



DISTRICT 57 REPORT

701 West Gregory Street
 Mount Prospect, IL 60056
 (847) 394-7300
www.d57.org

ADMINISTRATION

- Dr. Elaine Aumiller
Superintendent
- Adam Parisi
*Assistant Superintendent
Finance and Operations*
- Dr. Susan Woodrow
*Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction*
- Cassie Black
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- Trevor Hope
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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT



I know these final weeks of the year are especially busy, with so much going on at each of the schools. But please take a few minutes to read this newsletter, because it outlines many important and exciting changes coming to the District next year – the expansion of math instruction at Lincoln, the addition of mobile classrooms to ease overcrowding at Westbrook, earlier start and end dates for the school year, and several key retirements and new administrators joining our team.

In addition, there are changes to the District 57 School Board. On May 1, we swore in our new Board members, Vicki Chung and Brian Maye, and incumbents, Eileen Kowalczyk and Gerry McCluskey, who were voted in during the April 4 election. We also said goodbye to retiring Board members Joe Leane, who has served 14 years, and Karen Nejdil, who has served eight. Joe and Karen have volunteered countless hours as Board members and president. Please join me in thanking them for their significant service. Also please welcome our new members. We thank the entire Board for being so committed to learning the issues and making informed decisions that benefit our community.

Our Board will have a big job next year, as it decides whether the District will seek an Education Fund Tax Rate increase (referendum), possibly in the March 2018 election. The referendum is necessary to enable the District to address financial challenges that have been out of our control for several years and are expected to get worse. This includes federal and state funding decreases, a property tax freeze, increased financial mandates and growing enrollment –

all of which have forced the District to resort to deficit spending. At our May 1 Board meeting, we heard a presentation by a consultant who helps communities plan for and run referendum campaigns. There will be another presentation about referendum planning at our meeting on June 15 (7 p.m., Fairview). All of this information will be helpful as we determine next steps.

Finally, I want to thank two administrators who are retiring: Dr. Susan Woodrow, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, and Kris Gritzmacher, principal of Lions Park. Susan has led many curriculum changes and educational initiatives that have improved student learning over her eight-year tenure. Kris has been an innovative school leader who has been loved by students, staff and families for the past 18 years. The District has greatly benefited from their service. I will miss partnering with them, but I wish them all the best in their retirements. Please read the Page 3 story about their replacements and the many other well-loved staff members who are retiring.

Dr. Elaine Aumiller
 Superintendent of Schools, District 57



DISTRICT 57 WELCOMES NEW SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS
 Dr. Elaine Aumiller gathered with the new School Board after the swearing in of two new members and two incumbents on May 1. The Board is now made up of (back row, left to right) Vicki Chung, president Joe Sonnefeldt, vice president Jennifer Kobus, Dennis Composto and (front row, left to right) Gerald McCluskey, Eileen Kowalczyk and Brian Maye. (Photo by Maria Potratz, District 57.)

WESTBROOK CONSTRUCTION IS UNDERWAY: MOBILE CLASSROOMS IN PLACE BY AUGUST TO MEET ENROLLMENT NEEDS

With initial digging and site preparation almost complete, the two mobile classrooms that are being added at Westbrook are expected to be delivered in the first few weeks of summer. The units, which will be located near the playground, will be ready for students and staff by the time school resumes in August. This expansion is necessary due to spiking enrollment next year and projected growth for quite some time.

Westbrook enrollment for the 2017-18 school year currently requires one additional section, for a total of 10 (it's possible that another section could be necessary after registrations are tallied). The plan is for the mobile classrooms to house music and the staff workroom/lunchroom. By not placing a grade-level classroom in the units, the District is limiting the amount of time any group of students will be in them. Also, combining the workroom and staff lunchroom frees up additional space so art can move from a cart back into its own classroom.

Bathrooms are being installed in the mobiles, in case it becomes necessary to use them as regular classrooms at some point. For safety and security, a canopy that is covered on all sides is being installed from the building to the mobiles.

The total cost of the project is estimated at \$300,000, which includes the three-year lease and installation. The cost is higher than originally estimated, partly due to the need for larger mobiles to accommodate the bathrooms. The larger mobiles are too large for the courtyard (based on state laws that dictate the distance the units must be from the building), so the plan was altered to place them on the northwest side. This area is sloped and requires additional excavation, which added to the cost.

SPACE ISSUES AT FAIRVIEW AND LIONS PARK

Fairview and Lions Park enrollments also are on the rise, requiring one additional classroom at Fairview and two at Lions Park. Lions Park has space that can be utilized. To accommodate Fairview's needs, the SOAR program will move from Fairview to Lions Park. Plans are underway to ensure a smooth transition next year, so that students in the SOAR program are successfully integrated with general education students just as they have been at Fairview.

Elaine Aumiller, Ed.D., superintendent of schools, says these decisions were made after a great deal of analysis and looking at many options. "We feel these are the best solutions at this time. But we will need more space in the future, and we must find long-term answers, many of which will require additional funding," she says. "Administration and the School Board will continue to look at these issues next year, including the possibility of a tax referendum to fund staffing and building needs."



FIRST GRADERS THINK LIKE COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS THANK YOU, BOSCH!

Westbrook students program "Bee Bots" to follow a designated path. This activity helps them learn the basics of computer programming. These and other learning materials were purchased using a \$9,000 grant from the Robert Bosch Tool Corporation. LRC director Barb Mack wrote and submitted the grant proposal to increase STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) programming and promote curiosity, creativity, exploration, collaboration and critical thinking for the District's youngest learners. (Photo by Jake Culberson, District 57.)

LINCOLN'S SCHOOL DAY TO INCLUDE MORE MATH MINUTES

Starting next school year, Lincoln students will have 39 additional minutes of math instruction each day, to ensure they are receiving the best possible preparation for high school and beyond. This means the school day will be structured in a different way, with three core blocks of classes: math, language arts and social studies/science.

Lincoln's "math minutes" currently are similar to other District 214 feeder middle schools but fall below the state average. Principal Paul Suminski says it's important to add math time so that students have adequate opportunities to explore new concepts and eventually master them. "Students need depth of knowledge in middle school math, especially in algebra, where you must have a solid foundation to be successful at the higher levels. This takes a little more time than we're now spending," he says.

Administration and Lincoln have worked for the past several months to develop a new schedule that makes the extra math minutes available without adding to the length of the school day, or changing start/end times. The plan involves boosting math instruction time to 80 minutes a day (including the passing period), which is the same as language arts. In addition to the blocks of math, LA and social studies/science, each student's schedule includes foreign language, broad experience classes, PE and lunch – these are in traditional 38-minute periods, which is a reduction of a few minutes. Advisory will be held once a week on Mondays for 30 minutes.

To accommodate the extra math minutes, the District will hire four additional math teachers. This was part of the Staffing Plan the Board passed in February. Professional development also will be added, to ensure teachers have the support they need to enhance and expand math lessons.

RESPECTED, LONG-SERVING ADMINISTRATORS AND STAFF RETIRING, MANY NEW TEAM MEMBERS JOINING THE SCHOOLS NEXT YEAR

When students return in August, they'll be greeted by many new faces, due to a long list of retirements and some additions to the school teams.



Katherine Kelly, new Lions Park principal

Lions Park principal Kris Gritzmacher, who is retiring after 18 years of service to District 57, will be replaced by Katherine (Katie) Kelly, currently principal of Field Elementary School in Park Ridge Niles District 64. Elaine Aumiller, Ed.D., superintendent of schools, says Kelly is the perfect candidate to take Gritzmacher's place. "The interview team of parents, staff and administrators thought highly of Katie, because she's a well-rounded educator who has been a leader on many school and district educational initiatives, plus she has classroom experience in all the grades that Lions Park serves," Aumiller says.

Dr. Susan Woodrow, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, also is retiring and is being replaced by Cassie Black, currently director of student services. Sara Tyburski, psychologist at Lions Park, will move into the student services position.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS HIRED

Fairview, Lions Park and Westbrook will welcome assistant principals next school year, new positions that the School Board approved this spring. These positions were eliminated

as part of 2005 budget cuts, but it has become necessary to add them again due to the growing list of administrative tasks and government mandates facing the schools. The assistant principals will address legal requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA), as well as provide student services support that previously was handled by full-time school psychologists or special education coordinators. The schools will go from four psychologists to two and receive student services support from the assistant principals.

Lincoln already has an assistant principal in place, Randy Steen. The new assistant principals are: for Fairview, Una Durkan, currently student services coordinator and formerly a teacher at Fairview; for Lions Park, Danielle Bielenda, a teacher in Park Ridge-Niles District 64; and for Westbrook, Kristin Vonder Haar, advanced learning facilitator in Arlington Heights District 25. Aumiller says she's impressed with the skills and experience of the assistant principals and that they'll be a great fit with the strong team of administrators in the schools.

Other significant changes include the retirements of many school staff who have been loved and respected by students and their families over several years: Felipe Hernandez, Ann LeBoyer, Jean Likens and Joanne Prato of Fairview; Tobey Black, Sandie Pappanduros and Carolyn Story of Lions Park; Robin Brantman and Michael O'Neill of Lincoln; and Marie Barkowitz, Dawn Bays, Mary Budreau, Jean Imburgia and Lori Many of Westbrook.

SAYING GOODBYE AND THANKS TO THESE AND OTHER D57 TREASURES



Lions Park art teacher Sandie Pappanduros and music teacher Carolyn Story collaborated on their 22nd fifth-grade play this year! Story wrote many of the plays (often along with her husband, Don), and Pappanduros designed the scenery, with the help of her students. They are pictured here on the set of this year's play – another Carolyn Story original –

"Einstein's Closet." (Photo by Mark Rusk, District 57.)



Principal Kris Gritzmacher celebrated with fifth graders at the Fun Run on May 12, as they all prepare to say goodbye to Lions Park. Gritzmacher will retire at the end of the year, after 18 years of leading the school. (Photo by Anne Senn, District 57.)

Westbrook PE teacher Lori Many reacted to the surprise flash mob held in her honor in March. Many, who is retiring after 22 years as a District 57 teacher, had no idea the touching musical tribute was planned to take place during her annual Wellness Walk. Students and staff sang and danced to "Walking on Sunshine," and a former student of Many's serenaded her with "You are my Sunshine." (Photo by Maria Potratz, District 57.)



SPRING MUSICAL ROCKS LINCOLN

Sixth, seventh and eighth graders, under the direction of music teacher Leslie Thomas, thrilled audiences with their presentation of this year's spring musical, "School House Rock Live," on April 21 and 22. (Photo by Marni Finder.)

STUDENTS EXPLORE THE HISTORY IN THEIR OWN BACKYARD, WITH NEW CURRICULUM REVAMPED IN TIME FOR MOUNT PROSPECT CENTENNIAL

When second-grade teachers Michele Logar and Julie Vowinkel realized that their Mount Prospect history curriculum had become out of date and could use a refresh, they decided to devote a summer to delving into the community's past. Logar, a Fairview teacher, and Vowinkel, who retired from Lions Park in 2015, became historians for a couple months, working in partnership with the Mount Prospect Historical Society to create a new District 57 curriculum that was rolled out last year, in time for the town's Centennial Celebration. This spring, for the first time, students ended the history unit by exploring the newly restored Central School at the Historical Society.

Second graders from Fairview and Lions Park spend a few weeks each year on Mount Prospect history, a unit that culminates with May field trips to local historical sites. The new curriculum is much more detailed, and the field trip has been expanded. Logar says the students love it. "They can't wait to get started each day. Nothing I've taught in all my years has generated this level of excitement," she says.

Logar and Vowinkel helped create the original history curriculum more than 10 years ago. When they designed the new lessons, they decided to make better use of Central School as soon as it opened to the public. That finally happened this year, which means students who took the field trip in May could sit in the desks, write on slates and be transported back to the early 1900s.

The field trip also includes stops at St. John Lutheran Church and Cemetery, where Pastor Jeff Gavin gives a tour, and Capannari Ice Cream, formerly the Moehling General Store, where owner Katie Dix explains the significance of one of the oldest buildings in Mount Prospect. Logar says many community members and the Historical Society have helped make the history unit meaningful to students.

She also thanks District 57 and Dr. Susan Woodrow, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction, for supporting



Fairview second graders learned what it was like to be a student in the early 1900s, during their visit to the newly renovated Mount Prospect Historical Society's Central School. (Photo by Kari Commare, District 57.)

the project and realizing the importance of giving second graders an appreciation for history. "There's no better way to start than with the history in your own town," Logar says.

Logar and Vowinkel say the effort to revamp the curriculum grew as they uncovered new information. The curriculum goes back to the beginning and covers the Potawatomi Indians who used to live in the area, then explores the founding families. New materials include a street name activity, a section on women in Mount Prospect and tech components, such as the state's digital archives.

"Over the years, thousands of District 57 second graders have learned about the history of their town. It's great that Michele and Julie have built on that with an expanded curriculum just as we're celebrating Mount Prospect's 100th birthday," Woodrow says.

REMINDER OF CALENDAR CHANGE...SEE YOU ON AUG. 16!

District 57's new calendar will go into effect next school year. Classes resume on Wednesday, Aug. 16, 2017, earlier than normal. This change was made to be consistent with the new High School District 214 calendar. School will end next year on May 25 (if no emergency days are used). Check out the complete calendar at this [link](#). Have a great summer!