



FINANCIAL UPDATE

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT

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In order to save resources, we are not printing this publication. It is posted on the District web site and is being distributed through various email channels. Please tell your friends and neighbors to go to www.d57.org to read this newsletter and learn about the many things happening in District 57.



WHERE THINGS STAND TODAY

School districts throughout the United States have been negatively affected by the economic times and have been forced to make sacrifices and tough decisions. Unfortunately, our state is facing the worst financial reality in the country, so our local school districts have an even bigger burden to bear. Illinois is not meeting its constitutional responsibilities, including providing assistance for the education of the children of the state. In addition, school

districts are dealing with cutbacks in Federal funding, tax objections, loss of interest earnings, rising health care costs and unfunded mandates. In District 57, we have the added challenge of existing within a comparatively low tax revenue base. As a result of these factors, District 57 expenditures are outpacing revenues, even though we have made dramatic reductions.

We have tried to deal with the situation by containing costs, while maintaining important programs and services. We can continue to do this for the short term, but we will be forced to make more damaging cuts if we are not able to raise revenue in the near future.

That's why District 57 Administration has recommended seeking voter approval for a limiting tax rate referendum in April 2013. If voters approve the modest increase, the District will receive enough additional revenue to ensure a balanced operating budget and financial sustainability, restore and support our excellent programs and services, and avoid cutting more staff and

further raising class sizes. In short, with the additional tax dollars, District 57 will be able to provide the quality education it has been known for throughout the years. Without the funds, there will be a serious decline.

These school funding issues affect everyone who lives within the boundaries of District 57. We all have a vested interest in providing the educational resources that children will need to have a successful future. Thank you for taking the time to review this important information.

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



OUR EFFORTS SO FAR

Almost a decade ago, Administration and the Board of Education recognized that factors in the economy were going to adversely affect District 57. They began taking proactive steps to create a sustainable budget, including cutting out waste and increasing efficiencies. District 57 now focuses on "needs" more than "wants." And this year, the budget was balanced. These are positive steps for any organization. But District 57 has paid a price. The District has felt the pain of not being able to implement initiatives and expected practices that are characteristic in thriving, high-performing schools.

Every aspect of District 57 has experienced loss. There have been five key impacts of the reductions and changes made so far:

1. Class sizes were raised to 26 to 30 students, up from 20 to 24, which is the state average.
2. Valuable programs that inspire learners and help them become more well-rounded were eliminated or restructured. Examples include enrichment education, performing arts, art, the Learning Resource Centers and programs that ensure a successful transition for students who join the District mid-year.
3. District 57 has a Master Facilities Plan (MFP) to maintain the buildings, which are community assets. Each section of the MFP has been suspended or substantially reduced for the past three years. The buildings are beginning to show this lack of attention. The District must react to problems rather than take a proactive approach when systems and structures come to the end of their normal life expectancies.



Lincoln recently presented "Beauty and the Beast," one of the valued performing arts opportunities currently offered to District 57 students.



Families are paying increased fees, enabling the schools to continue providing activities, such as track and field at Lincoln.

4. Two employee groups (educational support personnel and administrators) have not received salary increases for the past two years. The teaching staff did not receive an increase this year. There is only a modest increase built into next year's budget, as these groups have not kept up with inflation and their compensation is not competitive in this region. This can translate into high turnover, which disrupts progress on strategic initiatives and requires investment in mentoring new employees. District 57 already is experiencing this adverse impact, with the loss of three key leaders this year.
5. District 57 increased student fees, which has been difficult for many families, especially those that must pay for multiple children. But the District would not have been able to continue offering programs such as music, athletics and transportation without this additional revenue.

These reductions and changes, as painful as they are, have been necessary and have bought some time. But even these drastic moves will not be enough if revenue is not raised in the near future.

Band and orchestra at the elementary and middle schools have been restructured to save resources.



WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

The only way to create a sustainable budget is to match expenditures with revenues. But District 57 already has cut as much as possible while still providing a basic quality program. The District is no longer thriving in a manner consistent with its past, and if any more is cut, the quality of the education provided will decline. So the District currently is taking a measured approach and acting upon three crucial budget objectives:

1. Maintain programs and services at the 2011 – 2012 funding level.
2. Provide a modest increase for the valued employees to minimize the risk of losing them to surrounding districts, which pay more competitively.
3. Keep the buildings clean and safe, systematically maintaining them to ensure their longevity and protect the community's investment.

In order to accomplish these objectives, District 57 must utilize the reserves to cover expenses. This approach allows the District to remain stable in its offerings — but only for a short time. The reserves are being depleted. If revenue is not raised in the very near future, District 57 will be forced to make significant cuts that will not be acceptable to the Board or the community. The cuts would affect all areas of the educational offerings

in all of the schools. That is why the District needs an increase to the Education Fund. This increase would sustain District 57 for the foreseeable future.

District 57 will soon share more detailed information about potential cuts. Specifics about a potential referendum, including a list of cuts that would be made without a tax increase, will be circulated at the beginning of next school year. In the meantime, members of the District 57 community are asked to consider the facts in this newsletter and weigh the options. What kind of school district do you want for your children and/or your community? Please keep the following in mind as you think about the future of District 57:

DISTRICT 57 WILL NEVER BE:

- A district that spends excessively
- A district that leads the pack in salaries
- Viewed as a district that is liberal in its ideology or is wasteful

DISTRICT 57 WILL STRIVE TO:

- Remain a district that provides students with a quality education for a reasonable cost
- Allocate resources with a commitment to sustainability
- Be an asset to the community of Mount Prospect



Lions Park students visited Central School during a recent field trip that explored Mount Prospect history.

D57 WELCOMES THREE NEW ADMINISTRATORS

District 57 is pleased to welcome three talented and highly qualified leaders to the administrative team. They will officially join the District over the summer.



JASON KAIZ will become the new **principal of Lincoln Middle School**, replacing Dr. Don Angelaccio, who is leaving to become assistant superintendent of schools for Prospect Heights District

23. Kaiz is assistant principal at Attea Middle School in Glenview District 34.



DANIEL OPHUS will become the new **principal of Fairview Elementary School**, replacing April Jordan, who has taken a position as principal of The Skokie School in Winnetka

District 36. Ophus is assistant principal at Washington Elementary School in Park Ridge-Niles District 64. Prior to that, he was a math and social studies teacher at Lincoln for six years.



CASSIE BLACK will join the District as **director of student services**, replacing Donna Toops, who is leaving to head student services at Avoca District

37. Black, a former school psychologist, is assistant principal at Highcrest Middle School in Wilmette District 39.

Dr. Elaine Aumiller, superintendent of schools, thanks the interview teams, made up of administrators, staff and parents, for helping to bring such energetic and passionate candidates to District 57 and for completing the process in such a timely manner.