



# DISTRICT 57 REPORT

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## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT



Another school year is coming to a close, and what an exciting and eventful final few weeks it has been. Our Fairview addition is well underway, students and staff have received many impressive honors, and we recently swore in new School Board members and said goodbye to two who are stepping down after providing strong leadership for the past eight years. All of this important news is covered in this newsletter. Please take a few minutes to read it.

We also are preparing for some key administrative changes that will take effect this summer. Westbrook assistant principal Kristin Vonder Haar will become principal of the school, replacing Dr. Mary Gorr, who has been named assistant superintendent for teaching and learning. This is a new title that better reflects the responsibilities of the position, which was formerly called assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. Mary replaces Cassie Black, who just graduated from law school and has been offered a great opportunity to begin practicing law at an educational law firm. Cassie has been a valued contributor to the administrative team, and we wish her continued success.

I'm so pleased that Kristin will become our new leader at Westbrook. The staff/parent interview committee screened well-qualified candidates and found her to be the best fit. She has been a hard-working, effective assistant principal for the past two years, and I know she'll do well in her new role. We are now in the process of searching for her replacement as assistant principal.

Mary has been at the helm of Westbrook for eight years and has a lot of fans there, as was evident at her incredible surprise sendoff (pictured below). She's been an innovative educational leader, and it's a win for the District that she will now oversee teaching and learning for all four schools.

Thank you for your partnership throughout this school year. Have a wonderful summer!

**Dr. Elaine Aumiller**

Superintendent of Schools, Mount Prospect School District 57

### SURPRISE SENDOFF FOR DR. GORR

Westbrook surprised Dr. Mary Gorr with an all-school sendoff on May 17, with video tributes, music videos, confetti cannons, a Westbrook song performed by the students and special visitors including her family and many retirees who came back for the occasion. It was an emotional tribute as she prepares to leave her position as principal to become District 57's assistant superintendent for teaching and learning. "I will always treasure Westbrook School. This will always feel like home, and this is sacred ground for me forever," Gorr told the children. (Photo by Dena Conway, District 57.)



### WARM WELCOME FOR MRS. VONDER HAAR

Assistant principal Kristin Vonder Haar celebrated with some of her Westbrook friends after being named principal of the school, effective July 1. "It is such a joy to be a part of this wonderful community that prides itself on fostering a nurturing environment for our students to grow a love for learning. I am excited to continue to help Westbrook grow in my new role as principal," she said. (Photo by Maria Paraskevopoulos, District 57.)



# #D57PROGRESS



**FAIRVIEW FROM THE SKY:** Crews have already made a lot of progress in the expansion project, which started in March and is expected to be completed in August. (Photo courtesy of Nicholas & Associates, Inc.)

## CREWS BREAK GROUND ON FAIRVIEW EXPANSION, BUILDING THE WAY TO A BETTER FUTURE

After years of discussion and planning, Fairview is getting an addition that will address overcrowding and better prepare the school for the future. On Jan. 24, the School Board accepted construction bids, which were about \$300,000 less than expected. Crews broke ground about a month and a half after that, and since then, the progress on the west side of the building has been fast and furious. With the walls recently going up, the new footprint of the school is becoming visible.

The project includes four new classrooms with flexible furniture, an expansion of the multipurpose room with new a/v equipment, and the addition of storage in the back of the gym. With Fairview at capacity and enrollment expected to grow even more, the new classrooms and multipurpose room expansion alleviate crowding in the building. In addition, air conditioning will be installed in the gym, which the District decided to do at this time because duct work was already taking place and, therefore, the cost was reduced.

"It has been exciting for all of us at Fairview to watch this progress and envision the students who will be learning in the new classrooms that are already taking shape," says Fairview principal Dan Ophus. "Our current overcrowding forces us to use some small teaching spaces, or in some cases share spaces. I look forward to seeing the final product and knowing that all of our students are learning comfortably throughout the building."

The budgeted cost of the Fairview expansion is \$3.5 million, which is coming from referendum funds that were set aside in the 2018-2019 budget. Work will continue throughout the summer, with completion expected in time for the start of school.

Also this summer, the District will complete the following projects to address some of the most urgent needs that had been previously ignored due to lack of funds. The projects, which are part of the long-term Master Facilities Plan, are:

- **LINCOLN** – Rebuild the service delivery ramp and crumbling retaining walls, an area that frequently floods. Estimated cost is \$270,000. Replace duct work for the HVAC system and repair rotted wood and aluminum window sills, each at an estimated cost of \$25,000.
- **LIONS PARK** – Replace the outdated fire sprinkler system, at an estimated cost of \$250,000. Fairview sprinklers were replaced last summer. The District is delaying the project to rebuild the existing parking lot and build a lot on the newly purchased property by Lions Park, due to the discovery that the land elevations are not even, which presents a significant challenge. After consulting with the District architect and civil engineer, administrators determined it would be fiscally responsible to delay the project until next summer.
- **WESTBROOK** – Improve the playground and add a bank of swings, to better meet the needs created by expanding enrollment. The cost is \$20,000, which will be shared by the PTO.
- **ADMINISTRATION BUILDING** – Replace the HVAC system, which is original to the 1960s building and frequently malfunctions. Estimated cost is \$70,000.

Follow the progress of Fairview construction on social media, using #D57progress and #D57buildforthefuture. The District also will post video updates on its [Facebook](#) page and on [Twitter](#) over the summer.



(Photo by Jenny Kustra-Quinn, District 57.)



# EXCELLENCE IN D57

## NPR COMPETITION RECOGNIZES PODCASTS CREATED BY LIONS PARK STUDENTS

Lions Park fifth graders Colin, Ethan and Kiko (pictured left to right) won Honorable Mentions in NPR's first-ever Student Podcast Challenge. Their podcasts were considered among nearly 6,000 entries submitted by students in all 50 states. All of the fifth graders at Lions Park researched and wrote persuasive essays on topics that matter to them, learned about effective podcasts and then used a video editing app to create their own podcasts. Many of the students chose to enter their creations in NPR's national contest. The honored submissions were "Allowance," created by Colin and Ethan in Mrs. Pavlowski's class (listen [here](#)), and "Why Reading," created by Kiko in Mrs. Murphy's class (listen [here](#)). (Photo by Sara Murphy, District 57.)



## LINCOLN'S PLTW RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Teacher Elizabeth Straczek (center) recently gathered with her students to celebrate Lincoln's Project Lead the Way (PLTW) program receiving a Distinguished School designation for 2018-2019. The honor recognizes a commitment to increasing student access, engagement and achievement in the PLTW Gateway program, which introduces students to engineering and develops skills such as critical thinking and problem solving. Lincoln's PLTW program, which Straczek brought to the school in 2010, is one of just 148 middle schools nationwide to receive this honor. (Photo by Robin Moran, District 57.)

## ROBOTICS TEAM WINS WORLDWIDE HONORS, FOR LEARNING TO GROW SHRIMP IN SPACE

For the second year in a row, a Lincoln Robotics team won big at the World Robotics Championship, held April 24 to 27 in Detroit. The team, The Shrimp Strike Back, won the first place Innovative Solution Award, for creating a shrimp-growing tank to feed astronauts in long-duration space travel. The team competed against more than 17,000 students from around the world, also placing in the top six for project presentation, earning 17th place for robot performance and coming in fourth for best U.S. robot performance team. Lincoln's other Robotics team, Apollo 493, won the first place Project Innovative Solution Award at the State Competition in January. (Photo by Lincoln Robotics.)



## MAYOR PROCLAIMS DAY OF CELEBRATION FOR WRESTLERS' 'HISTORIC SEASON'

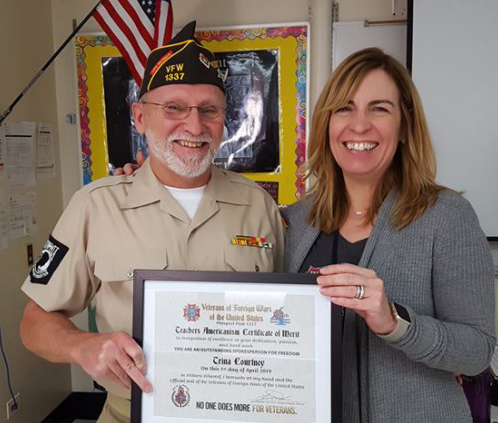
Members of the Lincoln wrestling team were recognized at a Mount Prospect Village Board meeting on March 19, for their spirit and determination during their "truly historic wrestling season" — which included an undefeated record, a conference championship with six individual champions, great contributions from three female wrestlers, five state qualifiers and a 12th-place finish in the state. Mayor Arlene Juracek proclaimed a day of celebration for the team's achievements, and she encouraged the entire community to recognize the "unforgettable and extraordinary season of these young athletes of Lincoln Middle School."

## SCIENCE CHICKS TAKE FIRST PLACE WITH UNDERWATER ROV

The Lincoln Science Chicks took top honors in Shedd Aquarium's Underwater ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle) Regional Competition on April 27. With the ROV they designed and built, team members scored first in the underwater demonstration and first in the engineer's presentation. (Photo by Lucy Garofalo.)





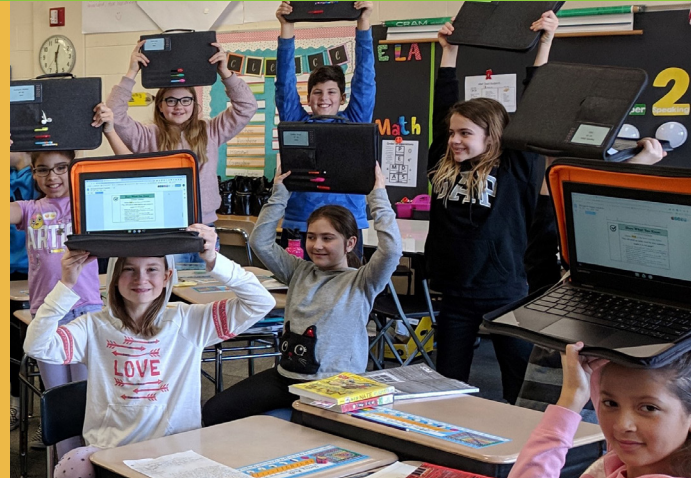


## VFW HONORS SPECIAL LINCOLN TEACHER

VFW Commanders Les Durov (pictured) and Bill Starr showed up at Lincoln on April 5 to surprise social studies teacher Trina Courtney with VFW's Teachers Americanism Certificate of Merit award. She was selected for her "dedication, passion and hard work" and for being "an outstanding spokesperson for freedom." (Photo by Bill Starr.)

## FIFTH GRADERS GO CRAZY FOR CHROMEBOOKS

Lions Park fifth graders proudly display their Chromebooks. These students, along with another Lions Park class and two fifth-grade classes at Fairview, participated in a pilot program for a 1:1 Chromebook initiative this year. Teachers found meaningful ways to incorporate online learning into lesson plans, using the computers for in-class teaching and homework. The pilot was a success, and the program will be fully implemented next year, with each fifth grader being assigned a Chromebook to use at school and at home. The District will be in communication with parents regarding how to best partner to make the program a success. Lincoln students in grades six through eight already participate in a 1:1 Chromebook initiative. (Photo by Jessica St. Denis, District 57.)



## LIONS PARK STUDENTS LEARN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FROM VIP VISITOR

Mount Prospect Mayor Arlene Juracek visited with Lions Park students on May 16. She helped deliver morning announcements, then spoke to each grade about our local government and her role as mayor. She also answered many insightful questions from the students -- from "What's your favorite part of being mayor?" to "What's your favorite sports team?" The mayor was invited by the PTO's new Civic Engagement Committee, which School Board/PTO member Vicki Chung started at Lions Park this year. (Photo by Vicki Chung.)

## NEWS YOU NEED, AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

### DISTRICT LAUNCHES NEW APP, REDESIGNED WEBSITE COMING SOON

District 57 has launched a new app, available on iOS, Android and Windows devices. District technology director Trevor Hope says the free app will be a valuable communications tool that will enable parents, students and staff to stay connected and informed, with quick-and-easy access to District News, Superintendent's Messages, calendars, School Board agendas, student registration and links to resources such as My MealTime and Bus Bulletin. Parents and students also can use the app to connect with their school and have important information at their fingertips, such as newsletters, staff directories, teacher websites and online resources for students. The app can be downloaded now on the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#). Use the links, or simply search for Mount Prospect School District 57.

The District also will release a new-and-improved website later this summer -- watch email and social media for the announcement when the site goes live.



## MOUNT PROSPECT SCHOOL DISTRICT 57



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an App  
for  
that!



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## EDUCATION FOUNDATION CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF GIVING BACK AND \$1.5 MILLION IN FUNDS RAISED FOR OUR SCHOOLS

In 1998, some District 57 parents decided to sell candy at a carnival to raise money for items the schools could not buy on their own. Little did they know that this small fundraiser would represent the launch of the District 57 Education Foundation and a legacy of giving back that would still be going strong two decades later.

The Education Foundation celebrated its 20th anniversary at the Great Gatsby Gala on April 6, raising more than \$44,000. This brings the Foundation's 20-year fundraising total to a whopping \$1.5 million.

"Everywhere you go in our schools you see examples of Education Foundation contributions – from very large items to a little smaller, but all incredibly important to student learning," says Elaine Aumiller, Ed.D., superintendent. "The District is so thankful to the current and past board members, donors, sponsors, volunteers...everyone who has been part of bringing the Foundation's mission to life over the past 20 years."

One of the first actions of the original Education Foundation was to adopt a Technology Plan that served as a blueprint for supporting the schools' early efforts to incorporate technology into learning. The Foundation provided computers for every classroom and partnered with a local company to wire the buildings for Internet access – a big deal in 1998!

Since then, the Foundation has hosted golf outings, trivia nights and spring galas to raise money to fund grant requests submitted by staff and parents, in the general areas of Curriculum Support, Technology and Wellness. The Foundation's efforts have grown, but its primary goal has stayed the same – to enable our community's children to take advantage of learning opportunities



*Education Foundation chairs and members representing much of the organization's 20-year history gathered at the Great Gatsby Gala on April 6. Pictured left to right: Paul Erbe, John Mailander, Tom Lowe, Jeanne Doughty, John Cichon, Mary O'Malley, Larry Kowalczyk, Eric Brouillette and Mallory Reyes. (Photo by Anthony Pellizzeri.)*

that might not otherwise be available to them. The Foundation has provided funding for major projects, such as the renovation of the Westbrook LRC and Lincoln fitness center, and for items such as band and orchestra instruments, classroom books and PE equipment.

Mallory Reyes, current chair of the Foundation, says the money raised this spring enabled the funding of a wide range of grants that further the education and learning experiences of students at all four schools – the long list includes maker space materials, family literacy bags, art kit supplies, sensory equipment, flexible classroom seating and more.

"We are so fortunate to live in a community that values the education of our children," Reyes says.



## NEW SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS SWORN IN, NEW PRESIDENT TAKES THE GAVEL

After the School Board's reorganization meeting on April 25, Dr. Elaine Aumiller posed with the new Board: (left to right) Rachael Rothrauff, Kimberly Fay, Jennifer Kobus, Vicki Chung, Eileen Kowalczyk, Brian Maye and Gerald McCluskey. New members Rothrauff and Fay and returning member Kobus, who were elected on April 2, were sworn in during the meeting, while Kowalczyk became president and Chung became vice president. The District said goodbye and thank you to Joe Sonnefeldt and Dennis Composto, who served as Board members for the past eight years. (Photo by Jenny Kustra-Quinn, District 57.)

## SEE YOU ON AUG. 21!

Reminder: the **2019-2020** school year will start for students on Wednesday, Aug. 21, one week later than last year. The change was made based on preferences expressed in the District's calendar survey. Find the full calendar at this [link](#). Have a great summer!