

PARKLAND

SCHOOL DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2026

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AND MUCH MORE!

PHS BAND'S HAWAIIAN ADVENTURE



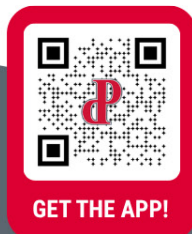
The Parkland High School Trojan Marching Band had the incredible honor of performing at the USS Bowfin Submarine Museum & Park, surrounded by the history and sacrifice that define Pearl Harbor in Hawaii this past May. Students visited the USS Arizona Memorial, where they reflected on the lives lost and the bravery shown on December 7, 1941.

What made the trip truly special was watching our students fully embrace the meaning behind the experience. Their performance was more than music; it was a tribute of respect, gratitude, and remembrance. For many, this was a life-changing event that will stay with them forever.

We are incredibly proud of the way these young musicians represented Parkland High School with professionalism, compassion, and heart.

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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Parkland Community,

As we open the doors for the 2026-27 school year, it is a pleasure to welcome our students, families, and staff back to our hallways. The energy of a new academic year is always inspiring, and this fall is particularly exciting as we witness the physical transformation of Parkland High School. We have successfully completed the first phase of our renovations, which includes a new secure front entrance vestibule, a welcoming visitor area, and dedicated office spaces for our support teams, including counselors and school nurses. While construction on new classroom wings will continue throughout the year, the site is securely managed to ensure limited disruption to our students' learning. This project remains both on schedule and on budget, as we also move forward with planning to address long-term capacity needs at the middle school level.

School Board Committee of the Whole

In our ongoing effort to foster a culture of transparency and collaboration, the Parkland School Board has transitioned to a "Committee of the Whole" meeting format. Rather than breaking into smaller sub-groups, all nine board members now deliberate together on every district matter. These public workshop-style meetings, typically held at 6 PM on the Monday preceding the monthly School Board Meeting, provide a space for thorough discussion and shared decision-making. We invite you to join us at the Administration Center (1210 Springhouse Rd) to stay informed. Agendas are always available on our website under the School Board tab at www.parklandsd.org. We encourage you to visit our website to verify exact meeting dates and times.

Data Center

We continue to closely monitor the proposed Atlas Data Center project on Cedar Crest Boulevard. Because this development sits across from Parkland High School, the district remains a vocal advocate for the safety and health of our students and staff. While approval authority lies with South Whitehall Township, we are actively communicating our concerns regarding infrastructure and local impact to township officials, the developer, PPL Electric, and the Lehigh County Authority. We are committed to keeping you informed on this front; you can find our latest updates and formal inquiries at www.parklandsd.org/about-us/atlas-data-center.

Fall Activities

Our community spirit is truly at its peak during fall activities. Following a remarkable year where sixteen of our sports teams secured championships, we are thrilled to announce that admittance fees have been eliminated for turf stadium sports, including soccer, field hockey, and lacrosse. We hope to see the stands filled with Trojan pride! Beyond the field, we are excited for our upcoming fall PHS stage shows and our special "Holiday Dress Your Best" event for senior citizens on December 10th. We also remind families that through state funding, nutritious breakfast remains free for all students across the district, ensuring every child starts their day ready to succeed.

Supporting these programs and maintaining our high academic standards requires a foundation of long-term financial health. As part of our commitment to transparency, we want to keep you updated on our fiscal strategy, "Efficiency in Excellence," which was outlined in our June newsletter. Like many of our families, the District is navigating an environment where external costs are rising faster than traditional revenue. To protect the Parkland experience for generations to come, we are proactively evolving our funding models with the goal of achieving a structurally balanced budget by the 2031-32 school year. This disciplined stewardship ensures that we can continue to innovate while remaining responsible to our taxpayers. For more details on our long-term financial planning, please visit our Budget webpage: <https://www.parklandsd.org/departments/business-administration/budget>.

We thank you for your continued support and look forward to a wonderful school year.

Sincerely,

Mark J. Madson, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



A special congratulations is extended to the Parkland Pride Award winners who went above and beyond to make Parkland a great place for students to grow this past school year.

Aksana Acuna
Kenneth Cuomo
Brianna Dirnbeck
Danelle Dottery
Jason Figueroa
Jason Fox
Kelsey Frary
Jennifer Garland
Abbigail Hoke
Terry Hristofas
Kimberly Ivory
Stephanie Knowlton
Brynn Lansenderfer
Erica Lutri
Melissa Lynn
Melissa Macia
Lauri Moore
Shelby Morgan
Debra Oplinger
John Oplinger
Jennifer Schmoyer
Rachel Shiffer
Mark Stana
Lauren Will
Ashley Zulli

BUDGET DID YOU KNOW?



THE HOUSEHOLD BUDGET ANALOGY

The current 2026-27 budget had a shortfall of approximately \$9.7M. Total revenues are estimated at \$252M and total expenditures are about \$261.7M. This is due to our expenses growing faster than revenues.

The "So What?": Imagine a household where income grows by 3% annually, but the cost of utilities, groceries, and insurance grows by 5%. Over time, you fall behind even though you are earning more, creating a structural deficit. Parkland faces this same pressure: external costs are rising faster than our revenue, creating a gap that requires proactive management.

SPOTLIGHT: HISTORY AWARD WINNERS

A huge congratulations to **Abhinav Thadepalli, Saharsha Konda, and Rishi Ponda** for securing 2nd Place in the Senior Group Website category in the state competition of National History Day! Their project, *The Watergate Scandal: Forging Transparency In American Governance*, explored government reforms in modern democracy. In addition, they earned the prestigious **White House History Award—a distinction given to only two projects out of 500,000 nationwide.**



Additional 1st and 2nd Place State Winners:

- **Rahini Chauhan:** 2nd Place, Individual Documentary – *Rewiring the Mind: How Neuroplasticity Sparked a Revolution*
- **Maryam Syamsuddin:** 2nd Place, Individual Performance – *A Voice in the Coalfields: Fannie Sellins and Labor Reforms*
- **Areesha Mariyam:** 1st Place, Individual Performance – *An Unjust Reaction to the Bolshevik Revolution: The Palmer Raids*
- **Julide Ozcan:** 1st Place, Individual Website – *Ether Day: Conquering Pain, Stirring Reaction, and Catalyzing Modern Medicine*
- **Imogen Middleton:** 1st Place, Junior Individual Website – *Girls to the Front: the riot grrrl revolution*
- **Hajar Syamsuddin:** 1st Place, Junior Individual Performance – *After Genocide and Revolution: The Journey of Healing Together Through Traditional Ways*

These achievements represent the very best of Parkland's academic excellence, drive, and community support. Special thanks to teacher Calliope Volikas, who serves as the PHS History Day advisor.

PARKLAND CHORALE: 2026 AMERICAN PRIZE FINALISTS

We are thrilled to announce that the Parkland Chorale has been selected as a national finalist for the 2026 American Prize in Choral Performance! The American Prize National Nonprofit Competitions in the Performing Arts is the nation's most comprehensive series of contests in the classical arts. The American Prize is designed to evaluate, recognize, and reward the best performers, ensembles, composers, directors, and conductors in the United States, with finalists selected based on submitted performance recordings. We are incredibly proud of our student musicians for this wonderful honor, which is a testament to their dedication and hard work.

PARKLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TACKLE NYC NAVY SEAL SWIM



Pictured left to right are **Bill Brown**, founder of the New York City SEAL Swim, **Luke Stahley**, **Jacob Piccini** and **Ethan Coleman**

Huge congratulations to Parkland High School Swim/Dive team members Ethan Coleman, Jacob Piccini, and Luke Stahley for participating in the 8th Annual New York City SEAL Swim this past August. This event brought together nearly 200 participants—including veterans, first responders, and civilians—to honor fallen heroes and support those returning from service.

Starting at Liberty State Park, the challenge included a nearly 3-mile swim through the Hudson River, passing iconic landmarks like the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island, and the Empty Sky Memorial, followed by a 3-mile run, 300 pushups, and three sets of 22 pullups.

The five-person local team, led by Parkland alumnus Ken Termini, spent the year fundraising throughout the Lehigh Valley, ultimately raising more than \$28,000 to support veterans, police, firefighters and other emergency responders and 9/11 survivors.

The event was conceived in 2019 by retired Navy SEAL and attorney William D. Brown Jr. to help former warriors recharge bonds, aid their transition to civilian life, and support families of the fallen.

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PARKLAND SENIOR CITIZEN CLASSES

REGISTER AT WWW.PARKLANDSD.ORG/SENIORS



The following classes will be offered this spring to Senior Citizens, ages 55 and older, who reside in the Parkland School District. **The classes are FREE of charge. Please register before the deadline of September 23, 2026*, online at www.parklandsd.org/seniors.**

If you don't have Internet access, call us at 610-351-5628 and we will assist you. We ask that people do not register unless they can attend a majority of the sessions. All classes will be reserved via a lottery system. Parkland School District will send out course notifications starting on September 25th. Kindly refrain from contacting the office until after September 28th if you have not yet received confirmation. Thank you.

WATER AEROBICS

Parkland High School Pool

Wednesdays, September 23 - October 28 6:00-7:00 PM

Saturdays, September 26 - November 14 (NO CLASS 10/3 & 10/24)
1:00-2:00 PM

*Register for water aerobics by September 17, 2026

This class, co-sponsored by Upper Macungie Township Recreation and South Whitehall Township Recreation, features low impact aerobics (conducted in shallow water). The class will focus on the use of all muscles and limbs, breathing and stretching. Water shoes or old, clean sneakers are suggested. Swim noodles are provided at the pool. Swimmers should enter through the lower entrance at the back of the Athletic Wing. *Please arrive no earlier than 15 minutes prior to class start to ensure entrance to the building and time to change in the locker room.*

LEARN TO PLAY PICKLEBALL

St. Luke's SportsPlex

Thursday, October, 1, 8, 15 or 22, 2:00-4:00 PM

This class is sponsored by St. Luke's SportsPlex. Learn the basics of the pickleball. No experience is necessary. Loaner paddles are available for beginners. The classes are a great way to get introduced to the sport and meet other players. Please only register for one class. *Maximum of 20 participants per class.*

GENTLE YOGA FOR EVERYONE

Cetronia Elementary School Gym

Tuesdays, September 29 - October 20, 4:30-5:30 PM

Gentle Yoga for Everyone, sponsored by South Whitehall Township will be taught by West End Studio Yoga Instructor, Beth Wernham. The intention of gentle yoga is connecting body, breath and mind to build strength, balance, and awareness in the present moment. With awareness to the needs of your own body, you will be guided into poses that will help to keep the spine and joints more flexible, while building stability and steadiness. Please bring your own yoga mat, blocks, and a blanket and arrive by 4:15 to start promptly at 4:30. *Maximum of 60 participants per class.*

LEARN TO SOLVE THE RUBIK'S CUBE!

Parkland School District Administration Building - Library

Mondays, September 28 - November 16 (NO CLASS 10/12 & 11/9),
4:00 PM-4:45 PM

Ready for a fun new mental challenge? Join high school student Logan Ma for a free, beginner-friendly class designed specifically for our senior community. In this relaxed and social setting, you'll learn the secret to solving the Rubik's Cube using simple patterns and step-by-step guidance. No experience is required! It's a wonderful way to boost your memory, sharpen your hand-eye coordination, and keep your mind active. Whether you're looking to impress your grandkids or just want to learn something new, come connect, have fun, and conquer the cube! Bring your own 3x3 cube if you have one, or use one of ours. *Space is limited to 10 participants.*

WELLNESS INITIATIVE FOR SENIOR EDUCATION (WISE)

Parkland School District Administration Building - Boardroom

Wednesdays, October 7 - November 18 (NO CLASS 11/11),
1:30-3:30 PM

The WISE (Wellness Initiative for Senior Education) program, sponsored by the Lehigh County Office of Aging and Adult Services, is a six-week wellness and prevention series designed specifically to support older adults in maintaining their overall health, safety, and independence. Join us for this free, evidence-based program to explore practical strategies for healthy aging, medication safety, stress management, and reducing the risk of substance misuse. Gain practical tools to enhance your well-being in a supportive, educational environment. *Class size is limited to 25 participants.*

ST. LUKE'S CHAIR & STRENGTH CLASS

Location: St. Luke's Fitness & Sports Performance Center-West End

Wednesdays, October 7 - October 28, 11:00 AM

Fridays, October 9 - October 30, 11:00 AM

This class, sponsored by South Whitehall Township Recreation, is a low-impact chair strength and mobility program designed to improve strength and mobility for adults of all activity levels. It is movement-based training for persons that want to work on balance, coordination, agility, and functional strength. This class is led by a St. Luke's Instructor. *Class size is limited to 50 participants. Please register for only one session.*

NEW EVENT FORMAT

DRESS YOUR
Holiday Best

DECEMBER 10 AT 5:30 PM

PARKLAND HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Parkland senior residents (55+) are invited to enjoy FREE appetizers made by our Parkland High School cooking class students, coffee bar, mocktails and Lehigh Career and Technical Institute student-made desserts, then adjourn to the auditorium for some great music by our talented high school students. Doors open at 5 PM. Refreshments will be served at 5:30 PM and concert begins at 7 PM.

Make a reservation at: www.parklandsd.org/seniors

No internet access? Call 610-351-5628 to have someone assist you.



JOIN US FOR A PHS STAGE SHOW THIS FALL

SENIOR NUTRITION FOR WELLNESS AND LONGEVITY

Parkland School District Administration Building - Boardroom

Friday, October 23*, 10:00-11:00 AM (*date change after print)

This class will be presented by Elliot Beadle RDN/LDN, performance dietitian with St Luke's Fitness Center, and will focus on how nutrition impacts health, longevity and mobility. It will focus on why nutrition becomes more challenging as we age, key nutrients for older adults, nutrition consideration for specific health conditions and tips for eating healthy every day. The only thing you need to bring is a pen and paper!

CHAIR YOGA FOR SENIORS

Parkland School District Administration Building - Boardroom

Thursdays, October 1 - November 5 (NO CLASS 10/8), 10:30-11:15 AM

With awareness of your own body, this gentle seated chair yoga class is for anyone looking for a safe and supportive way to move. This welcoming practice, led by Patti Pany, a certified chair yoga instructor, combines seated movement, breath awareness, mobility and circulation exercises along with encouragement for all levels and ability. It is recommended that you wear comfortable clothing and please arrive 15 minutes before class so we can promptly start at 10:30. *Maximum of 30 participants for this class.*



PHS Fall Play:
SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE
OCTOBER 16-18, 2026

Tickets on sale on www.cur8.com Monday, September 2nd, at noon. Admission prices are \$12 for students and seniors (65+); \$15 for adults. All sales are final; no refunds or exchanges permitted.



PHS Family Show:
ROALD DAHL'S WILLY WONKA JR.
NOVEMBER 20-22, 2026

Tickets on sale on www.cur8.com Monday, September 28th, at noon. Admission prices are \$12 for students and seniors (65+); \$15 for adults. All sales are final; no refunds or exchanges permitted.

CLASS OF 2026 RECOGNITION WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR THE CLASS OF 2026?

This fall, many Parkland graduates will head off to schools across Pennsylvania and beyond. Enrollment at Penn State University's Main Campus is 62 students, while 53 students will attend a Penn State branch campus. Additional college enrollment includes Cedar Crest (7), DeSales University (38), Kutztown University (25), Lehigh University (12), Moravian College (11), Muhlenberg College (13), Lehigh Carbon Community College (95) and Northampton Community College (28). Some other popular choices include University of Pittsburgh (17), West Chester University (16), Temple University (14), and Bloomsburg University (14).



PARKLAND'S TOP 3% RECOGNIZED AT COMMENCEMENT

During the Parkland graduation ceremony this year at the PPL Center, students graduating within the top 3% of the class were recognized for their outstanding academic performance. No class rank is published. The Class of 2026 students who were acknowledged in alphabetical order are: Neha Atchyuthuni (Cornell University), Raffaele Baccala (Thomas Jefferson University), Meadow Bracalente (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Jeffrey Chen (Pennsylvania State University), Joshua Collins (University of Florida), Amy Falk (Cedar Crest College), Sriram Joshi (University of California Berkeley), Aryan Kapoor (Undecided), Aneesh Kashalkar (Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey - New Brunswick), Arleen Kaur (Case Western Reserve University), Katherine Li (Pennsylvania State University), Hein Maung (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), Tushar Mehta (University of California Berkeley), Shaaf Mirrani (Elmira College), Shivam Patel (Georgia Institute of Technology), Melody Shen (Carnegie Mellon University), Brooke Stewart (Rowan University), Anas Suleiman (Lehigh University), Genevieve Vasquez (University of Pennsylvania), Jerry Wang (UC Berkeley), Hassan Yasir (Moravian University and LECOM), Grace Zhang (University of Virginia), and Gabrielle Zhu (George Washington University). Congratulations to our top 3% and all 785 of our 2026 graduates!

CLASS OF 2026 EXIT SURVEY

82%
of the class
will
attend college

64%
will
attend
a 4-year college

18%
will
attend a
2-year college

14%
will
enter the
workforce

2%
will
enter the
military

2%
will attend
a business/tech
school



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SAYING FAREWELL.... Congratulations 2026 Retirees

Parkland celebrated 63 retirees with a combined 1376 years in public education at the end of the school year. We wish the following people a wonderful new life journey:

Administrative Center

James Mickey

Cetronia Elementary

Debra Fernandes

Rachel Wieder

Fogelsville Elementary

Nancy Kemler

Brenda Talhelm

Cynthia Glick

Ironton Elementary

Charlene Schiebel

Michelle Staller

Jaindl Elementary

Diane Kelly

Lisa Lehman

Brenda Stewart

Diane Torok

Kratzer Elementary

Joanne Horoski

Louise Feher

Orefield Middle School

Sandra Daniels

Richard Schaffer

Elaine Letoski

Parkland High School

Terri Baker

Annette Benedetto

Donna Blose

Carolyn Coni

Kaye Coval

David Di Paolantonio

Michelle Gannon

Brian Kiernan

Franklin Lane

Sharon Oertner

Timothy Schwarz

Daniel Spaar

Karen Strohl

Julie Wood

Parkway Manor

Deborah Schirmacher

Diane Schrimpe

Mark Syslo

Schnecksville

Elementary

Joanne Marshaleck

Sharon Iacobelli

Springhouse

Middle School

Megan Bauer

David Brong

Sara Deily

Sandra Gackenbach

Eileen Haberstroh

Lisa Kadar

Rachel McLaughlin

Beth Pizzuto

Steven Quinn

Diane Ritzenthaler

Operations

Leeann Eck

Kerry Lewis

Richard Palmer

Jane Wentz

Transportation

Errol Barnes

Charles Chamberlain

Jeffrey Cushner

Domenic Emanuel

Kathryn Kotsch

Carl Kressley

Judith Pocze

George Yacoub

Ann Bachman

Bernice Bott

Raymond Nunn

Deborah Walck

Grace Stettner

Thank You

FOR YOUR SERVICE TO PARKLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

CONGRATULATIONS...

Lauryn Konieczka, School Psychologist. Best wishes in your new position.

REMOTE LEARNING DAYS WILL REPLACE FLEXIBLE INSTRUCTION DAYS

For the 2026-2027 school year, the Parkland School District is replacing traditional state-mandated Flexible Instructional Days (FIDs) with a localized Remote Learning Day model. These days feature a two-hour delayed start to provide staff with preparation time, and teachers are required to host synchronous check-ins while remaining accessible via email. Under this new framework, student attendance is tracked through participation or digital check-ins, while grading policies remain separate to ensure students are not unfairly penalized for late assignments. Because younger students in grades K-2 do not take devices home, they will utilize specific offline resources rather than live sessions. This transition limits learning disruptions during inclement weather and provides more flexibility than years past.

ELEVATING EXCELLENCE DUAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES EXPAND PATHWAYS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR PARKLAND STUDENTS

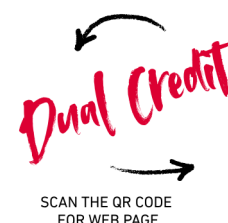
Parkland is dismantling the walls between secondary and post-secondary education by allowing students to earn college credits on and off campus through district-approved higher education partners. This initiative provides an opportunity for college-level rigor while significantly reducing the overall cost of a degree, supported by a vast network of partnerships that align with students' career and academic interests.

Active Collaborations

- Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC): Features dual-credit options taught by Parkland teachers, as well as the "Early College" program allowing juniors and seniors to earn an Associate Degree alongside their high school diploma and part-time college. LCCC also partners on specialized pathways like Private Pilot Flight Theory and Medical Assisting where Parkland students recently secured competitive Valley-wide slots and scholarships.
- Lackawanna College: Provides part-time college online opportunities and dual-credit options taught at PHS in Elective Sociology, Accounting, Business Management, and Marketing.
- Kutztown University: Features the "Early College Academy" with dedicated Education and Exploratory Studies tracks. Students complete morning coursework on Kutztown's campus before returning to PHS.
- Cedar Crest College, Penn State University-Lehigh Valley, Muhlenberg College and Moravian University: Provides part-time college experiences through access to select campus courses.
- Rochester Institute of Technology (PLTW): Certifies Parkland teachers to deliver national STEM curricula in Engineering and Biomedical Science for college credit.
- Seton Hall University: Offers dual-credit options via Project Acceleration for advanced World Language courses (Spanish, French, German, and Latin) taught at PHS by Parkland teachers.
- DeSales University: An upcoming collaboration currently in development to further expand student options.

Courses are offered through live, online, and hybrid formats. Interested students and their families can visit the PHS Dual Credit webpage or contact their guidance counselor during the course registration process to explore eligibility and application details.

Interested students and their families can visit the Dual Credit webpage or consult your guidance counselor.



Listen to Dr. Madson's #ParklandPride podcast for more details on Dual Enrollment/Early College.





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St. Luke's, leading the way.



BALANCING SCREENS AND LEARNING:

PARKLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT UPDATES DIGITAL GUIDELINES FOR 2026-27



As we enter the 2026-27 school year, Parkland School District remains deeply committed to fostering an environment where academic excellence, student wellness, and technology exist in a healthy, productive balance. Led by Superintendent Dr. Madson, district administrators and staff spent the spring and summer carefully evaluating local screen time data, gathering extensive feedback from our community, and reviewing the latest cognitive research.

To “close the loop” on this vital work and ensure our educational practices support the whole child, the district is introducing updated digital learning guidelines. These shifts are designed to maximize active classroom engagement, minimize screen-based distractions, and partner with parents to promote healthy digital habits both in school and at home.

WHAT THE DATA TELLS US: GRADE-BY-GRADE INSIGHTS

Our local data reveals that screen time naturally increases as students grow, but it also highlights areas where we can establish firmer boundaries to protect instructional quality.

Elementary Schools (Grades K-5)

- **Actual Usage:** Chromebook monitoring data showed that Kindergarten students averaged approximately 30 minutes of daily screen time, Grade 1 averaged 40 minutes, and Grade 2 averaged 60 minutes. Looking at data over a standard school week, K-2 students averaged less than 50 minutes of active screen time, while grades 3-5 averaged under 100 minutes per day, Monday - Friday.
- **Parent Perspectives:** Survey results showed that a vast majority of elementary parents who responded to our survey (80.3%) advocate for less than 60 minutes of daily digital instruction.
- **Instructional Target:** Parkland’s elementary target is 30 minutes to 1 hour of daily screen use, driven primarily by core learning in Math and ELA. This tight alignment between actual usage, parent preferences, and instructional goals highlights a strong community consensus around our current practice.

Middle Schools (Grades 6-8)

- **Actual Usage:** Middle school students averaged approximately 180 minutes of Chromebook usage per week, with Grade 7 leading overall usage.
- **Parent & Student Perspectives:** 89% of middle school parents agree that 90 minutes or less of daily screen time is appropriate for school.
- **Instructional Target:** Parent preferences mirror our practice at the

middle level as our teachers target usage at a highly focused 10 to 20 minutes per class period.

- **The Power of Hands-on Learning:** When asked what keeps them most engaged, 60% of middle schoolers identified “Hands-on Labs” as their favorite way to learn.

Parkland High School (Grades 9-12)

- **Actual Usage:** High school students averaged under 150 minutes of Chromebook usage per week.
- **Parent Perspectives:** Survey feedback from 2,375 students and 392 high school parents showed that 74% of parents prefer between 30 and 90 minutes of daily digital use.
- **Instructional Target:** High school instructional technology is designed to be highly episodic, targeting less than 10 minutes per period. At nine periods per day, with one period designated for lunch, teachers are meeting that target while utilizing learning apps like EdPuzzle to support learning.

KEY POLICY UPDATES FOR 2026-27

To put these insights into action, Parkland is implementing several practical policy updates starting this fall:

- **Keeping Chromebooks in Classrooms (K-3):** Building on our guidelines for K-2, Grade 3 students will now keep their district-issued Chromebooks in the classroom rather than taking them home daily. Chromebooks will only be sent home in the event of an anticipated remote learning day.
- **Device-Free School Bus Rides:** Elementary students will no longer be permitted to open or use Chromebooks during their daily bus commutes. This policy is designed to prevent accidental physical damage to the devices and, more importantly, to encourage social interactions and peer-to-peer connections during the ride.
- **Strict PHS “Off and Away” Cell Phone Ban:** Parkland High School will implement a strict policy prohibiting the use of personal cell phones and smart devices during all instructional periods. This policy directly addresses concerns from high school parents who noted that personal devices negatively impact academics due to distractions, and aligns with the preferences of our faculty who strongly advocate for consistent, school-wide mandates over individual classroom discretion.

Parkland School District is excited to embark on a school year that champions both digital literacy and balanced, healthy development. We look forward to working hand-in-hand with our community to make 2026-27 our most focused and successful year yet!

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND SIGNS OF DELAYS



CHECK OUT THE
#PARKLANDPRIDE
PODCAST

with
DR. MARK
MADSON

LISTEN TO THE EPISODES AT
WWW.PARKLANDSD.ORG/SUPERINTENDENTMADSON





Lisa Ervin
Executive Director, Parkland
Education Foundation
ervinl@parklandsd.net
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www.parklandsd.org/foundation

BACK TO SCHOOL



As the doors open to a brand-new school year across Parkland, there is an electric energy in the air. Desks are freshly set, hallways are filled with eager footsteps, and bright young minds are stepping into classrooms full of endless potential.

At the Parkland Education Foundation, back-to-school time always serves as a powerful reminder: it truly takes a village.

Behind every student who discovers a new passion, every teacher who brings a creative lesson to life, and every school that thrives, there is an entire community standing behind them.

- **Our Extraordinary Educators:** Who pour their hearts into inspiring and guiding our students every day. Beyond all they give in the classroom, our staff routinely goes above and beyond—raising over **\$40,000** every single year through our Parkland Education Foundation Employee Giving Program to fund extra opportunities for our kids.
- **Our Passionate Families & Volunteers:** Who lend their time, energy, and encouragement to support our school communities.
- **Our Generous Donors & Local Partners:** Whose constant support powers innovative classroom grants, staff development, and expanded opportunities for kids across all grade levels.

When we come together as one Parkland community, our impact goes far beyond the classroom—we create an environment where every child feels supported, valued, and empowered to reach for their biggest dreams. As we jump into the 2026–2027 school year, we want to say **thank you** to our entire Parkland village. Thank you for caring, for investing, and for believing in the bright futures of our students.

Here's to a school year filled with growth, joy, new discoveries, and community spirit!

YOUR IMPACT IN PARKLAND SCHOOLS

Headlines often focus on funding cuts, but the Parkland community focuses on student success. Thanks to your support, the Parkland Education Foundation awarded over \$250,000 in grants across all 12 district schools this school year. From middle school music production labs and PHS athletic nutrition stations to giving every elementary student a book for the *Parkland Reads Together* annual event, your generosity ensures our students have the resources to thrive.

How You Can Make a Difference Today

If you feel inspired to support Parkland schools, there are several easy ways to partner with us:

1. **Redirect your PA State Tax Credits through the Friends of Education program (EITC):** Redirect your PA state tax liability to fund local school grants through our Special Purpose Entity (SPE) partner—earning a 90% state tax credit.
2. **United Way Workplace Campaigns:** Designate the Parkland School District Education Foundation as your charity of choice through United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley.
3. **Employer Matching Gifts:** Check if your company matches charitable donations to instantly double or triple your impact.
4. **Direct One-Time or Monthly Giving:** Visit our website at any time to make a direct donation in an amount that is meaningful to you.

Every gift directly powers teacher innovation grants, enhances arts and athletics, and keeps Parkland an exceptional place for our children to learn and grow.

Learn more or get involved today at www.parklandsd.org/foundation.





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HELPING TO
CREATE A
BRIGHTER
TOMORROW



The Parkland Education Foundation thanks its partners in Education.



Working together to be the difference in the lives of Parkland students.



2026-27 IMPORTANT DATES AND INFORMATION

CHECK OUT OUR WEEKLY 5 THINGS TO KNOW FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

WWW.PARKLANDSD.ORG/SCHOOLS/WEEKLY-UPDATE

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS -- SCHOOLS CLOSED

September 21, October 12, November 8,
January 22, March 9 & 19

DISTRICT-WIDE EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS (11 AM OMS, SMS and PHS, 11:45 AM Elementary Schools)

November 23, 24, 25
January 22, May 21
June 7

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

November 23-25

CAFETERIA PRICES

Elementary Lunch \$2.70
Secondary Lunch \$2.95
Adult Lunch \$4.45 • Adult Breakfast: \$3.00
Milk: \$.50
Reduced Price Lunch: No charge
Breakfast is FREE for all students this year.

CAFETERIA MENUS

www.parklandsd.org/menus

BIRTHDAY CLASS TREAT ORDER FORM

www.parklandsd.org/birthday



Parkland High School
is pleased to announce that
there will no longer be fees
charged for Boys and Girls
Soccer, Field Hockey and Boys
and Girls Lacrosse games at
the PHS turf field.

Please come out and cheer on
our Trojans!



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NONDISCRIMINATION IN PROGRAMS AND EMPLOYMENT POLICY

In accordance with TITLE VI, TITLE IX, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Parkland School District does not discriminate either in the educational or vocational programs and activities which it operates or in the employment of personnel, on the basis of sex, handicap, disability, race, color, national origin, age, or religion. If you are physically or mentally disabled, visually or hearing impaired, you may qualify for special services/instruction/equipment modifications so you can successfully complete the education program or participate in activities. All inquiries concerning this policy/questions regarding specific programs, services, and facilities for the disabled should be directed to the District Equal Rights Officer, Assistant Superintendent, Parkland School District, 1210 Springhouse Road, Allentown, PA at (610) 351-5505.

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