



POUNCE

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OCT. '14

**EXCELSIOR SPRINGS
SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER**

POSITIVITY BECOMES THE NEW STANDARD

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) "is a process for creating safer and more effective schools by structuring the learning environment to support the academic and social success of all students". Since initial implementation of PBIS, Excelsior Springs School District has been a leader in the PBIS initiative in the state of Missouri and beyond. Educators from Excelsior Springs have frequently been asked to share their knowledge about PBIS, presenting 26 times at regional, state, and national conferences since 2009. Additionally, practices

from Excelsior Springs have been shared three times in national publications: twice in Principal Leadership (2014, 2012) and once in Middle Ground (2012).

Closer to home, there have been 14 site visits to our schools from the following districts, states, and countries since 2010: Clinton Co. R-III, Columbia, Grandview, Lafayette Co., Lee's Summit, Nevada, Sedalia, Smithville, Troy Buchanan, Warrensburg, Franklin HS (Wisconsin), and Parkland Schools (New Zealand).

In February, a videographer hired by Missouri Schoolwide Positive Be-

havior Support filmed at Excelsior Springs Middle School and Westview Elementary for an educational video on positive behavior support in schools. These videos will be used to provide information to educators in Missouri and across the nation. Two of the four schools selected for this video training project were from Excelsior Springs.

Earlier this year a statewide award was established to honor the founding director of the Missouri Statewide PBIS initiative, Dr. Mary Richter. This prestigious award

..... **SEE PAGE THREE**

*Mark Your
Calendar*



PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

OCTOBER 22, 2014
4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

OCTOBER 23, 2014
1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

ELEMENTARY PARENTS
Please contact your
teacher for an appointment

**MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH
SCHOOL PARENTS**
You have an open invitation
during these hours



Dr. David Lawrence

SUPERINTENDENT SPOTLIGHT

My name is Dave Lawrence and I am your new Superintendent of Schools. I am not new to the Excelsior Springs School District as I have served as elementary principal, assistant superintendent of curriculum & instruction, and deputy superintendent since 1999. I did leave this fine school district from 2007-2011 to serve as the superintendent at Lafayette County C-1 School District but gladly returned in 2011. I am excited about what our school district has accomplished in the past and the future accomplishments that are on the horizon. I want to share past accomplishments of our school district, current status, and our vision for the future.

I want to begin by sharing some of the accomplishments our school district has earned over the past year. Our school district was the only school district in Missouri to earn the District of Distinction award given at the Positive Behavior Support conference in June. Each of our schools also earned either a gold or silver award for the work they did within their schools in regards to PBS and the instructional supports offered to students. Our high school was recognized by U.S. News and World Report as one of the 40 best Missouri high schools for college prep. Excelsior Springs, Liberty, Liberty North, Oak Park, and Staley high schools were the only five high schools recognized for this honor in Clay County. Be proud of these accomplishments and share them with your friends and neighbors.

Currently we have made a commitment to communicate more effectively with our community as well as to be more transparent. This newsletter is one example of how we want to communicate more effectively with our community but it is only one example. We have established a spot on our website (www.essd40.com) home page that you can make one click on the icon called, "Ask the Superintendent", and receive a timely response to your questions. We are revamping our school district brochures to share with realtors and other businesses in town that have several visitors considering a move to Excelsior Springs. Currently our staff members have iPads to help them develop lessons that will engage and transform the learning of our students. Our current status is one that is proud of our accomplishments but eager to make the Excelsior Spring School District one of the best school districts in the KC metro area.

As you can see, we have been successful in the past and are looking forward to even more success in the future. We need your help in sharing the good things happening in our school district because our students deserve to have a proud community that supports them and their future. I am very excited about the new culture of collaboration and respect between our school district and community. If you ever have a question or comment you want to share with me please stop by my office at 300 W Broadway, call me at 630-9200, or send me an email at dlawrence@estigers.k12.mo.us.

Our Mission

The mission of the Excelsior Springs School District, in **partnership** with students, parents and community, is to assure a **focused and challenging curriculum** that will monitor progress and provide a **comprehensive system of support** to prepare all students for their **next level of learning**



EXCELSIOR SPRINGS SCHOOL BOARD

The School District is governed by a seven-member Board of Education, elected by residents of the district. The Board meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Early Childhood Center Boardroom, 113 Line Street.

Tray Harkins, President
Troy Snelling, Vice President

Members:

Matt Hartwig • Stephen Houck • Terry Krier
Kristi Shewell • Keith Diebold

POUNCE, The Excelsior Springs School District Newsletter, is brought to you thanks to the following supporters: Riteway Automotive, WealthSpring Financial, Bob's Collision and Liberty Hospital. For information on becoming a future sponsor please contact Dr. Jaret Tomlinson at 816-630-9200 or jtomlinson@estigers.k12.mo.us.

DISTRICT AWARDED FOR BEHAVIOR INITIATIVE

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

recognizes a school and a district that exemplifies the ideals, principles, and practices of positive behavior support in Missouri. Excelsior Springs School District was honored to be one of four districts in Missouri to receive a nomination for this award. During the opening session of this year's summer institute in June, results were announced and Excelsior Springs School District received the inaugural Dr. Mary Richter District of Distinction Award.

Five schools from Excelsior Springs received individual recognition from DESE for effective PBIS practices this summer including the following: Elkhorn Elementary (Silver Level Award), Excelsior Springs High School (Silver Level Award), Lewis Elementary (Gold Level Award), Westview Elementary (Gold Level Award), and Excelsior Springs Middle School (Gold Level Award).

PBIS has greatly improved school culture and climate in each of our schools. While it's exciting to share our practices with a wider audience the best part of the PBIS initiative is the positive impact it has on the students in our community.

- Be Safe
- Be Responsible
- Be Respectful



Search for & like the Excelsior Springs School District on Facebook



E-Town SRO Beat

Sergeant Kimsey and Sergeant White are mainstays in the halls of Excelsior Springs Schools. You may ask yourself just why a school would partner with the police department, so here is a description found on the Missouri Association of School Resource Officers:

There are three areas of focus for School Resource Officers. A school resource officer (SRO) is a certified law enforcement officer who is assigned full time to school. For this, SRO's receive many hours of specialized training. The concept is similar to the "officer on foot patrol" who knows the public he or she services on a first name basis and is sensitive to their particular needs. Like many adults,

some students view police officers solely as enforcers of the law. Students that have positive interactions with the SRO view law enforcement in an entirely different light.

They see the SRO as a friend, an advisor, a positive role model, and someone to turn to in time of need.

Thank you Sgt. Kimsey and Sgt. White for all you do for our students and families of our district!



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KIDS THESE DAYS

It's no surprise that students these days get pulled in many directions. But did you know how much time students of Excelsior Springs High School put into school, activities, community organizations, and work? Three high school students give you a glimpse into a normal day in their lives as they strive to prepare for life after high school.

TJ Johnson - SENIOR

6:40-6:50-plan for Student Council (STUCO) meeting
 6:50-7:15-STUCO Meeting/Natural Helpers/Link Crew
 7:25-2:30-School
 2:30-5:00-Cheer Practice
 5:00-9:00-Work the Scoreboard/Concession Stand
 9:00-9:30-Dinner
 9:30-10:45-Chores & Homework
 10:45-11:45---Shower & pack for the next day
 11:45-12:00-Prepare for bed

ACTIVITIES: Cheerleading
 STUCO Link Crew Natural
 Helpers C-2000 Pop Choir
 Yearbook Newspaper History
 Club International Club Snow
 Removal Tiger Ambassador
 FCCLA Little Louie New
 Student Mentor Girls Soccer
 Manager



Kelsey Mueller - JUNIOR

6:45am-7:10-Student Council, Link Leader
 or Natural Helpers meeting
 7:25-2:27-School
 2:45-5:00-Tigerettes
 5:00-6:00-Homework/get ready for Soccer
 6:30-9:00-Soccer Practice
 9:00-10:00-Dinner
 10:00PM-???---Homework, shower and bed

ACTIVITIES: Link Leaders
 STUCO Natural Helper
 Snow Removal

Shelby Starkebaum - SOPHOMORE

6:30am-7:00-Marching Band
 7:20-2:30-School
 2:45-4:30-Softball Practice
 5:00-6:00-4H Club
 6:00-7:00-Student Council Meeting
 7:00-11:00-Dinner, homework, off to bed

ACTIVITIES: STUCO
 4H Softball
 Basketball Band

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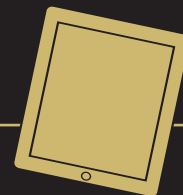
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STUDENTS SLATED TO RECEIVE IPADS

Students in the Excelsior Springs School District will begin receiving iPads for use with their school work later this year. The movement is a district wide initiative to better utilize technology in students' day to day learning.

The initiative is designed not to just hand out iPads to students, but rather to change how instruction is performed in and out of the classroom. "The evolution of technology in the everyday lives of our students requires us to take a progressive and systematic approach towards its use in our classrooms," stated Superintendent of Schools David Lawrence. "Our goal is to provide students with the means for accessing information, while learning how to determine the reliability of the information and the sources that they use."

School district employees took a trip to Chicago, IL last year to visit the Apple Education Center setup specifically for school districts to see how Apple products can assist in the delivery of district curriculum. The visit allowed staff to see how iPads can assist in classroom instruction, as well as Apple TVs and some educational apps that assist with student learning.

"All in all, the platform that Apple has put together met our needs and provides us with the most robust approach to delivering our curriculum in a way that best relates to the needs of our

students," commented Vincent Spallo, the district's Director of Curriculum and Instruction. "We were looking for a technology option that gave our students exposure to all that we could offer them, but we needed our solution to be something that we could afford as well."

The Apple iPad solution that the district chose to pursue will be paid for on a lease basis. The lease will provide for nearly 1,000 iPads each year for the next three years. The use of iPads will provide the district with access to over 1 million apps on their app store. The agreement will also include Apple TVs in every classroom in the district. Apple TVs allow teachers to project whatever is on their iPad on to the projector screen at the front of the class. Teachers also have the option to project whatever is on any student iPad in their class onto the screen. "What better way to demonstrate how to accomplish something than by showing students how one of their classmates performed the lesson?" asked Lewis Principal, Christi Rice.

Teachers have already received their iPads and will be working to prepare for the student rollout which is scheduled to begin in January. While the rollout proves to be one of the largest technology initiatives the district has undertaken, it also ensures that Excelsior Springs students will lead the way in incorporating technology into the way they learn.

"The evolution of technology in the everyday lives of our students requires us to take a progressive and systematic approach towards its use in our classrooms."

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Liz Smith

- Career Services Coordinator
- 11 yrs in district
- BS in Marketing from Northwest Missouri State University
- MA in Teaching from University of Central Missouri

What do you do?

I assist students in transitioning from high school to post-secondary work and education.

What is your favorite part of your job?

I love seeing students from all around the area having the opportunity to get hands on, project based experience. I

recruit students from our 8 sending schools. I want everyone to know what awesome programs we offer, and the excellent instructors we have!

What do you do when you're not at work?

First and foremost, I enjoy spending time with my husband and beautiful children. I also enjoy running and completed my first half marathon earlier this year.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early Childhood Education has become a hot topic of discussion by the United States Department of Education and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Under the current Missouri Commissioner, a campaign was launched to improve student achievement called Top 10 by 20, looking for Missouri to rank in the top 10 states by 2020. One goal associated with the Top 10 by 20 is "All Missouri children will enter kindergarten prepared to be successful in school".

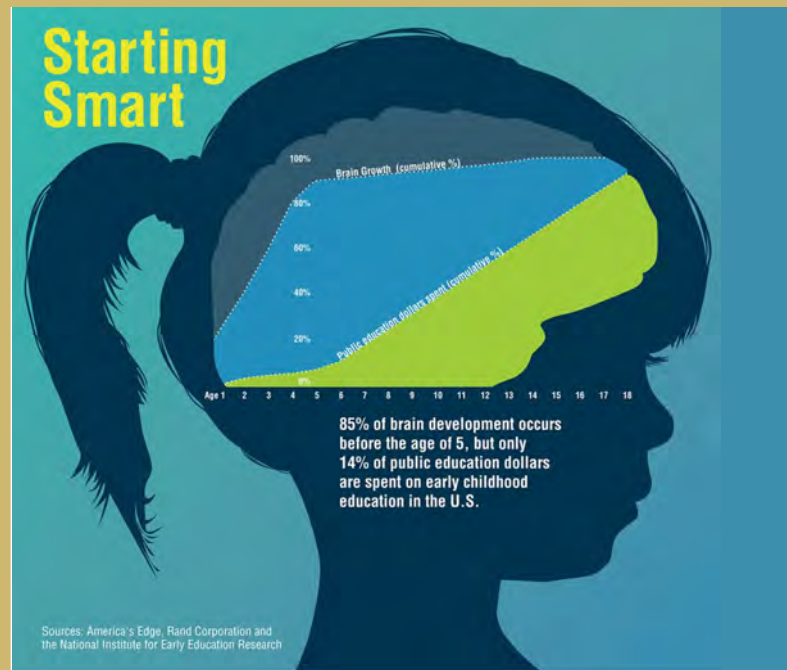
Currently, Missouri is applying for an early childhood education grant worth up to \$17.5 million per year for four years to expand early childhood programs for 4-year olds in high-need communities. This is exciting news! Excelsior Springs School District #40 has already begun addressing this identified need in our community. Our district is continuing the services of Early Childhood Special Education and Title I Preschool Education, and the most recent addition of the Missouri Preschool Proj-

ect Grant awarded to Lewis Elementary and Westview Elementary in December 2013. Our goal for early learners is directly aligned with Missouri and the United States Departments of Education.

The District has two early childhood education options to offer pre-kindergarten students through either a half-day or a full-day program. All placements are based on screening results and student needs. In total, the District can serve 85 4-year old students and 45 3-year old students at this time. These two early childhood programs are staffed by certified teachers that hold early childhood degrees.

In addition, these two programs work closely with our District Parent Educator, Kathy Taylor. All screenings for district early childhood education are completed through the Parent Educator Department. If you know a family with a pre-kindergartener, please tell them about our early childhood options. Kathy Taylor can be contacted by calling (816) 630-9293.

ESSD now has two early childhood education options to offer pre-kindergarten students through either a half-day or a full-day program.



If you know a family with a prekindergartener, please tell them about our early childhood options. Kathy Taylor can be contacted by calling 816-630-9293

COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL PARTNERS

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816-699-7295

YMCA Head Start
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Talented Tots
816-637-9525

Janet's Show and Tell Preschool
816-716-5442



The Bottom Line

THE ART OF RESPONSIBLE SCHOOL BUDGETING

Annual independent audit reports and community opinion agree that the finances in Excelsior Springs School District are strong. Our Board of Education has established a goal of 22%-27% reserve balance in the operating fund. We ended fiscal year 2014 on June 30 with an operating reserve balance of 25.14%.

Developing a budget requires a process that takes several months. This process includes meeting with stakeholders to identify their needs, monitoring the legislative process due to the large percentage of revenues coming from state funds, projecting local

and federal funding, and working with Board of Education members to approve a preliminary budget.

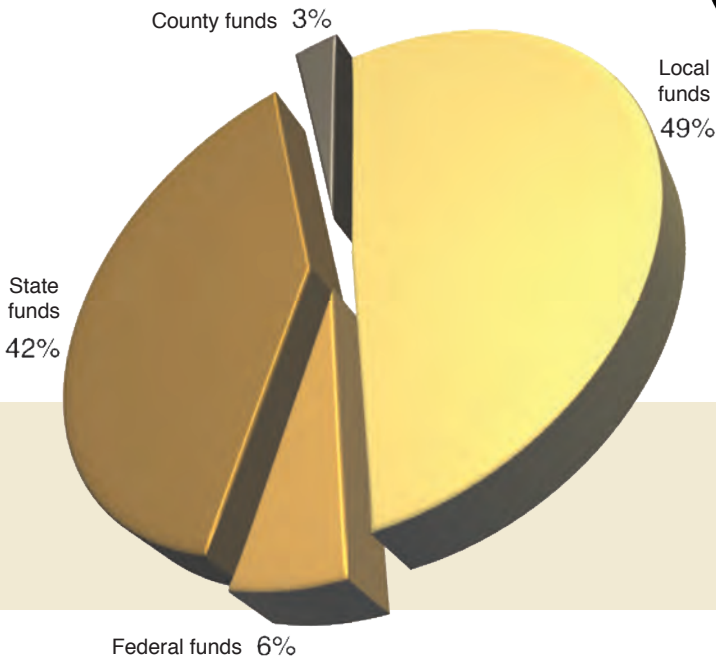
State law requires a preliminary budget to be passed by July 1st but tax rates are not set until August, federal fund allocations are not set until September, and state revenues can be frozen or changed due to actions by the state legislature or Governor during the summer and fall. All of this uncertainty requires a conservative approach to budgeting and ongoing revisions to the adopted budget.

Fiscal year 2015 revenue resources are 3% county, 6% federal, 42% state,

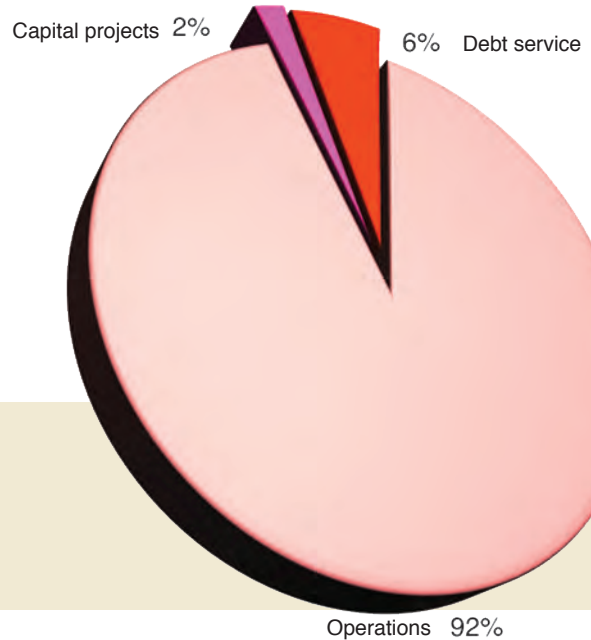
and 49% local. Our expenditures are 2% capital projects, 6% debt service, and 92% operations.

Public school district funding in Missouri typically mirrors our state's economy. When property values increase and more good jobs are created the brighter the financial outlook for public schools. As we patiently wait for those things to happen in our state we will continue to provide for the needs of our students, maintain our facilities, and hire the most qualified staff available to work with the children of our community. Thank you for your continued support of our students.

Our school district's revenue sources



Our school district's expenditures



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 Chris Hubbuch, Principal

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