



DISTRICT 57 REPORT

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT



Many exciting events have taken place at our schools during the first three months of the year, and there's much more to come. This newsletter gives an overview of all of this activity and addresses major issues such as testing, curriculum and the budget.

We welcomed approximately 2,200 students back to school this year. They returned to many technological upgrades, including expanded Internet access and a one-to-one computer ratio pilot program. These initiatives are part of our aggressive, multi-year plan to re-envision the role of technology in the classroom. Another major change that greeted families was the expanded parking lot at Westbrook. And just this week, the new drive to Central Road was completed. Traffic flow at Westbrook is now greatly improved.

We do not yet have results of last spring's PARCC test. Once they are released, I will communicate with you about our performance and share the District and School Report Card, which is put out by the Illinois State Board of Education. This report will give an overview of enrollment, instructional spending, academic growth and state test achievement. In the meantime, please see the story on Page 2 for information about upcoming changes to PARCC.

This newsletter also includes photos of the schools' fall fundraisers. These events were memorable for the students AND surpassed fundraising goals. I thank our PTOs/PTAs for working hard to provide enriching opportunities for students throughout the year.

I also want to recognize our School Board members for the important role they play. Illinois celebrated School Board Members Day on Nov. 15, so this is a great time to thank your Board members for their tireless efforts and countless volunteer hours. In addition, we observed National Principals Month in October. Our schools are fortunate to have such strong and caring leaders. We also congratulate Westbrook principal Mary Gorr on the birth of her twins. I'm sure the students will miss her while she's on maternity leave, but they have a wonderful interim principal in Barb Golik.

Please take a few minutes to read the important information presented in this newsletter. And don't forget to follow the District on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) to stay informed all year long.

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

SPARE CHANGE ADDS UP AND MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE!

Lions Park students proudly display their collection jug used in the Mount Prospect Historical Society's Cents for Central School fundraiser. Lions Park, Fairview and Lincoln participated in the community-wide effort to raise money that will go toward finishing the restoration of the one-room schoolhouse, which was District 57's first school. The spare change added up, with the contest among local schools bringing in \$3,580.45. District 57 students raised almost half of that -- \$1,713.99. (Photo by Dave Cessna, District 57.)



CURRICULUM REVIEW

NEW PE CURRICULUM TEACHES STUDENTS TO BE PHYSICALLY FIT FOR LIFE

This school year, students as young as kindergarteners are using pedometers during gym class and learning how tracking their steps can help them be physically fit. Middle schoolers are working with heart rate monitors to increase their awareness of exercising in their target heart rate zone. These enhancements are part of District 57's revised physical education curriculum, which went into effect this school year and is based on the state's new PE learning standards.

The latest neuroscience research links physical activity with improved academic performance, according to Dr. Susan Woodrow, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction. "Students need to spend more time engaged in fitness activities in order to perform better in class and on standardized tests, exhibit more positive classroom behaviors and, of course, improve their overall health now and in the future," she says.

That's why today's gym classes are focused on the benefits of physical fitness and encouraging students to be active for a lifetime. "No child sits out," says Lori Many, Westbrook PE teacher. "They all have pieces of equipment in their hands, so they all participate and keep moving."

Also under the new curriculum, teachers emphasize teamwork, leadership and conflict resolution. "We look to the students to be leaders. During game play, it's their responsibility to make sure everyone follows the rules and maintains the integrity of the game," says Julie Leeney, PE teacher at Fairview, Lions Park and Lincoln. "And modifications allow every ability level to progress at an individual pace and achieve success."

Another change is the addition of a Lincoln health class that is taught by certified health teachers Leeney and Heather Nisbet. Instead of health lessons being dispersed throughout the year, students now attend this class for a few weeks in place of physical education.

The goal is for all students to recognize that fitness and healthy habits have a positive effect on their overall well-being and for students to get the maximum benefit from the time they spend in PE class. "Fit kids learn better," Leeney says, "and that's what we want to achieve for all students in District 57."

COMING SOON TO A SCHOOL NEAR YOU... NEW SCIENCE LESSONS

Several classrooms across all District 57 schools are piloting revised science curriculum this year, with the goal of selecting new materials that will be implemented for the 2016-17 school year. The curriculum is based on the national Next Generation Science Standards, which identify information that all K through 12 students should know in order to be prepared for college and careers. The standards are grounded in the most current research on science learning and are internationally benchmarked against countries whose students perform well in science. Changes include a stronger focus on conducting investigations, solving problems and engaging in discussions with teachers' guidance. Students will write journals, reports, posters and media presentations that explain and argue.

SIMPLIFIED PARCC TEST DEBUTS THIS SPRING

In response to feedback from school administrators, teachers, students and parents, the PARCC Assessment has been simplified and shortened. The test will once again be given to students in grades three through eight this spring, but there will be only one testing window instead of two. Testing time will be shortened for all grades by about 90 minutes. Lincoln will begin testing on April 11, while Fairview and Lions Park will begin on April 18. All testing will be completed by April 28.



LIONS PARK PROMOTES PEACE IN A BIG WAY

On Oct. 26, all Lions Park students and staff joined together to form a human peace sign, in recognition of Olweus Anti-Bullying Week. This special week focused on making Lions Park a peaceful school and keeping it an environment free of bullying. Fifth-grade math students measured to determine where to place the cones that were used to help students line up in the right spots. School psychologist Sara Tyburski-Noyer and her husband Jason Noyer took aerial pictures with a mini drone.

SEEING RED AT LINCOLN

Lincoln students wore red in celebration of Red Ribbon Week in October. Activities and contests throughout the week encouraged and celebrated living safe, healthy lifestyles.



STUDENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT PROVIDES INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS TO MEET A BROAD SPECTRUM OF NEEDS

No two children are alike. In fact, student needs in elementary and middle schools can vary greatly. That's why District 57 works hard to provide differentiated instruction and services that allow all students to learn and grow.

"Our goal is to start getting students college and career ready, and/or as independent in adulthood as possible, so we look at all aspects of development and determine how we can best meet students' individual learning needs," says Cassie Black, director of student services.

The Student Services department is responsible for planning a broad continuum of support for students eligible for special education services. In addition to special education teachers, staff who comprise the department include school psychologists, social workers, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, adapted PE, school nurses and instructional assistants.

Student Services' involvement with children can begin as early as birth to age three, when District

57 staff members work with other state agencies to ensure families receive necessary early intervention supports. The Student Services staff provides preschool screenings and evaluations; early childhood special education services, including speech and language therapy; and classroom instruction in Westbrook's Circle of Friends Program.

Once children get to kindergarten, Student Services provides appropriate supports through eighth grade. The goal is to support students in the least-restrictive environment possible, by developing individualized and developmentally appropriate plans to meet learning needs. This can include support within the general education classroom or within a small-group setting. For students with more comprehensive needs, the Structured Opportunities for Academics and Responsibility (SOAR) program provides individualized curriculum emphasizing functional academics, communication skills, life skills and social skills.

"The idea is to thoughtfully develop plans that meet students' needs,

rather than try to fit every student into existing programs," Black says.

Elaine Aumiller, Ed.D., superintendent of schools, says that it's a best practice and legal mandate "to educate students in the least-restrictive environment along with general education peers, to the greatest extent possible." She adds that it's also important for neighborhood children to be in school together. "When students with special needs can be in the school near their home, they can develop lifelong friendships and learn with and from their peers."

Black agrees that inclusive practices benefit all students in a variety of ways, including "high expectations for learning, developing good academic and behavioral models for all students, increased appreciation and acceptance of individual differences, and opportunities to build a community of learners."

"We're fortunate to have many supports in place for students who need them, and to have talented staff members providing those services in such a caring and professional manner," Aumiller says.

STUDENTS RUN, JUMP AND DANCE FOR A GREAT CAUSE...THEIR SCHOOLS!

Students and families did a great job collecting pledges for the schools' successful fall fundraisers. The money raised will enable the Fairview and Lions Park PTOs and Westbrook PTA to provide educational and fun opportunities for the students all year long, including author visits, assemblies, birthday books, Fun Fair and Field Day activities and more. Thank you to the volunteers who planned these events and the families and community members who made donations!

WILD FOR WESTBROOK WALK

At the Wild for Westbrook Walk on Oct. 15, students marched and jumped their way around the school, with families cheering them on. They took part in activities at fun stops that were inspired by their favorite children's books. The event raised \$23,670! (Photo by Maria Potratz, District 57.)



FAIRVIEW ROCKS DANCE-A-THON

The first Fairview Rocks Dance-a-thon was held on Oct. 2, with students walking around the school grounds and stopping at several stations to dance to some of their favorite songs. Because students exceeded the fundraising goal of \$15,000, Principal Dan Ophus kept his promise of dressing in Blackhawks goalie gear and giving everyone a chance to take a shot on him. (Top photo by Sara Peterson, bottom photo by Chris Trezise, District 57.)



LIONS PARK ROAR & RUN

Lions Park held its first Roar & Run fundraiser on Oct. 9. The event exceeded its \$7,500 fundraising goal by \$5,000! So the PTO decided to give back to the community and support three local organizations: the Art Therapy Program at Lutheran General Hospital's Child Life Services; Phil's Friends, which provides custom care packages to people battling cancer; and Helping Hands, a PTO program that assists Lions Park families in need. (Photo by Debbie Pavlowski, District 57.)



FINANCIAL UPDATE

WITH NEW BUDGET, DISTRICT CONTINUES TO CAREFULLY ALLOCATE LIMITED RESOURCES

District 57's 2015-16 budget was adopted in September, with projected revenues of \$22.7 million and projected expenditures of \$26.1 million. This results in projected deficit spending of about \$3.4 million, which comes out of the fund balances. Based on the current budget, the District's fund balances are estimated to be 42 percent at fiscal year-end — i.e. there is enough to pay for 42 percent of operating expenses for the year, if necessary.

The Board of Education has a goal of maintaining between 30 to 50 percent fund balances, with a target of 40 percent, so current levels are meeting the educational needs of students, according to Dale Falk, assistant superintendent for finance and operations. He says District 57's financial situation is currently stable, as a result of the District carefully allocating its limited resources.

Elaine Aumiller, Ed.D., superintendent of schools, cautions that reserves have been on the decline and that the District

must continue to make smart spending decisions. "There are things we would like to do, like lowering class sizes, but we have to be very careful about how we spend money until we know what economic challenges the future holds," she says, adding that the District could have to deal with state legislation and diminishing financial support.

As in the past, the new budget includes money for capital projects, to keep the school buildings safe and up to date. About \$2.3 million has been allocated for such projects, which are determined by the Master Facility Plan. Most of the capital project funding for the 2015-16 budget has been allotted to address last summer's parking lot expansion at Westbrook School, including the recently completed entrance/exit on Central Road.

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

D57 TEAMS WITH D214 AND OTHER DISTRICTS TO EDUCATE PARENTS ABOUT HIGH-TECH LEARNING

High School District 214, District 57 and other area school districts sponsored the Engage 2015 Parent Tech Conference on Nov. 7. About 400 parents participated, learning how technology is advancing educational opportunities and changing the way today's students learn. Sessions included Social

Media in Education, Google Apps for Education, Programming for all Ages and Cyber Safety.

The unique conference brought together all of the districts that feed into District 214 high schools. The planning committee included District 57's Trevor Hope, director of technology, and Dr. Susan Woodrow,

assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction. District 57 staff members Patty Kennedy, Kate Sassatelli, Kim Stortz and Michelle Walsh gave presentations.

To learn more about the conference and the presentations that were given, go to www.engagetechconference.org.

TRIVIA NIGHT A SUCCESS, GALA COMING SOON!

Thanks to the District 57 Education Foundation for planning another successful Trivia Night on Oct. 24, and thanks to everyone who supported this event. The money raised is being used to fulfill teachers' fall grant requests.

If you walk through any one of the schools, you will see MANY examples of the Foundation's great work through the years. This year, the District is particularly grateful for the Chromebooks that are part of Lincoln's 1:1 Computer Ratio Pilot Program. District 57 thanks the Foundation and its supporters for continuing to enhance students' education!

Save the date for the 18th annual Evening for Education Gala, which will be held **Feb. 20, 2016**, at Meridian Banquets and Conference Center in Rolling Meadows.



ALUMNI RETURN TO D57 SCHOOLS TO LEND A HAND

Look how far they've come! In September, members of the Prospect High School boys Track and Field team volunteered at Fairview (right), while runners from the girls Cross Country team assisted at Westbrook. The student athletes were a big help in the classrooms, and the children enjoyed interacting with these role models, many of whom are District 57 alumni. Fairview parent and Prospect teacher/coach Frank Mirandola coordinated the Fairview visit. Westbrook parent and Prospect teacher/coach Pete Wintermute coordinated the Westbrook visit. (Photos by Marie Barkowitz, District 57, and Frank Mirandola, District 214.)