throughout *Parkway Today*, so you can quickly go to particular locations on our website to learn more about certain subjects.

These icons will dot the landscape of all Parkway publications, so you can get where you need to quickly.

**About the Cover: Bellerive Elementary Teachers John Fink and Lauren Cassimatis discuss test scores and strategies for improvement with fifth-grade student Rubina Thomas.**



► Parkway will continue to deliver a high quality education for all students.



### Information on Important Legislative Issues

Proposals which could significantly impact Parkway and other public school districts around the state have been introduced in the Missouri General Assembly which concludes its work on May 18, 2012.

► **Student Transfers from Unaccredited Districts**

In 2010, the Missouri Supreme Court issued a decision in the case of *Turner v. School District of Clayton* which basically said that accredited school districts like Parkway must enroll students who want to transfer from nearby unaccredited districts, regardless of whether there is space or sufficient staffing available. The unaccredited districts would have to pay tuition costs.

Although the Supreme Court sent the case back to St. Louis County Court for trial this spring, there are several bills in the legislature which would allow receiving districts to set reasonable limits based on space available and class sizes. Some of these bills also include controversial education reforms such as granting tax credits to fund tuition scholarships for students to attend non-public schools.

“Parkway does not oppose the idea of students being able to transfer out of unaccredited school districts, and has participated in the Voluntary Student Transfer program for nearly 30 years,” said Superintendent Keith Marty. “But we believe enrollment of non-resident students must be addressed in a manner that lets individual school districts set reasonable limits in order to meet the class-size expectations of their communities.” (Some proposals include **SB 456**, **SB 451/706**, and **HB 1740**.)

► **School Funding**

The legislature is considering changes to the way it allocates money to schools. Under the current plan, Parkway is considered a wealthy school district and only receives about 5 percent of its operating revenue from the state. In recent years, state funding to all school districts — including Parkway — has been reduced due to budget shortfalls.

The current funding plan is ambiguous and subject to interpretation. “Without some revisions, school districts could see major changes in the amount of revenue they receive from the state,” says Parkway’s Chief Financial Officer Mark Stockwell. “Ultimately it will pit one school district against another which no one wants.” Two proposals (**HB 1043** and **SB 454**) have been introduced to clarify the funding plan and minimize the amount of funds that would shift from one district to another.

► **Go Online to Learn More**

Parkway’s 2012 Legislative Positions and contact information for elected officials are posted online at [www.ParkwaySchools.net/gov](http://www.ParkwaySchools.net/gov). To look up details about bills and their sponsors, go to [www.senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov). Questions? Call Parkway’s Communications Department at (314) 415-8077.

# Parkway Trims Budget

**A**s you may have heard by now, Parkway has to make budget cuts over the next two years in order to balance the budget. Many of our neighboring school districts have already been cutting and it has finally caught up with Parkway.

In February, the Parkway School Board voted to reduce expenditures by 3 to 5 percent (\$7.4 to \$9.6 million) over the next two years. Although Parkway continues to be in strong financial shape, declining revenues and a forecast for minimal future growth call for the district to take proactive steps to reduce expenditures.

The reductions will come from seven categories:

- Reducing district administrative and support staff positions;
- Reducing operating budgets by 10 percent;
- Implementing greater efficiencies such as reducing overtime and sending secondary report cards electronically;
- Reducing personnel providing support to teachers and students;
- Reducing teaching assistants and clerical support;
- Changing school staffing models;
- Generating new revenue through increased fees for summer school and use of facilities.

“Budget cuts are never easy, but we have done our best to ensure standards remain high so we can continue to deliver a quality education for all students,” said Board President Chris Jacob. “We will continue to monitor expenses in an uncertain economy-to keep us on the path for future success.”

For more details, visit [www.parkwayschools.net/budget/faq.cfm](http://www.parkwayschools.net/budget/faq.cfm).





different ways. It's about pooling strategies using the best ones that work for visual learners, auditory learners, etc."

### ► **What's the Difference?**

To questions such as, "Haven't teachers always been doing targeted instruction for kids," Brenner answers yes. "But it wasn't as frequent. And there wasn't a structured format to collaborate and pool strategies. Teachers never have enough time because of after-school activities, etc. This model allows them to meet in the morning once every month to go over everything."

### ► **'Mandatory Invitations'**

The model is also strengthened by strong intervention. If a student is struggling in say, Algebra 1, that student is "more than invited" to participate in an after-school study session. The teachers call parents to ask if a particular student can stay after school on a Tuesday, for instance, to receive extra help. In other cases, with Algebra I or English 1, South High relies on teachers' aids and academic coaches to sit in on classes with students to monitor their progress and give them help on the spot if they need it.

### ► **Timing is Critical**

"We used to think if a student didn't understand a concept in the first two weeks of class, he would catch up eventually with an outstanding teacher," says Mazzola. "Now we know that if a student doesn't understand in the first two weeks, he's likely to be lost for the rest of the semester."

Mazzola and Brenner expect this model to raise student achievement throughout Parkway. Pods of teachers in other schools have also piloted the PLC model with great success.

### ► **Excitement Everywhere**

Meanwhile, the sense of excitement at South High is everywhere. "You have to have your intervention strategies set up, your after-school sessions and academic labs," says Brenner. "And I am not just talking about for lower-level students. I am talking about the bright students, too. It is taking each child as high as they can go. It feels like a simple change, but one that can make a huge difference."

"Supporting my teachers in implementing PLCs has been my most rewarding job as principal," adds Mazzola. "We are winning the game with this."

## Connecting the Dots



••• **Thanks to a sophisticated data system, Parkway teachers have test scores and a wealth of information available to track individual student progress. Consider just two reports currently available to teachers who request them—a student grade report which alerts a teacher any time a student's grades drop by 10 percent, and an attendance alert, which notifies a teacher when a student's attendance rate drops below 90 percent. "Individual teachers were able to track their own students' progress before," explains South High's JoAnn Brenner. "But now we can also track all the Algebra 1 students together to see where the students are succeeding or not. We can see patterns better this way. It helps teachers to collaborate."**

## Calendar Changes



**Teachers will meet in PLCs for two hours on the first Wednesday of each month during the school year, except for August and January. When these PLC meetings occur, school start times will be delayed for two hours. Why did Parkway decide to delay school start times for PLC meetings instead of having early release in the afternoon?**

- **Allows more focused, undistracted study time for teachers before the hustle of the school day begins.**
- **Eliminates unsupervised after-school time when students wait for activities to begin or "hang out" at home alone.**
- **Gives students additional sleep time in the morning.**
- **Permits full participation of coaches and after-school activity sponsors.**

# A Principal in Every Classroom

Acting as instant messengers of sorts, Parkway principals begin making frequent, short visits to classrooms to provide immediate feedback to teachers on their instructional strategies. They are called “mini observations.”



► Far back left: Kevin Beckner, assistant principal at Northeast Middle, observes Richard Nuszalski's eighth-grade U.S. history class.

**“You can learn a surprising amount about a teacher in 10 minutes,” says Kevin Beckner, assistant principal of Northeast Middle.**

**T**his fall, Parkway principals began making frequent, short visits to classrooms instead of only one longer visit per year. Within two days of each visit, principals provided feedback to teachers about various aspects of their teaching.

These five to 15-minute “mini observations,” as they are called, will take place between three and six times a year, depending on the teacher’s experience. They allow administrators to get snapshots of teachers’ work over the course of a year and also provide ongoing professional learning for teachers based on principals’ feedback.

“You can learn a surprising amount about a teacher in 10 minutes,” says Kevin Beckner, assistant principal of Northeast Middle. “I am surprised by how much more connected I feel to my teachers and to what’s going on in the classrooms.”

#### ► Teachers Prefer ‘Snapshot’ Visits

For their part, teachers seem to prefer this new evaluation model to the old one, where principals formally scheduled a classroom visit ahead of time, maybe once a year. In response to a recent survey, a clear majority of teachers said they felt administrators had a better “aggregate” picture of their teaching style with the new model.

“I love having evaluators in my room more frequently

because they get a better picture of me as a teacher,” one teacher wrote. “The follow-up is manageable because it focuses on one aspect of my teaching at a time.”

“The former evaluation model was outdated and subjective,” adds Julie Pepper, a Central High math teacher and vice-president of the Parkway National Education Association (PNEA). “The administrator who came to do the classroom observation would use his or her own words for the evaluation.”

Pepper and a team of 50 administrators, teachers and community members, some of them from Project Parkway, spent seven months developing a new evaluation rubric. They did so at the request of the Parkway Board of Education. The board wanted a review of the old evaluation model to determine if anything needed to change based on Parkway’s new mission and strategic plan.

#### ► Expectations are Clear

The new evaluation rubric clarifies job descriptions and identifies five areas on which teachers are evaluated, says Pepper, a 27-year veteran. “I know exactly what is expected of me as a teacher. It’s actually very clear for both the evaluator and the teacher.”

Some teachers, however, wonder whether five to 15 minutes is enough time per visit. Others wonder about logistics, whether principals can fit more classroom visits and follow-up feedback into their already busy schedules.

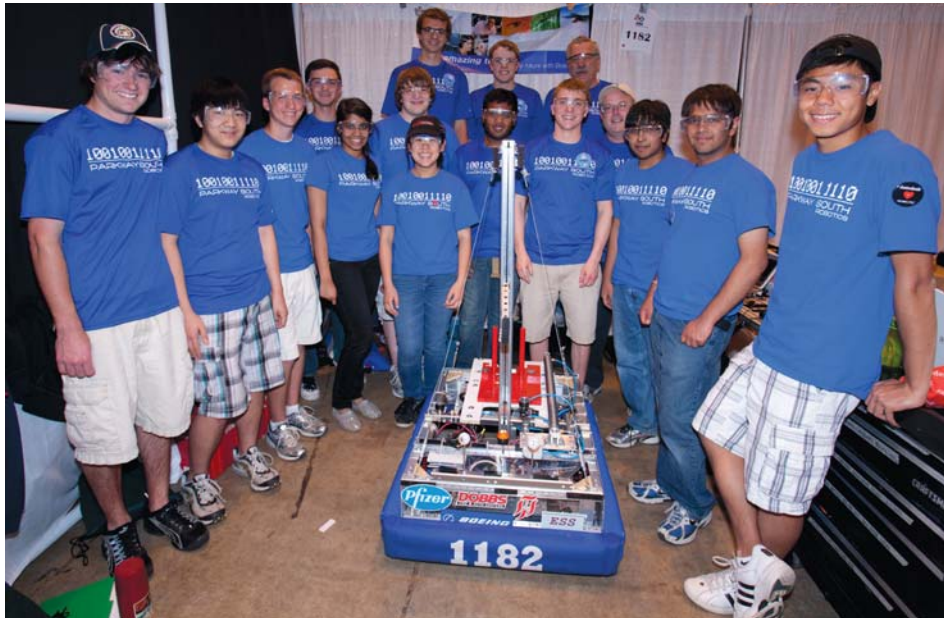
#### ► A Friendlier Way to Talk

Beckner says the frequency of visits hasn’t been an issue with him. In January, he had already visited most science classrooms four times. “I did all my science classrooms at one time. Then I followed up after school with my science teachers. That helps me with organizing my visits. I can concentrate on one subject at a time and ask myself, ‘Have I seen all my science teachers?’”

Beckner prefers to have a face-to-face conversation with a teacher right after a visit, lasting anywhere from 30 seconds to five minutes. Then he provides written feedback.

As with any new model, of course, there are growing pains. “This model is not a closed book. It is still subject to change based on feedback,” says Pepper. But so far, it is a “much friendlier” way to sit down and talk, she says.

# class acts



► The South High Robotics club, competing as Teams 406 and 408, captured first and second place Alliance awards at the regional and state FIRST robotics competitions in February. Their wins will likely propel the club to the FIRST World Robotics Championships again this spring. When this photo was taken last spring, the club and the robot they built emerged as fierce competitors at the “superbowl of smarts,” as the world championships are dubbed. This year, they have an especially strong incentive to test themselves against many of America’s best engineering and science students. Their robot is named “S.S.” Koski, in tribute to John Koski, one of their club sponsors, who retires from South High this year. “S.S.” stands for sink or swim, one of Koski’s favorite phrases. The S.S. Koski, they say, is definitely going to swim this year.

**T**he South High Robotics club, competing as teams 406 and 408, captured first and second place Alliance awards at the regional and state FIRST robotics competitions in February.

Their wins will likely propel the club to the FIRST World Robotics Championships in late spring.

The club and the robot they built muscled out strong competition last

spring to earn a spot at the “superbowl of smarts,” as the world championships are dubbed. As *Parkway Today* goes to press, the club will find out if they head once again to the world championships, to be held in St. Louis for the second year in a row.

At various times, West High, North High and Central High have also formed robotics clubs that support Parkway’s curriculum. “The robotics competition is science at its highest peak. You have to go out and display

your work,” says Tim Morrison, South High science teacher and a robotics club sponsor.

In the world competition, student teams are required to build a robot to compete in games.

### Music Highlight

The Central Middle Honors Orchestra, the Central Middle Eighth Grade Band and the Central High School Orchestra were all selected to perform at the Missouri

Music Educators Association Conference in January.

### Science Fair Winners

Two Parkway students were each awarded \$1,000 scholarships in the honors division at the 2012 Greater St. Louis Science Fair in February. **Mrigank Gupta**, a West High senior, won for his project titled, “The Effect of Different Types of Separators on Power Produced in a Microbial Fuel Cell with Brewery Wastewater Substrate.” **Hannah Wiedner**, a Central High junior, won for her project titled, “The Effect of Bisphenol A Arabidopsis Radical Length.”

### Notable Character

McKelvey Elementary recently earned distinction as a 2012 Missouri School of Character. The award is based on more than 130 indicators, including curriculum, rates of bullying, service activities and staff collegiality.

### Young Scientists

West Middle students scored in the top five out of 18 schools in a regional competition of the Science Olympiad, which tests students on problem solving, inquiry, application and



► West Middle’s **Jordan Beveridge**, left, and **Rahul Iyengar** helped their team score in the top five.

# 'No, I Don't Have Cancer'

## Special Correspondent



**Student Journalist Rachel Ellis, West High, wrote this story on Jacob Goldblum. Bald at age 3, Jacob told Rachel how Parkway helped him overcome obstacles to achieve his dreams.**

technology. They will advance to the state competition in April.

### National Merit Finalists

Twenty-three Parkway students have been named Finalists in the 2012 National Merit Scholarship Program. The students are:

#### Central High

Dylan J. Adams  
Thomas L. Hack  
Shawn Z. He  
David Huang  
Katherine S. Inhat  
Meagan A. McKinstry  
Joshua H. Mo  
Lee Remi  
Dennis X. Zhu

#### North High

Manali P. Gokhale  
Adrienne M. Hunt  
Timothy R. Tai

#### South High

Dushyant Bhatnagar  
Stefanie T. Shahan  
Connie X. Shen  
Heather D. Wilson  
Jeffrey Zhao

#### West High

Keerthi Bandi  
Will Gant  
Andrew Kuehnle  
Kimberly Lister  
Adam Manders  
James Wang

About 1.5 million juniors in some 22,000 high schools entered the National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

Approximately half of the Finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship.

### First-Place Science Team

West High 11th- and 12th-grade teams won "Best Overall" in the region at the Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics and Science (TEAMS) competitions, held in February. Members of the first place regional winning team appear in the bottom photo. Overall, students placed in the top five at the regional Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics and Science (TEAMS) competition.



► West High's first-place science team, from left, Jaron Ma, Patrick Landwehr, Caleb Ki, Adam Manders, Andrew Kuehnle, James Wang, Ben Wheeler and Kim Lister

teachers have been there to help me," he says. "I really like the way Parkway strives to make everyone feel included."

"I don't feel I should ever give up on school or sports because of my condition," he adds. I am capable of success no matter what."

An active member of the West High School JV wrestling team, Jacob has two wins thus far. He also plays football and golfs.

With his busy schedule, he has no time to watch TV.

But he does have time to dream and contemplate his future. He wants to become a businessman, like his father and grandfather before him.

And he now takes pride in his condition. He supports the Tortoise and Hair Company, an organization that assists people who have Alopecia.

People often assume Jacob has cancer.

"When people ask me I either ignore the comment or explain my condition."

Jacob hopes by sharing his story he will inspire other Parkway students with similar obstacles to know they can persevere.

"I strongly encourage other students with conditions to come forward and share their stories because no one can tell your story. It's not good to keep your peers guessing. It just leads to confusions and further misunderstandings," Jacob says.

*This is our fourth Fresh Voices feature about students who overcome obstacles to achieve their dreams. Please tell us about other students by emailing us at ParkwayToday@pkwy.k12.mo.us.*

At age 3, Jacob Goldblum's hair started thinning; there were bald spots. The family pediatrician diagnosed him with Alopecia, a medical condition in which hair is lost from some or all areas of the body, usually from the scalp.

"I didn't know what was going on... my hair kept falling out," he says.

Then and now, "the hardest part about it is just trying to fit in," says Jacob, a West High freshman.

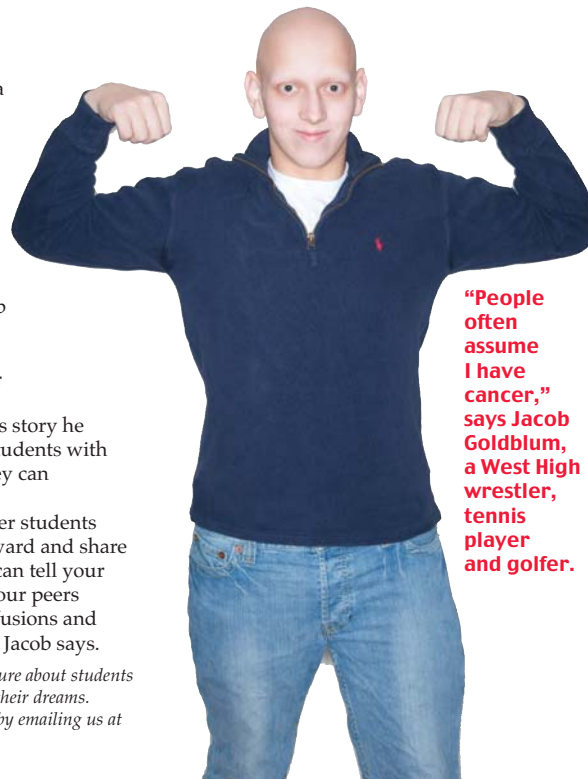
In second and third grade, Jacob sought comfort from his Claymont Elementary teacher, Mary Heath, when other students teased him. "She always made me feel better about myself in every aspect of my life," Jacob says.

In fourth grade, Jacob showed up to Sally Simmons' class with a wig and she told him she liked him just the way he was.

"Looking back on the times people called me baldy, it actually prepared me for life. I learned that what others think is not important. People now know me for who I am, and not what I look like," Jacob says.

Upon entering high school, Jacob decided to shed his shyness. "It was the first time in my life I felt comfortable initiating conversations with strangers, who have now become my friends. I've learned to accept more people in my life, and in return, people started to get to know me better. Once I broke down the barrier between people, it became easier to talk to them."

Today, he classifies himself as outgoing and persistent. "My



"People often assume I have cancer," says Jacob Goldblum, a West High wrestler, tennis player and golfer.



# Board

# highlights

## Meet the School Board Candidates

Two, three-year director positions on the Parkway Board of Education are open in the April 3, 2012 election. Three candidates have filed for the two positions. Below are the photos and biographies as submitted by each candidate.



**Beth Feldman**

I have been a resident of Parkway since I married in 1990. My husband and I have two children who attend Central High. I have been active in classrooms, school leadership and at the district level. I have served on the Parkway School Board since my appointment in June 2008. I currently serve as vice-president, and am a member of the budget and curriculum sub-committees.

I am proud of the progress Parkway has made since I joined the board. My proudest moment was approving free full-day kindergarten for all. My philosophy of school board membership is to always keep the students in the forefront of decisions.

During my time on the board, we have approved the mission, vision and learning principles of Project Parkway, our strategic planning initiative. I am excited, both as a board member and as a parent, to see it implemented in schools. I look forward to continuing to work on preparing students for what awaits them in life after Parkway.

In spite of current budget difficulties, I believe there are many opportunities to better serve our community while maintaining fiscally responsible spending. We must think differently in this ever-changing world.



**Helen Casteel**

Helen is a retired teacher who has been involved in Education for over forty years. In addition to her Master's Degree in Counseling, she also holds a real estate broker's license as well as an insurance license. Helen has also spent sixteen years in the banking industry.

Helen has been married to Walter, a Union carpenter, for twenty-seven years, and they have two sons. Matthew, 25, is employed as a production assistant in New York's theatre district. Adam, 21, is an actor in Los Angeles. Both are Parkway North graduates.

During the twenty-six years Helen has lived in the Parkway School District, she and her family have been active volunteers in the community. From chaperoning field trips to building sets for plays and musi-

cals, everyone has participated in some way to help build a strong community.

Helen has enjoyed traveling to forty-four states with a goal of visiting all 50 as part of her bucket list. Other interests include camping, photography, free-lance writing, bowling and attending St. Louis Cardinals games.

One of Helen's long-term goals include continuing to share her valuable experience and knowledge towards the education of Parkway's students, thereby ensuring a community of capable, curious, and confident contributors to an ever challenging world.

Helen is currently serving her second term as a Director on the Parkway School District Board of Education.

Kim Appelbaum graduated from Lindenwood University with a BA in Psychology. She began her career as a Technical Recruiter and moved into IT Contract Management 15 years ago.

Kim was raised in St. Louis and has been happily married to Paul for 15 years. She chose the Ballwin area because of the reputation of the Parkway school district. She has two boys, a 7th grader at West Middle and a freshman at West High. She is a proud "Band Mom" of a baritone player and percussionist. Kim has always been involved in her children's education by serving on the PTO and as a grade level party planner. She remains involved with Boy Scouts and served as Cub Scout Den Leader.

Kim feels training and education are critical for individuals to perform and function successfully in today's society. To continue to be viable in her current position at Maritz, she obtained certification in ISO 9001:2000 and won the award of "Peak Performer for Outstanding Customer Service and Commitment to Quality".

Kim is excited about new opportunities in alternative methods for education and is eager to have discussions with students, teachers, and residents to help Parkway further lead the way in education.



**Kim Appelbaum**

# Summer School Fun

Watch for a course brochure in the mail soon.



**"Houston, I think we have a solution." That mantra is something you'll likely hear in Jeffrey Bolin's popular engineering classes in summer school, based at Central Middle.**

**H**ouston, I think we have a solution." That mantra is something you might hear in Jeffrey Bolin's summer school classes, once called "Cars, Rockets and Cata-pults." Middle school students learn about engineering and mathematics principals by designing and building, say, rockets, solar cars and toothpick bridges for a colony on Mars.

Bolin's classes are so popular that enrollment per class can exceed 25 students. His classes are just one reason more than 35 percent of Parkway students participate in summer school.

Michael Cosgrove, director of summer school programs at Parkway, attributes the strong enrollment to class variety, value, and certified, high quality Parkway teachers, who teach most of the classes. Two-hour elementary and middle school classes are offered for a minimal charge of \$25 and four-hour classes, like "Jump Start to Kindergarten," are offered for \$50. High school classes, for which students receive credit, are free.

Here's just a sampling of classes:

- Jump Start to Kindergarten, which gives students extra help in preparing for kindergarten. Parents are allowed to enroll their children in this four-hour class when they register their children for kindergarten.
- Prep Algebra 1, which introduces high school students to basic Algebraic concepts.
- College Admissions, which gives students first-hand experience in writing college application essays, applying for financial help and

preparing for ACT tests. The test preparation alone would cost students nearly \$500 if they took the class from a commercial business.

Moreover, each summer school class is tied to the Parkway curriculum. In summer school or during the regular school year in Gateway to Technology (GTT), for instance, Bolin's subject matter is similar. Eighth-grade students are given problems to solve, just as if they were real-world engineers. If they aren't designing and building solar cars for a colony on Mars, they might be asked to design, build and test race cars on Bolin's custom-built race track at Central Middle, evaluating the aerodynamics, weight and size of each car.

"My car beat your car because it was smaller and lighter weight than yours," shouts one student as the races take place."

With their strong emphasis on engineering and math, Bolin's classes will actually undergo a name change to Engineering + Technology + Innovation + Mathematics (ETIM) this year. Additionally, a math teacher will join Bolin in team teaching the summer classes. "The U.S. needs more engineers," says Bolin, a Parkway teacher of 20 years. "This integrated curriculum is a good way to get students excited about engineering at early ages."

These engineering and math classes will be based at Central Middle this summer, but they are available to all Parkway students, and Parkway provides transportation.

For a complete summer listing, visit [www.parkwayschools.net/summer](http://www.parkwayschools.net/summer).

## Early Childhood Classes

Parkway Early Childhood Education offers several programs, some at no charge, that provide parent education and learning experiences for young children.

Check out Parents as Teachers, Parent-Child Interaction, Preschool, Play-Based Screening and Special Education programs and classes at [www.parkwayschools.net/ecc](http://www.parkwayschools.net/ecc).



## Project Parkway Reminder



Mark your calendar for the next Project Parkway meeting at 7 p.m., April 16, at Parkway West High, 14653 Clayton Road, Ballwin, Mo. Project Parkway meetings are open to parents and community members who want to help set the future direction of our schools. Parkway relies on input from parents and community members to help set goals and make continuous improvement for our students. For a complete list of Project Parkway meetings, visit [www.parkwayschools.net/projectparkway](http://www.parkwayschools.net/projectparkway).



## 2012 Annual Report Available

**'This is Parkway' Digital Magazine Also Online**  
[www.this-is-parkway.com](http://www.this-is-parkway.com)

Check out the new edition of Parkway's interactive digital magazine, "This is Parkway 2012," at [www.this-is-parkway.com](http://www.this-is-parkway.com). This multimedia communication spotlights student and staff accomplishments and provides up-to-date district stats and data. The magazine includes videos and quick links for important resources. You can download a copy of the online digital magazine, also known as Parkway's 2012 Annual Report, at: [www.parkwayschools.net/publications](http://www.parkwayschools.net/publications).



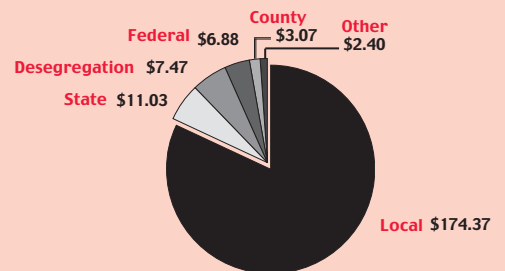
Hard copies can also be obtained by calling the Parkway Communications Department at (314) 415-8077.



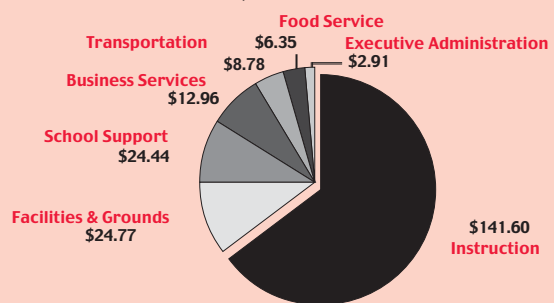
## This is Parkway... *at a glance*

- ▶ "Accredited with Distinction" by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)
- ▶ Recognized for "Distinction in Performance" by DESE for 11 consecutive years
- ▶ 14 U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Awards
- ▶ **ENROLLMENT**  
 Enrollment: 17,481  
 18 elementary schools  
 Five middle schools  
 Four high schools  
 One non-traditional high school  
 One early childhood center
- ▶ **FINANCES**  
 2011 Residential Tax Rate: \$3.34 per \$100 of assessed value
- ▶ **EMPLOYEES**  
 Teacher Salaries: \$54,731 (Parkway Average)
- ▶ \$44,249 (Missouri Average) Percentage of certified staff with master's degree or above:  
 Parkway: 68.1%  
 Missouri: 53.9%
- ▶ **ACHIEVEMENT**  
 National Merit Scholars = 51  
 Semifinalists: 24  
 Commended: 27
- ▶ ACT Composite Test Score  
 Parkway: 22.9  
 Missouri: 21.6  
 USA: 21.1
- ▶ SAT Combined Test Score  
 Parkway: 1815  
 Missouri: 1779  
 USA: 1509
- ▶ Parkway gives the ACT to all juniors at no charge.

2011-12 Operating Revenue: \$205.22 million



2011-12 Operating Expenditures: \$221.81 million



To view the 2011-12 budget, visit the Parkway website: [www.parkwayschools.net/finance/index.cfm](http://www.parkwayschools.net/finance/index.cfm).

**MISSION: POSSIBLE**



► During a Skype session, Spanish Teacher Eileen Rodriguez-Kiser and her West High students give the thumbs up to Ramiro Luna, Inset, a teacher from Mexico who will make his second visit to West High this spring, bringing 19 of his high school students with him.

# Skype Pilot

**E**ileen Rodriguez-Kiser and her Spanish students at West High have taken Skype to a new level. While many Parkway teachers customarily use Skype to talk to other classrooms in America and abroad, Rodriguez-Kiser invited her Skype colleague, a teacher in Monterrey, Mexico, to actually visit her classes at West High and lead them in Spanish conversation.

Ramiro Luna, the teacher from Mexico, arrived at West High one day last fall, to teach Rodriguez-Kiser's classes, and to share their international collaborative experiences with other Missouri language teachers. The students and Luna conversed in Spanish all day and also sang songs together. When Luna arrived, West High Spanish students actually burst into applause.

"We felt like we knew him," says West High student Kristen Solodar, "because we had talked to him and his Spanish students via Skype many times before he actually arrived. It was so much fun."

"Students take a foreign language because they want to communicate with their peers around the world," says Rodriguez-Kiser. "Skype allows us to do that." It also demonstrates the transfer of learning to different situations, which is part of Parkway's mission.

"No one takes a foreign language to learn how to conjugate a verb," adds Nancy Urnes, coordinator of foreign language and Parkway's English as a Second Language (ESOL) program. "They take it to be able to speak to others across the world."

To this day, Rodriguez-Kiser and her students continue to Skype with Ramiro Luna and his Mexican students. Web 2.0 tools such as Epals, VoiceThread, Glogster, and Vimeo also allow their students to extend their online collaboration. And "Señor" Luna will make his second visit to Rodriguez-Kiser's classes as guest teacher and Spanish song man one day this spring, bringing 19 of his students with him, all of whom are current Epals with West High students. It will be the first real-life student exchange between West High and Prepa Tec de Monterrey, Ramiro's high school in Mexico.

"When we ask students to be curious," says Parkway Superintendent Keith Marty, referring to Parkway's mission, "we need to ask them to be curious with new technology tools, not the old methods. We need to connect with students where they are right now."

Or as Rodriguez-Kiser puts it, "When students want to communicate with their peers around the world, they want to do that right now."

**Parkway Mission:**  
**To ensure all students are capable, curious and confident learners who understand and respond to the challenges of an ever-changing world.**

## Your School Board

Putting faces with names

**Chris Jacob**  
President



**Beth Feldman**  
Vice President



**Tom Appelbaum**




**Helen Casteel**




**Bruce Major**



**Dee Mogerman**



**Sam Sciortino**



The board meets at 7:30 p.m. on designated Wednesdays at Central Middle. For more information on board policies or meetings, which are also streamed live, please visit our website at: [www.parkwayschools.net/boe/boe.cfm](http://www.parkwayschools.net/boe/boe.cfm).



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# Calendar

[www.parkwayschools.net/calendar/calendars.cfm](http://www.parkwayschools.net/calendar/calendars.cfm)

**May 24**  
Last day of school

**June 4**  
Summer school begins

**Please Note:** Because Parkway mails this publication by carrier route to save postage costs, some individuals who do not live in Parkway may receive this mailing.

Parkway Today is published twice annually by the Communications Department.

Parkway School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. If an otherwise qualified individual with a disability needs accommodations to attend or participate in a school or district activity, please contact the staff member responsible for that event at least four (4) business days in advance. Questions, concerns, or requests for information/assistance can also be directed to the designated district coordinator for each applicable federal law or by calling (314) 415-8100.



**Join  
Parkway  
on Facebook  
and Twitter**

[www.parkwayschools.net/news/followUs.cfm](http://www.parkwayschools.net/news/followUs.cfm)

Since Parkway began posting school closings and late-breaking news on Facebook and Twitter in August 2010, we have kept count of our fans and followers. The numbers climb each week.

As of early March, Parkway had more than 4,000 Facebook fans and nearly 1,000 Twitter followers.

So it's our turn to thank our growing numbers of fans and followers. Each one of you is responsible for uniting the Parkway community!