



DISTRICT 57 REPORT

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT



As we head into Thanksgiving break, I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you some of the exciting things that have happened in the first three months of the 2014-15 school year. We're off to a great start! So please take a few minutes to read this newsletter and get an overview of what's going on throughout the District.

We welcomed about 2,200 students back to school this year. They returned to find new English language arts and mathematics curriculum. Thanks to a great deal of preparation by our staff, as well as the support of parents, the transition has gone quite well. Read more about this on Page 2. Our new materials present many opportunities for online learning. We've added carts of Macbook computers at Fairview, Lions Park and Westbrook. The computers will increase access to technology for everyday learning and help us facilitate the online PARCC test, which replaces the ISATs and will be given later this school year.

Another important tool for measuring student progress is the District and School Report Card, which the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) recently released. We are very proud of District 57's performance. With meaningful data that is presented in a user friendly way, the report card is a useful tool for parents and community members who want to see a snapshot of our District or individual schools. You can access the full report at www.illinoisreportcard.com.

In other news, the School Board recently approved the purchase of the property next to Westbrook, which will be used to enhance the parking lot at Westbrook and alleviate traffic flow issues. Construction will occur next summer and is scheduled to be completed by the start of the 2015-16 school year. We know that many Westbrook parents and staff will welcome the changes.

A few weeks ago, I participated in the Education Foundation's Trivia Night. In addition to being a fun night out for parents and staff, the event enabled the Foundation to continue its long history of providing students with educational opportunities. I thank everyone who was part of this event, as well as all community members who support our schools. With Thanksgiving around the corner, I'm reminded that there are many reasons to feel thankful for being part of the District 57 community.

Dr. Elaine Aumiller
Superintendent of Schools
Mount Prospect School District 57



UNFORGETTABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR SCIENCE CHICKS

Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth invited Lincoln's Science Chicks to join her for a tour of the labs at Now Foods in Bloomingdale on Oct. 17. The girls, who were accompanied by teachers/club leaders Kathy Veglia and Sue Milliken, learned about the jobs and educational backgrounds of women scientists. Last year, Duckworth told her colleagues on the House floor that the Science Chicks "represent the future of our country...and the millions of girls who have the ability to achieve greatness in STEM fields."

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To save resources, we are not printing this publication. Please help spread the word by asking your friends and neighbors to check it out at www.d57.org or on our social media channels.

See Page 4 for photos from Fairview's Orange Ruler Fund Run and Walk for Westbrook!

CURRICULUM REVIEW

NEW YEAR BRINGS NEW-AND-IMPROVED LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATH CURRICULUM

This school year brought a major change to District 57 and school districts throughout the state -- this is the first full year that students are using updated and enhanced curriculum that conforms to the new Illinois Learning Standards for English language arts and math, which incorporate Common Core.

"We are very pleased with the way the new materials are performing so far this school year. They are up to date and engaging, they offer many forms of support for students and staff, and they incorporate technology whenever appropriate," says Dr. Elaine Aumiller, superintendent of schools.

The shift in learning is the culmination of two years of researching, testing and refining curriculum. Many staff members lent their expertise, under the leadership of Dr. Susan Woodrow, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.

To ease the transition this year, Fairview, Lions Park and Westbrook assigned staff members to become subject matter experts on the new curriculum and coach their peers on implementing the lessons. Each school has one teacher responsible for language arts coaching and one for math.

The District also provided support to parents who wanted to learn more about the Math in Focus curriculum, during a September Parent University session attended by about 250 people. [Frequently asked questions](#) were distributed after the event.

You can find detailed information about the [state language arts standards](#) and the [state math standards](#) on the District website.

SCIENCE AND PE ENHANCEMENTS ARE NEXT IN LINE

Now that the new language arts and mathematics curricula are firmly in place, the District is turning its attention to its next major undertaking -- updating science and physical education programs so they are in line with revised standards.

SCIENCE: The Next Generation Science Standards identify the scientific information that all K through 12 students should know in order to be prepared for college and careers. The standards, which are grounded in the most current research on science learning, will lead to a major shift in the way scientific topics are taught. They are internationally benchmarked against countries whose students perform well in science. The Next Generation standards are national guidelines that were developed by scientists, educators and leaders in business and industry.

Illinois, one of 26 states that collaborated on the development, adopted the new standards in February 2014 and required that they be fully implemented by the 2016-17 school year. A team of staff members is researching the standards and revised curriculum that will become available, with the plan of piloting new materials next fall.

For detailed information about the specific standards and to watch a video about the benefits of this new approach to science education, go to the [Next Generation website](#).

PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

When state officials announced that they will require schools to improve and increase physical education classes, they cited the latest neuroscience research linking physical activity with improved academic performance. According to the Illinois Enhance Physical Education Task Force, children need more time engaged in fitness activities, in order to perform better in class and on standardized tests, exhibit better classroom behaviors and improve health outcomes. That's why the state will soon require participation in daily, high-quality PE classes.

Illinois school districts must implement changes to PE curriculum by the 2015-16 school year. A District 57 team is researching the new guidelines this school year in preparation for implementation next year.

Parents are encouraged to check out this [chart](#) outlining the differences between traditional PE and the enhanced PE that schools will soon follow.



PACKING BOXES FULL OF PRESENTS AND LOVE FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

Lions Park staff members recently packed hundreds of toys, personal hygiene items and school supplies into shoeboxes that will be shipped to needy children throughout the world, as part of an Operation Christmas Child project. More than 20 volunteers attended a packing party, and many more bought and donated items such as balls, coloring books, crayons, games, shampoo and lotion. Operation Christmas Child was a favorite organization of Linda Frahm, the beloved Lions Park teacher who passed away last December. She inspired her colleagues to get involved in the past, and the effort has grown in her honor. This year her husband and daughters joined the packing effort.



Westbrook Gym and Reading Night

GIVING BACK

FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL, FAIRVIEW STUDENTS LEARN THE VALUE OF HELPING OTHERS

Fairview staff members have found some creative ways to help their students make a difference for others and learn valuable lessons in the process.

THE GLOBAL TEAM is made up of teachers who involve students in service projects that focus on the community, the nation and the world. The goal is to "make the children more aware of the world around them," according to music teacher Lisa Loeffler. This year's theme is hunger. During parent-teacher conferences, the Global Team will distribute bags that families can fill with canned and boxed food. The bags will be brought back to Fairview during the winter concerts, and volunteers will deliver them to local food pantries. The team also is reserving dates in January, February and April for groups of families to pack meals for Feed My Starving Children, which delivers food to malnourished children in 70 countries around the world. In addition, the team hopes to plan a collection drive for a program that distributes backpacks filled with food that children can take home on the weekends.

Each year, the Global Team's efforts culminate during Fine Arts Night in the spring, when the school focuses on a major project with global reach. Last year, in keeping with the night's Caribbean theme, students sold fish magnets they made, with proceeds benefitting an environmental organization that protects coral reefs. The focus for this spring has not yet been determined.

THE MAKE A DIFFERENCE CLUB is made up of 20 second and third graders who meet once a week before school to work on projects that help others. Teacher and club leader Kathy Mescino was pleased with the response that the new club received. The students started by creating activity booklets for children staying in hospitals. They're also making posters and cards reminding their classmates to say "thank you," and they're writing good deeds on leaves that are attached to a Make a Difference Tree. The club also will be planning a gently-used book drive.



Members of the Make a Difference Club create activity books for kids who have to stay in the hospital.

Mescino says benefits of being in Make a Difference Club include developing an awareness of community needs, building self esteem by accomplishing something worthwhile, developing teamwork and problem-solving skills and extending learning beyond the classroom.

2015 BUDGET ADOPTED, FINANCES STABLE

District 57's 2014-15 budget was adopted in October, with projected revenues of \$24.1 million and projected expenditures of \$25.8 million. This results in projected deficit spending of about \$1.7 million, which comes out of the fund balances in the reserves. The District's fund balances are at approximately 60 percent — i.e. there is enough to pay for 60 percent of operating expenses for the year, if necessary. The District has a goal of maintaining between 30 to 50 percent fund balances, so current levels are meeting the educational needs of students, according to Dale Falk, assistant superintendent for finance and operations.

As in the past, the new budget includes money for capital projects, to keep the school buildings safe and up to date. About \$1.5 million has been set aside for such projects, which are determined by the Master Facility Plan. Additional funds have been allocated to address the parking lot expansion at Westbrook School (see Superintendent's Message, Page 1).

Falk says District 57's financial situation is stable, the result of the careful allocation of limited resources over the past few years. But he stresses that it is important for the District to continue to be careful about spending decisions, as there could still be state economic challenges in the future, such as new legislation and diminishing financial support.

The new budget can be found on the District website at [this link](#).

STAYING "IN THE KNOW" IS NOW EASIER THAN EVER

NEW District and school websites: Go to www.d57.org for news, resources and links to the school sites, staff directories, calendars and more. The new-and-improved sites feature more streamlined designs and quick access to all the information and tools parents need.

NEW District mobile app: Smartphone users now can access an app called KnowItAll to search the staff directory, read news feeds and link to District/school mobile sites. This FREE app is available for [iOS](#) or [Android](#). To find it in the app store, search for "ESV KnowItAll." Once you have the app, search for "Mount Prospect School District 57" and you will be taken to District and school information.

HONORS FOR D57!

The District's communications efforts were honored by the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), including an Award of Merit for Distinguished Achievement for this newsletter. The District also won a Golden Achievement Award in Recognition of Exemplary Public Relations, for "Educating and Engaging our Community While Saving Valuable Resources."



The District 57 Board of Education received a 2014 School Board Governance Recognition designation from the Illinois Association of School Boards. The District 57 Board was one of 18 in the state to be recognized. The honor acknowledges school boards that "have engaged in activities and modeled behaviors that lead to excellence in local school governance in support of quality public education."

STUDENTS GO THE EXTRA MILE FOR THEIR SCHOOLS

Fairview and Westbrook PTAs held successful fall fundraisers that got students moving and smiling, while parents and community members cheered them on. The money that students and their families raised will help the PTAs provide assemblies, special events and learning tools throughout the year.

FAIRVIEW ORANGE RULER FUND RUN

Fairview's first-ever Orange Ruler Fund Run, held Oct. 17, made a profit of approximately \$16,000. In addition, the PTA donated \$1,000 of the proceeds to Charity: Water, which brings clean drinking water to impoverished parts of the world. Exciting activities leading up to the run stressed positive messages such as the importance of being active, believing in yourself, teamwork and thinking of others. (Photos by Sara Peterson.)



WALK FOR WESTBROOK

Walk for Westbrook, held Oct. 16, built on the success of last year's inaugural event, raising about \$18,000. Students circled the school grounds, passing through several entertaining stations that had themes based on favorite children's books. (Photos by Dana Foley.)



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The District regularly posts news, information and photos on Facebook — and now also on Twitter! So please follow @dist57, along with our Facebook page. Don't miss out on these great opportunities to stay informed!

