



MAKING A MARK ON COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A YEAR IN REVIEW

BULLDOG BBQ LEARNING TASTES GOOD

Bulldog BBQ is a new class at Douglass High School that is meeting the goal of providing students some project-based learning, while also providing some tasty BBQ meals for members of the district, and possibly in the future, the community.

The class was the brainchild of Douglass Assistant Principal Kerry Hesse and Outreach Counselor Kelly Anderson. School director Eryca Neville had encouraged her staff to think about some hands-on activities that would be learning opportunities for the students. While at a University of Missouri football game, Hesse and Anderson were watching the tailgates and the idea of a BBQ class was hatched.

"When I came up with the idea, I supported it wholeheartedly. The kids were engaged and they learned a lot." - Eryca Neville

With the help of a smoker from Spicewine Ironworks and Craig Adams, the practical arts chair for the district, Bulldog BBQ started in the second semester of last school year with 10 students. They put to use a previously unused, former family and consumer sciences kitchen to cater some events around the district. They also spent time learning about the history of the food they were creating as well as local history.

"We incorporated the academics," Hesse said. "We looked at the history of food in this neighborhood and studied the types of BBQ and the importance of BBQ through history."

"I was looking for course work that was project-based," Neville said. "something that would engage the students. When they came up with the idea, I supported it wholeheartedly. The kids were engaged and they learned a lot."

The students hosted the district's central office staff, providing a meal along with a presentation on their study of the local cuisine. They were also at Hickman three times, catering meals for up to 500 each.

Continued on page 3 ...

2010 BOND PROGRESS

The \$120 million bond approved by the voters in 2010 continues to fund a handful of very visible district projects, as well as some maybe not as obvious as the construction of a new high school.

Battle High School is 77 percent complete as of June and is on schedule. Work being done over the next handful of months includes indoor finish work between now and December and landscaping, asphalt and football field turf, among many other things, done between now and October. The work site averages about 200 workers a day on the \$75 million project and it is set to open when school starts in August of 2013.

Another project set for the Battle area is a new elementary school, to be located just north of the high school. Design and development began July 1. The school is set to open in August of 2015.

New gyms at both Hickman and Rock Bridge high schools are both on schedule for their opening in August of 2013. The two projects, at a combined cost of \$7.5 million, are 20 percent complete. Work continues at a "rapid pace," said Nick Boren, the district's deputy superintendent, as well as work on Hickman's stadium, which should be ready for the Kewpies' first home game this fall.

Heating and air conditioning work is under way at five elementary schools: Midway Heights, Ridgeway, Grant, Lee and Two Mile Prairie. The work is due for completion before school starts this fall. Midway Heights is having a ground source system installed, while the others are undergoing more traditional system updates in the just over \$16 million project. The work also includes energy efficient window upgrades in the buildings, replacing some of the oldest in the district.

"We are looking to expand West Boulevard and New Haven, displacing the mobile classrooms, and the Early Childhood Learning Center on the Lange Middle School land. We are hoping to open in 2017." - Nick Boren

conditioning, so we will use district funds for the five schools as kind of a loan against ourselves. In August, every elementary school in the district will have central air conditioning or window units."

More air conditioning work is due in the next two years as well. Work at Jefferson Junior High School will be done in 2013, and 2014 will see work at West Junior High School, New Haven and Rock Bridge elementaries.

The bond issue passed by the citizens of Columbia in April of this year cannot be issued until 2014, but work on some of the projects it will fund has already begun.

"We are doing some preliminary work," Boren said. "We are aggressively looking for an elementary school site in the southwest part of town. We are looking to expand West Boulevard and New Haven, displacing the mobile classrooms, and the Early Childhood Learning Center on the Lange Middle School land. We are hoping to open in 2017."



Battle High School construction site

YEARBOOK 2012

IN THIS ISSUE ...

PAGE ONE

- 2010 BOND PROGRESS
- BULLDOG BBQ LEARNING TASTES GOOD

PAGE TWO

- CLASS OF 2012 LEADERS SPEAK
- ANOTHER VICTORY FOR ROCK BRIDGE FINANCE TEAM

PAGE THREE

- SECONDARY REORGANIZATION MEETS NEW MILESTONE

PAGE FOUR

- CPS STATISTICS

PAGE FIVE

- STUDENTS SURPASS NATIONAL AVERAGES
- CSIP
- COLUMBIA GED GRADUATES TOP 90

PAGE SIX

- EDUCATIONAL MODEL PROVIDES CREATIVE OPTIONS
- WEST JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TURNS FIFTY

PAGE SEVEN

- CAREER CENTER STUDENTS EARN HIGH HONORS

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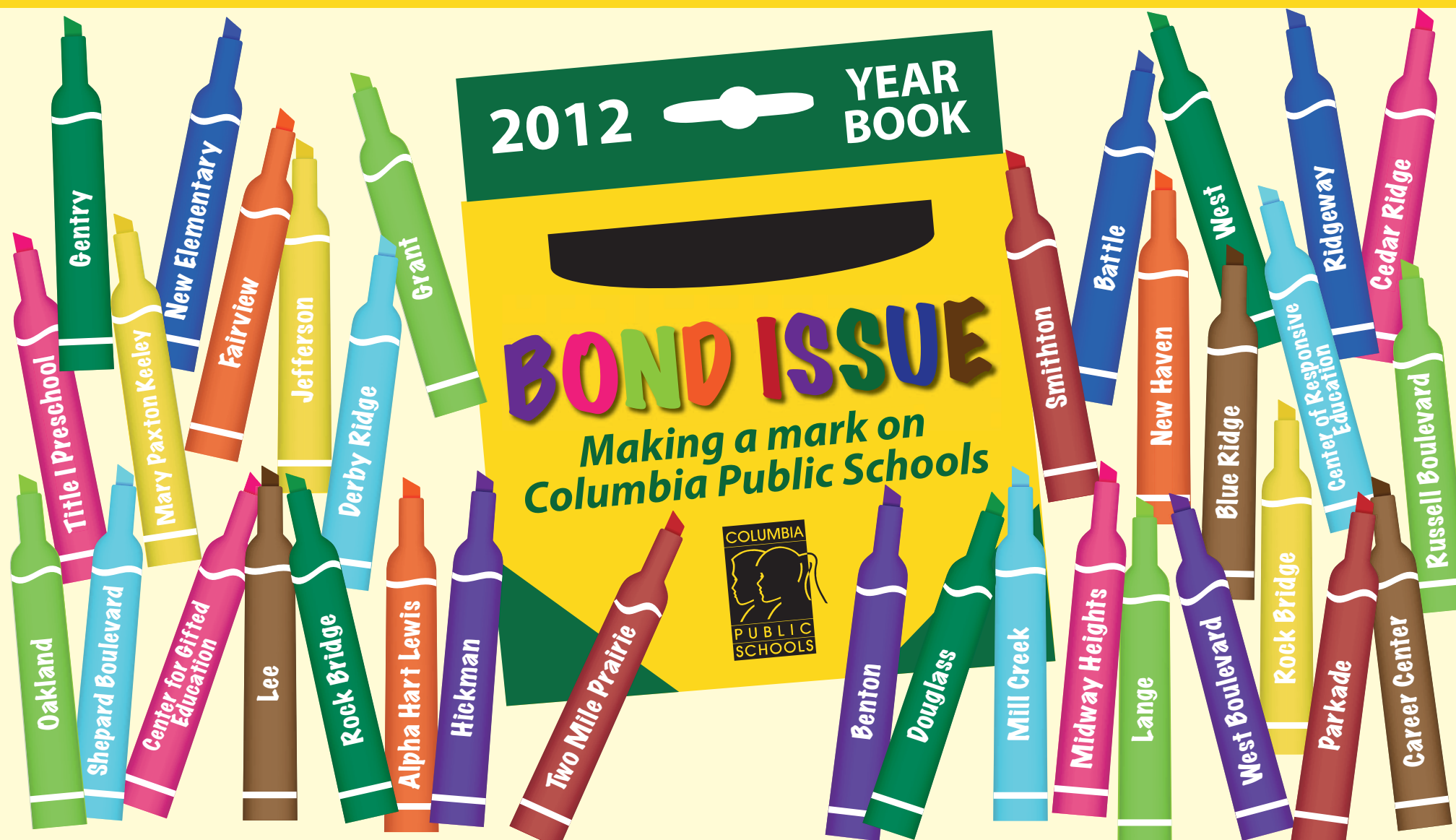
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HIGHLIGHTS

West Junior teacher honored by Missouri Bar

The Missouri Bar Citizenship Education Program honored **Brenda Blankenship**, a social studies teacher at West Junior High School, with the E.A. Richter Award for Excellence in Citizenship Education in May. The award was presented at the first annual We the People Capstone Showcase held at Columbia College's Dorsey Hall. Blankenship recently led efforts to create and organize a government capstone project engaging more than 1,200 students from all three Columbia junior high schools. Students studied government using the nationally acclaimed "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" program.

Rock Bridge student among National PTA Reflections winners

Rock Bridge High School student **Daphne Yu** received an award of merit in the National PTA Reflections Contest, Musical Composition category, high school age division, for her original work "Battle of Nature." Winners were chosen from hundreds of thousands of submissions from students across the nation and in European schools serving military families. This year's program theme was "Diversity Means..."

Lacrosse association recognizes CPS students

Three CPS students were recognized by the Missouri Scholastic Lacrosse Association (MSLA) for their outstanding work this season. Rock Bridge High School student **Jackson Maguigad** and Hickman High School students **John Gilmore** and **David Nittler** were named to the MSLA Division II, 2012 First Team All Conference - National Division.

District receives What Parents Want award

Columbia Public Schools is one of 29 Missouri school districts to receive the 2012 *What Parents Want* award from SchoolMatch, an independent school selection consulting firm. The Columbia, Ohio-based firm ranks school systems in a national percentile format, making it possible for comparisons by parents, home buyers, corporate leaders, policymakers, educators, or realtors using its services.

Hickman student wins Switzerland trip at Intel science fair

Hickman High School sophomore **Mingu Kim** competed as one of 1,500 finalists from 65 countries at the recent Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Pittsburgh, PA. Mingu was selected as one of 12 finalists to receive an all-expense-paid trip to tour CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research) in Geneva, Switzerland. Mingu is the fifth Intel ISEF finalist from Hickman since 2001.

Fifth grade honors choir earns top honors

Columbia Public School's Fifth Grade Honors Choir, under the direction of **Susan Altomari** and **Melissa Straw**, won first place in the Elementary Choral Division at the 2012 Music Showcase Festival International's Festival of Music. The 70-member chorus won the first place trophy for Elementary Chorus, as well as the overall Elementary Choral Division. The overall score of 197 out of a possible 200 has qualified the choir to compete for the Grand Sweepstakes Award, which will be presented to the highest-scoring elementary chorus in the nation.

CLASS OF 2012 LEADERS SPEAK

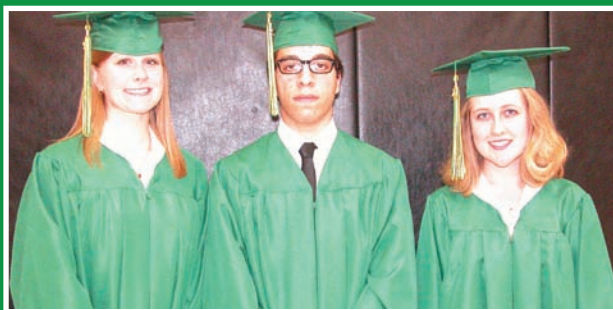
“I moved here as a sophomore and Hickman has given me so much, both as a student and as a human being.” - Jium Lee

“It has been a lot about opening doors and eyes; the chance to explore a lot of topics.” - Marina Steinbauer

“I live in the Rock Bridge district and I debated a lot. Based on what I received here, I made the right decision.” - Daniel Hwang

“As an army brat, I have seen many districts. There are so many opportunities in this district.” - Stephanie Morse

ROCK BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL VALEDICTORIANS



L to R: Katherine Hobbs, Ivas Daghlaz, Amy Scott
Not Pictured: Jeremy Lombardo

“It has been a privilege to go to school at Rock Bridge. We get to learn from some wonderful teachers.” - Katherine Hobbs

“It has meant the world to me. For that I am extremely thankful.” - Iyas Daghlaz

“I have made so many great memories I will keep my whole life. I could not have had a better high school experience.” - Amy Scott

HICKMAN HIGH SCHOOL VALEDICTORIANS



L to R: Jium Lee, Marina Steinbauer, Daniel Hwang, Stephanie Morse

DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2012



Douglass High School Class of 2012

ANOTHER VICTORY

FOR ROCK BRIDGE PERSONAL FINANCE TEAM

A team of seniors from Rock Bridge High School took first place in the National Personal Finance Challenge held in May in St. Louis. Rock Bridge's national championship team, named Tina and the Liabilities, included Tina Wang, Christian Ackmann, Amy Scott and Nick Sun. Their coach was teacher Susan Lidholm.

The National Personal Finance Challenge is sponsored by Wells Fargo Advisors and organized by the Missouri Council on Economic Education. The competition starts regionally with more than 10,000 teams competing from across the United States. The top teams were selected to compete in the national competition at the Wells Fargo headquarters building in St. Louis. The students competing in the national competition had to score high on rigorous tests and multiple rounds of "in person" day-long events that ended with "quiz bowl" competitions.

The students test their knowledge of money manage-

ment, budgeting, saving, investing, spending, credit and other financial topics. After the testing, the two teams with the highest scores advance to the final showdown. This year's competition culminated with a "quiz bowl" finale between teams from Missouri and Texas. In addition to school trophies, each member of the first place team received \$1,000.



SECONDARY REORGANIZATION

MEETS NEW MILESTONE

The year-and-a-half long work done to reorganize Columbia Public Schools’ secondary levels reached another milestone as the 2011-12 school year closed with most of the nearly 700 affected faculty members having found new homes for the 2013-14 school year.

“Over 88 percent of our faculty got either their first or second choices,” said Dana Clippard, the district’s assistant superintendent for human resources. “We started the transition for teachers in January, after the boundary work was done.”

In February, the Secondary Enrollment Planning Committee presented its boundary recommendations to the Board of Education. The work was done to incorporate a third comprehensive high school, Battle High School, into the district when it opens in August of 2013. The district is also shifting away from the sixth and seventh grade middle school, eighth and ninth grade junior high and 10th through 12th grade senior high model to a model with a sixth through eighth grade intermediate level and ninth through 12th grade high school level.

This shift also requires teachers to choose which building or grade level they’d like to be placed in when the reorganization is complete in 2013.

Teachers made a list of priority schools both by content and location. Combined with the student information available, once the boundaries were approved, choices were made in conjunction with the building principals. Once decisions were made and double-checked, letters were sent out to the teachers before the school year ended.

“It was done very well,” said Chris Belcher, Columbia Public Schools superintendent. “We kept people involved and got the letters sent before school was out so that there would be no anxiety over the summer. I could not have been more pleased with that. We have done what we said we would do. The feedback we have received from teachers was ‘thank

you’ and our focus groups asked us not to wait another summer.”

“The letters were co-signed, not just by human resources,” Clippard said, “but also from their new building principal. We wanted it to be not just from HR, but also from their principal.”

Some teachers have yet to be placed as of the summer break - mostly teachers in elective courses, a number less than 20. Those placements will depend on enrollment figures, which are not yet available.

“It was a two-year process and a very positive process, given the magnitude of the change,” Clippard said. “We had to build the process and structure from the ground up. No district we found has done this to the magnitude we have. Our goal was more input and clear and transparent communication so that there would be no surprises for anyone.”

Next will be the transition of the support personnel. With the frameworks in place from the teacher transition, Clippard said she can envision that process possibly going a bit quicker when it starts this fall.

“We have done what we said we would do. The feedback we have received from teachers was ‘thank you’ and our focus groups asked us not to wait another summer. ” - Chris Belcher

“Teachers were the biggest group. We will work on support employees in the fall and have them done no later than spring of next year. We know some things from this process and there are things we have already accomplished, so it may go quicker for the support staff,” said Clippard.

“Through all of the secondary reorganization process, we kept students at the heart every step of the way. It was a multi-faceted process, but whatever the area, it was driven by student-centered thinking.”

BULLDOG BBQ CONTINUED ...

The students all received their food handler’s licenses from the health department and the class will continue in the fall. Hesse is working on the insurance so that Bulldog BBQ might be able to serve outside of the district as well.

“A lot of kids work in fast food fields,” Hesse said. “We look to provide more internship opportunities to help them gain experience.”

“I like anything that is authentic,” said Chris Belcher, Columbia Public Schools superintendent. “It can be a benefit for the students, developing these skills, and the food was very good.”

HIGHLIGHTS

Business office earns financial reporting recognition
Columbia Public Schools’ Business Services department has received the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO)’s Certificate of Excellent in Financial Reporting award for having met or exceeded the program’s high standards for financial reporting and accountability. The district was recognized for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ending 2011. The Certificate of Excellence (COE) award confirms the district’s commitment to financial accountability and transparency.

“Book Reports for Burgers” challenge results
Second through fourth-grade students in Columbia Public Schools completed book reports during the month of March, answering Stadium Grill’s “Book Reports for Burgers” challenge. The local, sports-themed restaurant, a Partnership Friend in the district’s Partners In Education program, initiated the contest to encourage kids’ love of reading. Students in participating classes completed at least four book reports during the contest to receive a free burger certificate from Stadium Grill. The following students also received free burgers for a year for completing the most book reports in their schools: **Justin Douty** from Fairview Elementary School, **Tessa Greenup** from Rock Bridge Elementary School, and **Alexis Walker** from Shepard Boulevard Elementary School. Stadium Grill delivered lunch to the two classes that completed the most book reports out of all the participating schools in the district. **Elizabeth Mottaz’s third-grade class** at Rock Bridge Elementary School completed 76 book reports.

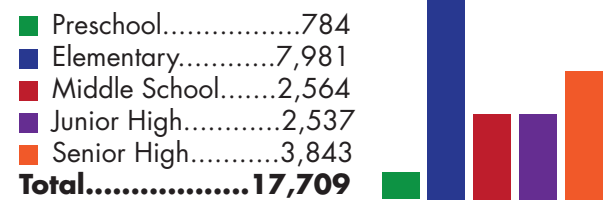
Hickman student earns scholarship to study abroad
Hickman High School junior **Sean Brennan** has been awarded a National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) scholarship. The NSLI-Y program is funded by the U.S. Department of State and provides merit-based scholarships for eligible high school students to learn less-commonly-taught languages in summer and academic-year overseas immersion programs. The NSLI-Y scholarship enables Sean to study Korean in South Korea for six weeks this coming summer.

3M Foundation awards grant to Shepard
The 3M Foundation has awarded Shepard Boulevard Elementary School a \$10,000 Ingenuity Grant to spark student interest and achievement in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) across grades and curriculum areas. Recipients are selected based on program alignment with school district goals; student engagement and achievement; the program’s relevance and connection to the world beyond the classroom, careers, and the community; and an evaluation plan to determine the program’s success. 3M and Shepard have been Partners In Education since 1985. Principal JoNetta Weaver and teachers Susan Heath and Jan McLuckie, along with support from their local 3M partners, were involved in securing the grant funds for Shepard.

Shelter Insurance announces Contributor of the Year
Shelter Insurance, a Partner In Education with West Junior High School, has announced guidance counselor

STUDENT FACTS

Enrollment



Special program enrollment

| | |
|--|-------|
| Adult education..... | 8,151 |
| English Language Learners..... | 1,185 |
| Gifted education..... | 1,424 |
| Parents As Teachers families served..... | 2,233 |
| Special education..... | 2,071 |
| Career education..... | 1,555 |

Projected enrollment

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| 2012 – 2013..... | 17,907 |
| 2013 – 2014..... | 18,235 |
| 2014 – 2015..... | 18,476 |

Racial composition

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| White..... | 62.8% |
| Black..... | 20.2% |
| Asian..... | 5.2% |
| Hispanic..... | 5.5% |
| Multi..... | 5.6% |
| Other..... | 0.6% |

STAFF FACTS

Staffing ratios

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Students to all teachers..... | 13 to 1 |
| Students to administrators..... | 231 to 1 |
| Students to classroom teachers..... | 20 to 1 |

Teachers

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| Full-time equivalent (FTE)..... | 1,259 |
|---------------------------------|-------|

Average Salary

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Columbia..... | \$47,203 |
| Missouri estimate..... | \$46,291 |

Education

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Bachelor’s..... | 377 |
| Master’s or Specialist..... | 858 |
| Ph.D./Doctorate of Education..... | 24 |

Years of experience locally

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| 1-5 years..... | 406 |
| 6-10 years..... | 271 |
| More than 10 years..... | 582 |
| Average years of experience..... | 15.48 |

Administration

| | |
|--|----|
| Principals, assistant principals, directors, supervisors, coordinators central office staff..... | 94 |
|--|----|

Average Salary

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| Columbia..... | \$82,542 |
|---------------|----------|

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Missouri estimate..... | \$83,579 |
|------------------------|----------|

Education

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Master’s or Specialist..... | 69 |
| Ph.D./Doctorate of Education..... | 25 |

Years of experience locally

| | |
|----------------------------------|------|
| 1-5 years..... | 4 |
| 6-10 years..... | 12 |
| More than 10 years..... | 78 |
| Average years of experience..... | 18.2 |

STUDENT SUPPORT

| | |
|---|-----|
| Secretaries, aides, food service, PAT, nurses, mental health, custodians, technology staff..... | 698 |
|---|-----|

FINANCIAL FACTS

*Figures are projected pending finalization of the 2011 – 2012 expenditures.

Total revenue (projected).....\$266.6 million

Sources of revenue

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Local..... | 48% |
| Intermediate..... | 1% |
| State..... | 21% |
| Federal..... | 7% |
| Bonds..... | 23% |

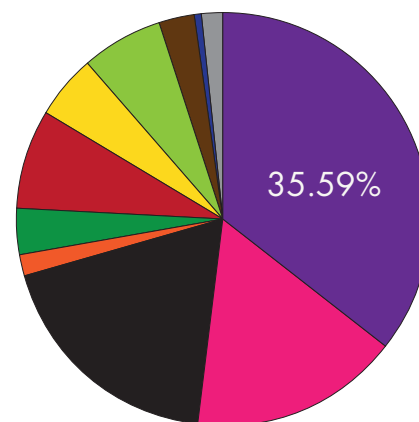
Total expenditures.....238.0 million

Average expenditure

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| per pupil..... | \$9,420* (2010-11) |
| Students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch..... | 38.9% |
| Student attendance rate (K-12)..... | 94.4% |
| Volunteers..... | 19,783 |
| Volunteer hours..... | 350,735 |
| Dollar value of service..... | \$7,642,515 |

HOW FUNDS WERE USED

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Instructional support..... | 35.59% |
| Capital projects..... | 16.46% |
| Debt service..... | 18.74% |
| Community services..... | 1.53% |
| Transportation..... | 3.74% |
| Pupil support..... | 7.66% |
| Administration..... | 5.18% |
| Business, maintenance services..... | 6.30% |
| Food Services..... | 2.73% |
| Adult Education..... | 0.65% |
| Technology Services..... | 1.47% |



| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Property tax rate..... | 4.8812 |
| (per \$100 assessed valuation) | |
| Tax levy uses..... | \$1.4212 operating fund |
| | \$2.5581 teachers fund |
| | \$.8019 debt service fund |
| | \$0.10 capital fund |

WHERE DO GRADUATES GO?

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| College..... | 74.2% |
| Employment..... | 14.6% |
| Post-secondary..... | 1.5% |
| Military..... | 1.6% |
| Other..... | 8.0% |

College Enrollment

74.2% of the district’s students attend college compared to 66.9% statewide.

MEASURES OF ACHIEVEMENT

Columbia’s students continue to meet or exceed expectations on formal standardized tests of achievement.

MAP performance

Columbia Public Schools’ 2011 MAP results overall are at an all-time high in mathematics and communication arts scores remained consistent with the same high scores as last year. Results have also increased in every grade in science from 2010. Additionally, Columbia Public Schools’ students exceeded state results in grades 5 and 7 in communication arts, and in grades 5 and 8 in mathematics. Students in grades 5 and 8 also exceeded state results in science. The 2011 MAP results also include data from the end-of-course exams in Algebra I/Integrated I, English II and biology. These end-of-course tests were added in 2009 and replace the MAP tests that were previously given at the high school level. Students outperformed the state on all three high school assessments. The noticeable bump in Algebra is due to a change in testing, as well as improved scores.

Explore Achievement Test

Columbia students’ average scores are on par with national averages on all assessed areas.

Plan Achievement Test

Columbia students’ average scores exceeded state and national averages on all assessed areas.

American College Test (ACT)

Columbia students’ average ACT scores exceeded state and national averages on all assessed areas. Approximately 73 percent of the district’s students take this college admissions test each year.

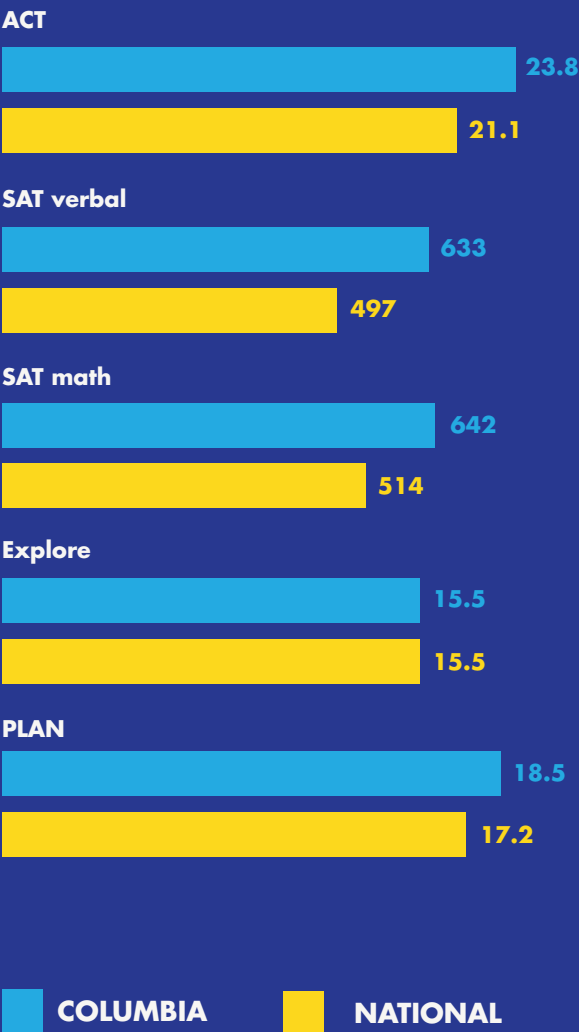
Advanced Placement Exams (AP)

The number of Columbia high school students taking AP exams continues to grow. Each year, district students take approximately 1,000 course exams with 85 percent earning AP credit.

State recognizes district’s success

In 2011-12, the district met or exceeded state accountability targets in 13 of 14 areas. Each year for the past eight years, the school district has been recognized by the state for “Distinction in Performance.”

STUDENTS SURPASS NATIONAL AVERAGES



COLUMBIA GED GRADUATES TOP 90

This year 90 students graduated from Columbia Public Schools with their GEDs, as they returned to the district after some time away to obtain their high school diploma equivalencies.

“Class length varies greatly,” said Christy Phillips, director of the General Educational Development (GED) program. “It can be a few weeks if they got in soon after high school, but it could be a few years if they are coming back after a while out. There are a lot of factors.”

The ages of those in the classes can vary widely as well, as the oldest graduate this spring was 50, but a 76-year-old graduate left the main Douglass High School campus a few years ago. Graduates in their 60s are not uncommon. However, 25-44 is the program’s biggest age group.

The GED program is based at Douglass High School, but it has other offices in Columbia, Centralia, Mexico and Fayette. The program is open to anyone not currently in high school who is at least 17.

The year begins like most other schools with orientation. However, this orientation also serves as registration and many times there are more people interested in the program than there are available seats.

To obtain their GED, students are tested in core subjects of reading, writing, social

studies, math and science.

“Different classes have different personalities,” Phillips said. “Degree seekers can work in structured class work, individual study or small group work.”

Students go through an assessment when they enter the program to see where they might need work. “If they are low on reading, we work on that first, then move onto other topics,” Phillips said.

The program also handles the English as a Second Language program for adults, which consists of around 400 students a year. About 600 students are taking GED classes during the year. Often a student will start in an ESL class and then move into the GED classes.



GED graduating class of 2012

CSIP: COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

VISION

To be the best school district in the state

- Student achievement as the priority
- Elimination of achievement disparities
- Equitable curriculum and learning opportunities to prepare all students for citizenship, careers and college
- Learner engagement
- Diversity
- Highly qualified staff
- Professionalism

MISSION

To provide an excellent education for all students

WE VALUE

- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Data-driven decisions
- A culture of dignity
- A safe learning environment
- Quality facilities
- Appropriate instructional resources
- Adequate technology resources and support
- Partnerships between schools, parents and the entire Columbia community
- Open, proactive communication
- Visionary leadership
- Excellent fiscal management and accountability
- Efficient, judicious use of public resources

HIGHLIGHTS

Julie Schelich as the 2012 Outstanding Contributor at West Junior High School. The Shelter and West Junior Partners In Education committee members joined Dave Moore, president and CEO of Shelter Insurance, to present Schelich with the Outstanding Contributor award along with a \$2,000 honorarium. Congratulations to the other West Junior High Outstanding Contributor nominees: **Brenda Blankenship, Mike Cranford, Jennifer Curtner, Chris Hysong, Marcus McGuinn, Debbie Poese, Becca Rackley, Yoko Smith,** and **Laura Zinszer.**

APAC and Fairview receive national recognition
Fairview Elementary School and its Partner In Education APAC Construction are being recognized by the American Road and Transportation Builders Association with two PRIDE Awards for the Build Up! and Quarry Days programs they provide to Fairview students. APAC, which provides construction services such as paving, site development, bridge construction, and underground construction, works with Fairview teacher Rene Wilcoxson to teach fifth-grade students about construction through a series of class lessons called Build Up! As part of Quarry Days, students visit a rock quarry and learn how fractions play a role in mixing asphalt. Fairview Elementary School and APAC Construction are also celebrating 10 years as Partners In Education.

Schools recognized for positive behavior interventions

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will recognize six Columbia schools for their implementation of Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support interventions. Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support is a proactive approach to put behavioral and social skills strategies in place for all students. Schools being recognized are **Mill Creek, New Haven, Paxton Keeley, Rock Bridge,** and **Russell Boulevard** elementary schools, as well as the **Quest program.**

Hickman student artist named international art expo finalist

Hickman High School student **Joanna Zou** is a finalist for the 2012 Creativity Connects Us International Art Exposition. As a finalist, her piece will be exhibited at the U.S. Department of Education national headquarters in Washington, DC, and will become part of a significant, permanent collection of children's original art.

Hickman senior selected as Presidential Scholars semifinalist

The U.S. Department of Education selected Hickman High School senior **Daniel Hwang** as a semifinalist in the prestigious U.S. Presidential Scholars Program. Established by Executive Order of the President in 1964, the Presidential Scholars Program recognizes some of America's most outstanding seniors. From nearly 3.2 million graduating high school seniors, approximately 3,300 students were identified as candidates in this program. About 550 students are selected as semifinalists based on their academic accomplishments.

EDUCATIONAL MODEL PROVIDES CREATIVE OPTIONS

A different kind of educational model is coming to three Columbia elementary schools as students and parents will be introduced to the concept of Small Autonomous Schools (SAS).

"As a district, we have no more transfers," said Peter Stiepleman, the district's assistant superintendent for elementary education. "So we were looking for a way to offer choices, but not overcrowd schools."

That search brought the district to the SAS model. In April, Ridgeway shifted to the model. Lee will do the same next year and Benton the year after that. The schools will have some individual controls over items such as staffing, budget, curriculum and calendar. However, the schools will still have to adhere to all state laws and district policies.

"Benton has a declining enrollment (down almost 60 students from five years ago)," Stiepleman said. "And the three schools are close to each other, so they can work together if they want to make decisions. They may decide to extend the school day certain days of the week, and offer an early out another day. They could do a number of things."

Stiepleman sees the freedom in staffing as a big plus for the schools, as they have the freedom to select teachers that will best meet their students' academic, social and emotional needs.

"We are looking for a way to offer choices but not overcrowd schools. ■ - Peter Stiepleman"

The schools will have their own councils, consisting of three teachers, three parents, the principal, a Partner In Education and a member of the district's central administration. The council will make decisions on the school's budget, staff selection and curriculum.

Chris Belcher, Columbia Public Schools superintendent, sees it as a creative answer to a subdivision of district students and parents.

"We have a niche population in the district who would prefer a different educational model. Because of state control of public schools, we had to get creative. What we are choosing to do, I have not seen another school district try. This is a new model to work from."

WEST JUNIOR HIGH TURNS FIFTY

Sandra Logan, West Junior High School principal since 1999 and on the staff since 1994, called the year-long festivities surrounding West Junior High's 50th anniversary "just phenomenal."

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

Tailgate celebration for West's homecoming football game against Jefferson Junior High School

"It was a huge event," Logan said. "A few hundred alumni came back, and we won the game!"

Spaghetti dinner, cake and reception during the annual Viking Classic

The Viking Classic is a girls' basketball tournament held in January.

A concert series held in February and March

"Almost every single band and choir director came back," Logan said. "Alumni came back and played instruments and sang at the concerts as well."

An "extravaganza" in May featuring a Battle of the Bands and many giveaways

"It could not have gone better," Logan said. "We had great weather and it was a wonderful celebration to end a great 50th year."



West Junior High School principal Sandra Logan (far right front) with former and current school band directors

CAREER CENTER STUDENTS

EARN HIGH HONORS

The Columbia Area Career Center continues its tradition of students earning top state and national honors.

Two teams representing Columbia competed in the 3D Visualization and Animation contest at the Missouri SkillsUSA competition. Team 1, consisting of Carl Baldwin and Cameron Weber, won first place; Team 2, consisting of Samuel Kloeppel and Richard Shinkle, won second place. Additionally, Ezekiel Rachow won first place in Electronics Technology.

Also as a part of the SkillsUSA competition, four Career Center students earned top three finishes in the Culinary Arts competitions, two of which are moving on to national competition. The students are Will Kinney (first place, Culinary Arts), Mallory Barnes (first place, Commercial Baking), Hailey King (second place, Culinary Arts) and Ashleigh Johnson (third place, Commercial Baking). Kinney and Barnes will compete at the SkillsUSA National Convention.

The students are constantly prepping as they lead up to their national competition in Culinary Arts. They work from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily with one of the three chefs who work at the Career Center: Chefs Jeff Rayl, Carri Risner and Brook Harlan. Kinney worked on a chicken fabrication with Harlan, part of which included exact knife cuts of the chicken so that when the cubes were put back together, they formed a perfect square.

Kinney, a spring graduate from Rock Bridge, has cooked most of his life and will attend Cornell in the fall to study hotel administration. Barnes will be a senior in the fall at Rock Bridge. She has been baking “ever since I can remember.” Her competition will consist of seven things: decorating a cake, and making a coffee ring, cinnamon roll, sugar cookies, danish, bread (knot rolls, braided loaf and pumpkin) and pie.

The Career Center sent 12 students to compete in marketing tasks at the DECA national conference after they placed in the top five in the state. From Rock Bridge High School, Alaina Battaglia (first place, Apparel & Accessories Marketing), Annemarie Van Doren (first place, Business Services Marketing), Harry Schauwecker (first place, Food Marketing Series), Syed Ejaz (fourth place, Human Resource Management), Shane Kuse (second place, Marketing Management), Michael Fentress (fifth place, Marketing Management), Rachel Volmert (third place, Retail Merchandising), Alex Gregory (fifth place, Business Finance Series) and Kaitlyn Robertson (third place, Principles of Hospitality & Tourism); and from Hickman High School, Spencer Claiborne (first place, Quick Serve Restaurant). The following DECA students qualified for nationals in team events: from Rock Bridge High School, Will Echelmeier and Coltin Hermann (fifth place, Sports & Entertainment). Fentress finished in the top 10 nationally in a role playing event, earning a medal.



Will Kinney, Culinary Arts student, preps for Nationals

DECA advisors for the Columbia Area Career Center are Pete Eichholz and Scott Fuenfhausen.

The FFA program is another earning high honors for the district. The team earned second place for the National FFA Grasslands team: Julie Matera, Kira Kirk, Tory Chasteen and Sarah Darr. FFA advisors are Larry Henneke, Kevin Duncan, Sherie Rodekohr and Chuck Miller.

“They are such consistent winners,” said Julie Lyman, Teacher Support/Data Coordinator for the Career Center of the FFA program. “They are constantly prepping for this and are such an active group.”

Eight Hickman High School students competed at the FBLA State Leadership Conference in Columbia. All eight members and advisers Colleen Goss and Jeaniene Thompson attended the conference. David Leon and Mike Richardson have qualified for national competition, which will be held in San Antonio, Texas. Hickman had the following winners: Cody Wilson (sixth, Accounting II), David Leon and Mike Richardson (first, Business Ethics, team performance event), Tina Brinkmann and Kelsey Klein (fourth, Business Presentation), Spencer Claiborne (eighth, Digital Design and Promotion) and Kevin Long (third, Digital Video Production).

Five students will represent Columbia Public Schools at the Future Problem Solving Program International Conference at the University of Indiana. The West Junior High School Future Problem Solving team, comprised of Stephanie Kang, Anna Lauriello, Amanda Sun and Shirley Zhang won the Missouri state championship in the global team problem solving middle division competition. Hickman High School student Maggie Leuchtmann won the Missouri state championship in the senior division individual problem solving competition. These students will go on to compete against representatives from 39 states in the United States, as well as students from Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Hong King, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Portugal, Russia, Singapore and Turkey.

HIGHLIGHTS

Science Olympiad

Congratulations to the following Columbia Science Olympiad teams who placed in the state competition at the University of Missouri: **West Junior High School** (3rd in Division B, alternate for national competition), **Smithton Middle School** (5th in Division B), **Hickman High School** (7th in Division C), and **Rock Bridge High School** (9th in Division C).

Rock Bridge journalism publications take top national honors

At the recent journalism convention of the National Scholastic Press Association in Seattle, Washington, Rock Bridge High School’s online publication, **Bearing News**, won the Pacemaker Award, which is considered by many to be student journalism’s highest honor. The Rock Bridge journalism program also placed in three “Best in Show” categories, winning first place in special edition for its feature magazine **Southpaw**. **The Rock** collected fifth in newspaper broadsheet category, 17 pages or more, and **Bearing News** took ninth place in online publication. Rock Bridge students winning individual awards include **Kirsten Buchanan, Nadav Gov-Ari, Maria Kalaitzandonakes, Jackie Nichols, Rena Rong, Jack Schoelz, Theresa Whang, and Emily Wright**.

Hickman students score in top 50 in calculus competition

Congratulations to Hickman High School students **Mingu Kim** and **Adam Suppes**, who scored in the top 50 on the national AP Calculus Online Competition. More than 1,100 students participated in the competition.

Hickman student wins wrestling championship

Hickman High School junior **J’den Cox** won the National High School Coaches Association National Wrestling Championship in Virginia. J’den won the 220-pound bracket, which features some of the nation’s best junior wrestlers. He advanced to the finals with three victories by 10 or more points and a pin. In the championship match, he beat Nevada’s Spencer Empey 8-2. J’den also won his third straight high school state title.

Health occupations students head to nationals

Five students will represent Columbia Public Schools at the Future Problem Solving Program International Conference at the University of Indiana. The West Junior High School Future Problem Solving team, comprised of **Stephanie Kang, Anna Lauriello, Amanda Sun** and **Shirley Zhang** won the Missouri state championship in the global team problem solving middle division competition. Hickman High School student **Maggie Leuchtmann** won the Missouri state championship in the senior division individual problem solving competition. These students will go on to compete against representatives from 39 states in the United States, as well as students from Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Hong King, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Portugal, Russia, Singapore and Turkey.