

INSIDE

- R-7 rolls back tax rate by 14 cents | 2
- Enrollment increases to 17,739 students | 3
- Board of Education tours bond progress | 4
- Six named National Merit semifinalists | 5

R-7 Board of Education
301 N.E. Tudor Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64086
816-986-1000

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Lee's Summit, MO 64063
Permit Number 71

ECRWSS Postal Customer

OUR SCHOOLS

Lee's Summit R-7 School District's Community Newspaper

Proudly presented by the **LEE'S SUMMIT JOURNAL**
Connecting your community



NOVEMBER 2015

Race for the Future raises \$34,000 for LS Educational Foundation, Carrie Foresee Memorial Scholarship Fund

Race for the Future, a 5K run/walk held Oct. 10, raised approximately \$34,000 to benefit the Lee's Summit Educational Foundation and the Carrie Foresee Memorial Scholarship Fund. A total of 1,000 runners and walkers registered for the 5K event, 78 registered as Dream Partners, and another 125 participated in the Kid's Dash.

Total proceeds over the race's 19-year history are close to \$375,000. The popular metro-area event is held at Lee's Summit West High School. A photo gallery and race results are available at www.lsedfoundation.com.

A competition for student/staff participation (including runners, walkers and staff volunteers) was also held on race day among Lee's Summit R-7 schools. For the 10th year in a row, Hazel Grove Elementary School won first place honors with 25.5 percent of their staff and students participating in the 5K Race. Second place went to Westview Elementary



RACE FOR THE FUTURE | page 18

The Kids Dash is a popular part of Race for the Future.

Lee's Summit R-7 earns state's top ranking through MSIP 5 accountability system

District-wide scores jump by 4.3 percentage points when compared to previous year

The Lee's Summit R-7 School District has earned the state's top rating for academic achievement following the Oct. 23 release of Missouri assessment scores. The district scored 96.8 percent on the state's rigorous Annual Performance Report (APR) for the 2014-15 school year, an increase of 4.3 percentage points over the previous school year.

Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education annually issues a state report card for public schools through the Missouri School Improvement Program.

This assessment system, established in 1990, is now in its fifth cycle and is often called MSIP 5. Performance standards used through MSIP 5 are designed to recognize the achievement and growth of all Missouri students.

Through the 2014-15 MSIP 5, Lee's Summit R-7 scored 135.5 out of a possible 140 points. This is a 6-point increase over the 2013-14 year.

TOP RANKING | page 18

From the superintendent

COMMENTARY



Dr. David McGehee is Lee's Summit R-7 School District superintendent and a Lee's Summit resident

David McGehee

Celebrating accomplishments of our nation's public schools

American Education Week, held during November, provides us with the perfect opportunity to celebrate our nation's schools. Theme for this annual event is "Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility."

Since 1921, American Education Week has highlighted the importance of bringing together educators, parents, students and the community in a unified effort to support students.

An important strength within Lee's Summit R-7 is our outstanding staff,

MCGEHEE | page 18

Lee's Summit R-7 rolls back tax levy by 14 cents

The Lee's Summit R-7 Board of Education recently approved a property-tax rollback amounting to approximately 14 cents per \$100 assessed valuation, when compared to the previous year's tax rate. The Board of Education made the decision at its annual tax-rate hearing, held Sept. 24.

According to the Missouri Constitution, the amount of money a school district may gain from property value increases is capped. The cap is based on a formula that includes assessment growth and requires that school districts use the lowest of several factors for the cap. In the case of the R-7 School District, the cap used was the Consumer Price Index, which totaled 0.8 percent, instead of the increase in assessed values of 6.03 percent.

With the rollback, the R-7 tax rate for 2015-16 will be \$5.9813 per \$100 assessed valuation.

Counselor helps prepare student for future

LSHS counselor's suggestion is turning point in student's life

I have a daughter who is now in college, but who went all the way through R-7. Sally Sabata was her counselor all through Lee's Summit High School. She has been an invaluable resource for both my girls, including my older daughter and the youngest, now a junior.

When our oldest was enrolling for her senior year, she only needed three classes to graduate. We were unsure what to do with the rest of her day, so we sat down with Sally. She knew Julie (pictured) enjoyed art and suggested we look at Herndon. Herndon had a graphic design program she may be interested in trying. This is not something

we would have ever considered, as we were unaware of the program.

It was a turning point in her life. She loved it and excelled at it. She is currently a sophomore in the graphic technologies program at Pittsburg State University. This was a school Sally suggested she look into because of its excellent program. Our daughter is working on the campus paper as a graphic designer. She is also the newest employee to be invited to attend the National Collegiate Media Conference in Texas at the end of October.

Without Sally's ideas and help, I'm not sure where she'd be today. I'd venture to guess she wouldn't be as happy as she is today.

Submitted by Don and Barb Spencer



Julie Spencer



The Story Project features personal stories about our students and their accomplishments in school. If you would like to submit a story about your child, visit www.lsr7.org/static/projects/story/.

HABANERO'S
Incredible Mexican Food & Superb Margaritas

**HABANERO'S GIVES YOU
 A REASON TO CATER!**
 816-554-1008



**Catering Available
 for all Events -
 Big or Small!**

Choose from:

- Pick-up
- Delivery
- Full Service



816-554-1008

www.EatAtHabaneros.com
 1008 S.E. Blue Parkway
 Lee's Summit, MO (50 Hwy & 291 N.)

**Make Lifelong Friends. Enrich Your Community.
 Expand Your Knowledge Beyond The Classroom.**

We're passionate about sharing cultures and extending families. Hosting a high school exchange student introduces your family, school and the entire community to a new culture and also to a new lifelong friend. Contact Kerri to learn more about hosting!

Kerri Craven | 816.686.6079 | kcraven@ayusa.org | www.ayusa.org

Ayusa by Intrax

Lee's Summit R-7 enrollment reaches 17,739 for 2015-16

Total is up by 129 students or 0.73 percent over last year

Enrollment in the Lee's Summit R-7 School District increased by 129 students this fall, totaling 17,739 in kindergarten through 12th grade. This is an approximately 0.73 percent jump when compared to the previous year's enrollment of 17,610.

The school district's official enrollment count for the 2015-16 school year is taken on the last Wednesday of September and submitted to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The R-7 School District includes 18 elementary schools, three middle schools, three high schools, Summit Ridge Academy, Summit Technology

Academy, Great Beginnings Early Education Center and Miller Park Center.

Over the last 10 years, the R-7 School District enrollment has increased by around 8.2 percent.

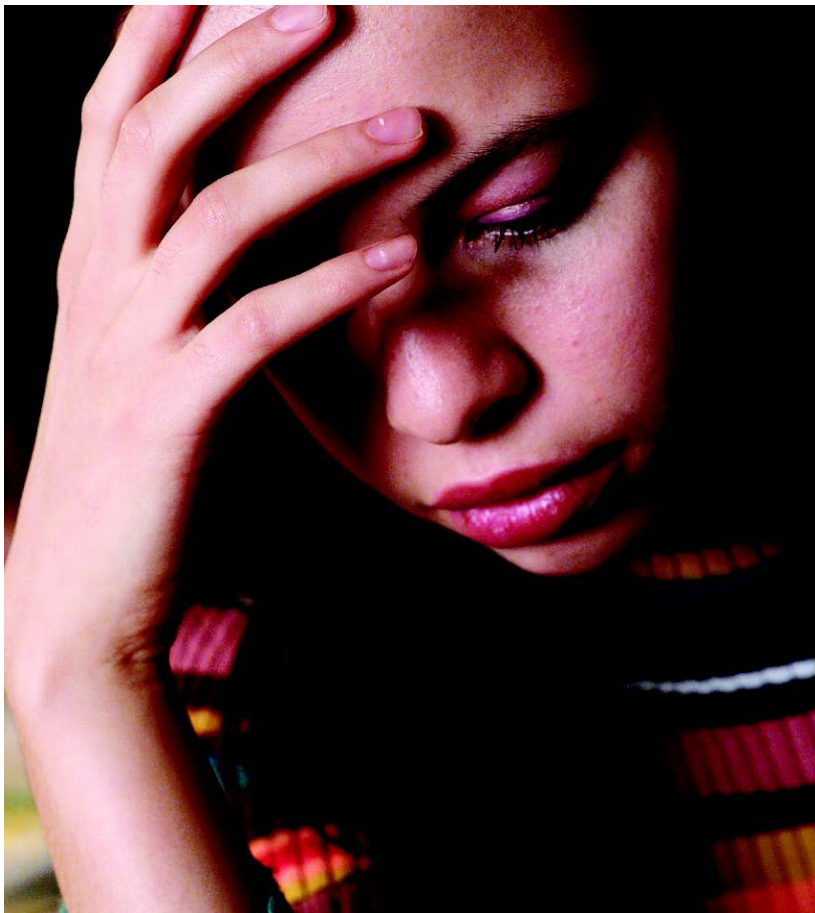
For more information about the school district, visit www.lsr7.org.



R-7 receives top ranking for best teachers and best places to teach

The Lee's Summit R-7 School District was recently ranked in the top 10 among "Best Public School Teachers in Missouri" and "Best Places to Teach in Missouri" by Niche. Niche helps families find places to live, work and attend school based on statistics and online ratings.

Only three Kansas City metropolitan-area districts were ranked in the state's top 10 in both the best teachers and best places to teach categories. According to Niche officials, the rankings are based on statistics such as academics, safety and resources as well as ratings from students and parents.



A Child's Struggle Is a Parent's Heartbreak

There are times when every family needs help

Drugs. Anger. Depression. Alcohol. Whatever is troubling your child, Crittenton Children's Center can help.

Six full-time board-certified psychiatrists lead a team of experts in behavioral health whose outcomes exceed national norms.

You are part of that team. Together we:

- Increase emotional self-control
- Decrease reliance on medication
- Improve family strength

► **Call us**
816-765-6600
crittentonkc.org

Help is just a short drive away.
Call Crittenton today.

 **Crittenton
Children's Center**
SAINT LUKE'S HEALTH SYSTEM



Pictured during the tour of bond projects are (from left) Terri Harmon, Dr. David McGehee, Adam Rutherford, Bob White, Julie Doane, Dr. Brent Blevins and Phyllis Balagna.

Board of Education tours school improvements funded by April no-tax-increase bond issue

Lee's Summit R-7 Board of Education members had a first-hand look at school facility improvements funded by the April 2015 no-tax-increase bond issue during a September tour. The \$40 million issue was approved by close to 80 percent of voters. It is funding facility improvements at each school as well as a new Summit Technology Academy / Missouri Innovation Campus.

Board of Education members participating in the tour included Terri Harmon, president; Phyllis Balagna; Julie Doane; Adam Rutherford; and Bob White. Conducting the tour were Dr. David McGehee, R-7 superintendent; Dr. Brent Blevins, deputy superintendent of operations; and Kyle Gorrell, director of facilities.

On Sept. 17, the group visited a sampling of schools impacted by the bond funds, including Bernard

Campbell Middle School, Richardson Elementary, Prairie View Elementary, Greenwood Elementary, Pleasant Lea Elementary, Pleasant Lea Middle School, Lee's Summit Elementary and Westview Elementary. By mid August, approximately \$8 million in school renovations had been completed throughout the school district.

Facility improvements at all R-7 schools funded through the issue are in the areas of classroom instruction, safety and security, health and wellness, ADA access renovations and special education as well as maintenance projects designed to protect the district's investment in its schools. Also included are playground safety upgrades for all elementary schools' soft play areas and replacement of deteriorated play equipment. Work on the majority of the eight elementary playgrounds planned for summer 2015

was complete by the start of school.

Examples of maintenance projects at schools are flooring, carpet, ceilings, painting, roofing, paving, mechanical, doors, windows, FOBS, backflows, water sanitizing and masonry.

The bond issue is also funding a new Summit Technology Academy / Missouri Innovation Campus, located on a 15-acre site near Ward and Tudor Road. Site work is underway at the location of the new school with a groundbreaking scheduled for spring 2016. The new school will open in August 2017.

Thanks to a partnership with the University of Central Missouri (UCM), the school district and university will construct and operate a cost-saving shared facility. Under the plan, R-7 is paying approximately 40 percent of the new school with UCM paying the remaining 60 percent. Based on an agreement

between the two organizations, Lee's Summit R-7 will be the sole owner of the facility which will house Summit Tech / Missouri Innovation Campus as well as UCM programs currently located in the UCM Summit Center Campus. UCM is paying its portion through a rental agreement.

The shared facility will reduce operating expenses for the R-7 School District, allowing the district to move Summit Tech / MIC from leased space into a building owned by the school district. It is anticipated that due to increased rental costs resulting from the expiration of a long-running tax abatement, Lee's Summit R-7 will save approximately \$9 million over the next 20 years by construction of the new facility.

For more information about the bond issue, visit www.lsr7.net.