

# Dragon Dispatch

Russell Jones Education Center

1/27/2017

Edition 1, Volume 3

## *Give thanks for a little, and you will find a lot!*

Greetings! It is hard to believe we are entering the second half of the 2016-17 school year. A thank you goes out to all our wonderful Russell Jones families for being so supportive of our educational program at Russell Jones. All of this support is greatly appreciated by our entire staff. Another thank you to our fantastic PTA for all the great things you help provide to our school and students each and every day.

How do we motivate our students and keep them engaged in learning? Students are motivated by the feeling of having choices, of belonging, and of success. As students strive to be viewed as “mature,” they welcome the opportunity to make their own choices. Running a dictatorship will get you nowhere fast. They need to know their voice is heard. Celebrate their achievements and give them choice and voice. All people, regardless of their age, appreciate praise and acknowledgement for their efforts. Positive reinforcement goes a long way because the more successful students feel, the more effort they will put into succeeding.

Students who feel good about themselves have an advantage during the educational years. They’re less dependent on impressing others, and they tend to face challenges with confidence. Here are some ways to build self-esteem in your child.

**Be realistic.** If a youngster is like many students, their view of themselves (outgoing or shy, artsy or athletic) is based on where she/he fits in among their peers. But instead of comparing themselves to others, urge them to recognize their strengths and pursue them.

**Choose friends wisely.** Encourage your child to spend time with people who build them up and avoid those who put them down or talk behind their back.

**Help Others:** Making a difference in another person’s life can boost your student’s self-confidence. They will take pride in being a leader and a role model. Suggest that they tutor younger students or volunteer with children’s programs at a community center.

There are a lot of winter bugs going around and we strongly advise that all unwell children stay at home so that germs/illnesses do not get shared around the school. Recent reports of illnesses are anything from upset stomach, cold/flu, headaches, and strep throat. We recommend that any symptoms of a sore throat be checked out by your doctor. We thank you for your assistance in trying to keep the school healthy and bug-free!

If you should have any questions or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to call me at the school office. Here’s to a fantastic, enriching second half of the school year.

*Russell Jones Education Center*

*Mission: Through expertise and commitment, the Russell Jones Education Center provides a therapeutic learning environment to prepare each student with skills to enjoy success in life.*

## IMPORTANT DATES

January 26	PTA Meeting	5:00 pm
February 9	Parent Advisory Committee Meeting (Elementary parents)	5:00 pm
February 15	Parent Teacher Conferences	5:00 – 8:00 pm
February 16	Parent Teacher Conferences	5:00 – 8:00 pm
<b>February 17</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b>
<b>February 20</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL (Presidents Day)</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b>
February 23	Spring Pictures	During school
February 23	PTA Meeting	5:00 pm
February 27	Field Trip – “Where the Sidewalk Ends”	During school
March 9	Parent Advisory Committee Meeting (Secondary parents)	7:30 am
March 16	End of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	
<b>March 17</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL (Teacher Workday)</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b>
<b>March 20-24</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL (Spring Break)</b>	<b>NO SCHOOL</b>
March 30	PTA Meeting	5:00 pm

## No-Tax-Increase Bond Issue

### Spotlight on Bond Projects: High School Plans

Among the projects in the no-tax-increase bond issue on the April 4 ballot is a facility for high-school students. Meeting the needs of our high-school students and their class sizes is part of the long-range facility plan, which is based on our enrollment growth.

The first step of this plan is a leased space, which will be the first home of the LEAD Innovation Studio. Starting next school year, some Park Hill High School and Park Hill South High School students will learn at LEAD. This will free up classroom space while giving these students a flexible, personalized learning environment, focused on problem-solving skills, project-based learning and professional experiences.

If approved, the no-tax-increase bond issue will

pay to build a district-owned facility designed for the needs of the LEAD students. It would also be the first phase of a full high school, so that we could build onto it if we get enough enrollment. Although our current projections show that our growth could slow, our patrons told us during the public-input stages of our long-range planning process that they preferred a new high school. In keeping with that feedback, this is a conservative plan that allows us to wait and see whether we need an entire high school.

### Other Projects

The no-tax-increase bond issue also includes these projects:

- A new elementary school
- A new middle school
- A district warehouse and support services facility to support our classrooms and maintain our facilities
- Improvements to existing facilities

If economic conditions leave enough proceeds from the bond issue, we would also

- Build a transportation center, which could save us money on busing
- Pay for maintenance projects in our existing facilities

It is possible to pay for these projects with no tax increase because of our Board’s careful money management and good financial stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Thanks to good financial management by the district, Park Hill is in a position to ask for a bond without raising taxes. This is a result of aggressively paying off existing debts and refinancing for better rates. Local commercial and residential growth has also helped by expanding the local tax base. Because of these factors, we have room in our state-set debt limit to take on additional debt with no tax increase. We will continue to carefully monitor our debt and interest rates in order to save taxpayer dollars.

Thanks to their conservative budgeting, we have enough room in our debt service levy to issue bonds to cover the cost of these new schools and projects with no tax increase.

For more information about Park Hill’s no-tax-increase bond issue, please visit the district’s website at <http://www.parkhill.k12.mo.us/>.