



Betsy Ross Anne Sullivan Dwight D. Eisenhower Douglas MacArthur

The School Scene

Fall 2008 The Schools of Prospect Heights District 23

2008-09 District Objectives

The Board of Education has adopted the annual District Objectives for 2008-09. These are the goals that will guide the Board, administration, and staff throughout the school year:

- Develop a comprehensive five-year plan for the District that encompasses the education, financial, and physical plant needs of the District.
- Investigate the development of a District-wide foreign language program.
- Develop a District "scorecard" that measures the educational and financial state of the District.
- Develop appropriate probes and analysis of data collected by the District to measure the effectiveness of the gifted education, full-day kindergarten, and reading support programs.

The first two objectives have "rolled over" from last year. According to Superintendent Greg Guarrine both require continuing research and input from various sources. The five-year plan is "a really big work in progress." More time and effort will be devoted to studying the

long-range vision for the District. Deb Wilson, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, is currently researching how foreign language programs are delivered in other districts. Many options including developing a consortium with area school districts are being investigated.

"We need to spend a lot more time looking at this one," said Dr. Guarrine. "Our next step will be to set up a committee to determine how best to offer this program."

The two new objectives reflect the Board's commitment to accurately measure the success of educational programs and financial strategies. Using resources wisely is a high priority and these kinds of initiatives will help make those determinations much more effective.

"It is a combination of all the things we do put in one logical and succinct format," said Dr. Guarrine. ●

Fast Facts

School enrollment:

| | |
|----------------|------------|
| Eisenhower ... | 308 |
| Ross..... | 330 |
| Sullivan | 270 |
| MacArthur | 534 |

programs and financial strategies. Using resources wisely is a high priority and these kinds of initiatives will help make those determinations much more effective.

School Board Appoints New Member

Randal S. DeCoursey was appointed to the Board of Education at a special meeting held on September 15. He will serve out the term that became available when Thomas Pawlik moved out of the District. That term expires in April of 2009.

As Director of Customer Experience at Allstate Insurance Company in Northbrook, Mr. DeCoursey helps develop and implement the company's financial strategic priority to become more customer-focused and reinvent protection and retirement for the consumer. He has been with the company since 1987 in various capacities starting as a Unit Supervisor/Trainee and moving up to Unit Manager, Regional Market Support Manager, Senior Marketing Division Manager, Senior Manager of Operations,

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and finally, Director of Operations prior to being named to the newly-created position this year. He has a Master of Business Administration (MBA) with a Marketing Emphasis from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and a Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Management from Illinois State University. He also has earned several industry designations and completed an executive education course at the Kellogg School of Management.

As a person who places a high value on education in all phases of life, Mr. DeCoursey is looking forward to being on the Board of Education and working to give children the best possible chance of success.

"I believe that progress in any business or organization is made by listening to the opinions of all interested parties and working through others to realize change and improvement. Negotiation, collaboration, and strong overall leadership skills are absolutely needed to ensure that optimal solutions are identified and implemented effectively."

Mr. DeCoursey and his wife live in Arlington Heights with their three children, ages 14, 9, and 4. The family recently moved

back to the area after being relocated by Allstate for three years. Mr. DeCoursey coached youth basketball for the past six years and participated as an adult volunteer for Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. ●



Administration

Dr. Gregory P. Guarrine

Superintendent
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Assistant Superintendent for Instruction
847/870-3850 ext. 103

Richard Ewanio

Business Administrator
847/870-3850 ext. 107

Jan Travis

Director of Technology
847/870-3850 ext. 105

Amy Walter

Special Education Coordinator
847/870-3850 ext. 120

Ron DeGeorge

Maintenance Supervisor
847/870-3850 ext. 110

PTO Reborn at Mac!

MacArthur Principal Steven Lee knows that kids benefit when parents get involved in their school. That's why he was determined to give new life to a Parent/Teacher Organization at Mac.

"We are very excited to get the PTO up and running this year," said Mr. Lee. "It's been about 10 years or so since the middle school has had our own PTO. We needed to involve parents more in activities at Mac. Although parent involvement has been pretty high in our music and performing arts areas and, to a certain extent, with our athletic program, we were still missing out in other areas."

After receiving positive reactions from parents about the concept of a PTO, Mr. Lee met with what he felt was a "good mix" of incoming sixth grade and current seventh and eighth grade parents. Several volunteers emerged from that group who were willing to step up and accept leadership positions.

The 2008-09 Mac PTO Board includes President Deb Jargstorf, Co-President Dana Ludvigsen, Co-President Betsy Yager, Vice-President (School Store) Colleen Busche, Vice President (Spirit Wear) Jamey Roscoe, Secretary Judy Ferraro, and Treasurer Angela Martin.

"These folks have really helped to organize, recruit, and get us off the ground this year," said Mr. Lee. "The interest and dedication of these take-charge parents allowed us to hit the ground running as school opened."

By meeting over the spring and summer months, the PTO developed goals and responsibilities for the organization. To strengthen communications between home, school, and the community, they plan to hold public meetings once a month, distribute a PTO newsletter, develop a PTO Web site, and align with professional organizations. The PTO will fundraise by sponsoring in-school events, running concessions at home athletic events, selling spirit wear, and sponsoring out-of-school outings. The organization also will provide volunteers for clerical assistance, field trip chaperones, and event supervision. Lastly, the PTO hopes to give recognition to students, staff, and community members.

The Mac PTO has a membership of over 125 parents and staff. Fundraising efforts also have started and PTO members have already supervised several school events. ●

Ike - Getting Greater All the Time

Luke Lambatos knows exactly how he wants kids to feel about attending Eisenhower Elementary School. "Every day we want the students to wake up and feel as though they cannot wait to get to school," said Ike's new principal.



Dr. Lambatos is passionate about defining school as a place where children learn through positive interactions with peers and adults and acquire the academic and social skills to become productive members of the community. But most important to this school leader is that children discover new dreams to pursue.

"Our role as educators and parents is to instill in all children that they are capable of accomplishing their dreams," he said.

His educational philosophy is driven by a desire to see every child achieve. Creating an environment where children come to school each day enjoying the learning process while making friends along the way is an ideal foundation. In his estimation, all students need to be encouraged to take full advantage of all the opportunities school has to offer.

Mr. Lambatos recognizes District 23 as a very friendly and nurturing environ-

ment for both adults and children. "Its small size is its strength, due to the fact that it invariably flows from an extremely supportive community. The staff is very dedicated to seeing that all students' needs are being addressed."

Topping his "to-do" is building relationships with students and families and ensuring that the school is meeting the educational needs and safety of the students. Luke also is looking forward to working with the PTO and School Improvement Team to develop ways for students to enjoy new learning experiences.

"Parental involvement is always at the cornerstone of any successful school improvement endeavor. As we work with our school learning community, we will find, together, new ways to make our school the best it can be," he said.

Mr. Lambatos comes to Eisenhower with lots of experience working with kids. He coached wrestling, boys and girls volleyball, football, and directed an art club during his years of teaching. He lives in Wheaton with his wife Sandra and three sons – John, six years old, Bobby, three, and Ryan, one. They recently went on their first camping trip with dad and can't wait to go again.

And of his long-term goal to make Eisenhower even greater than it already is, he said "we will get there – staff, students, and parents – working together." ●

Lovin' it at Ross

Claire Kowalczyk has a favorite proverb that suits her perfectly in her new job as principal of Betsy Ross School. "Love what you do and you will never work a day in your life." In Claire's case, the popular saying reflects the fact that she absolutely and unconditionally loves working with young children.



Her initial impressions of District 23 also have been extremely positive. "What a wonderful place to work. Everyone has been so welcoming and helpful," she said. "I am thrilled to be working with such a dedicated group of professionals."

Claire is not planning any major changes at Ross just yet. Her goal is to spend her first year learning the current practices, policies, and operations at the school. "After meeting with staff and parents, I will

evaluate what may need to be changed in the future. Ross is an excellent school and the staff continuously works at improving current practices," she said. She is committed to building strong relationships with the staff, students, and Ross families.

Ms. Kowalczyk is guided in her role as an administrator by the personal philosophy that ALL children can learn. Her charge is to always do what is best for children. She believes they have a right to the tools and foundation necessary to meet their full potential. And, the most important part of her job, as she sees it, is supporting her staff in accomplishing this goal.

As a mother of five children herself, Claire can relate to the fact that parents only want the best for their children. She places a high priority on making school a safe, inviting place that students are excited to come to each day. "I understand that children learn in different ways and I will work with my staff to meet the needs of every child in our school." ●

Welcome New Staff

Thirty-two full- and part-time staff joined the District 23 family.

| TEACHER | SCHOOL/POSITION | GRADE LEVEL |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Rachel Aspinall | MacArthur LBS Teacher | Grades 6-8 |
| Colleen Awbrey | Sullivan Gifted Education Teacher | Grades K-8 |
| Michael Becker | MacArthur Physical Education Teacher | Grades 6-8 |
| Katharine Berman | Sullivan Bilingual Teacher | Grades 3-5 |
| Teri Bicok | Sullivan/Eisenhower Psychologist | Grades 3-5 |
| Lisa Cimino | Ross LBS/Reading Teacher | Grades K-2 |
| Michelle Cunningham | MacArthur Social Work Intern | Grades 6-8 |
| Rhonda Douroux | Ross At-Risk Kindergarten Assistant | Grade K |
| Lorrie Ellison | MacArthur Special Education Teacher Assistant | Grades 6-8 |
| Kelly Funk | Sullivan Teacher | Grade 4 |
| Joel Grafman | MacArthur Psychologist | Grades 6-8 |
| Jennifer Guth | Ross Physical Education Teacher | Grades K-2 |
| Sara Heidenescher | Ross/Eisenhower Psychologist | Early Childhood-Grade 2 |
| Matthew Hrtanek | Ross Teacher | Grade 2 |
| Hope Hurla | Eisenhower Reading Teacher | Grades K-5 |
| Kristen Jurewicz | Ross Early Childhood Teacher | Pre-Kindergarten |
| Aliaa Kamara | MacArthur Math/Social Studies Teacher | Grade 7 |
| Snonita Khanisho | MacArthur Social Work Intern | Grades 6-8 |
| Claire Kowalczyk | Ross Principal | Pre-Kindergarten-Grade 2 |
| Luke Lambatos | Eisenhower Principal | Grades K-5 |
| Angela Levato | MacArthur Special Education Teacher Assistant | Grade 7 |
| Olivia Metzinger | Ross Special Education Teacher Assistant | Early Childhood |
| Julie Mullaney | Eisenhower Teacher | Grade 1 |
| Patricia Reibel | Eisenhower Secretary | Grades K-5 |
| Gail Rollefson | Eisenhower Teacher | Kindergarten |
| Janelle Stegen | Ross Speech/Language Pathologist | Grades K-2 |
| Gina Stolton | Sullivan LBS Teacher | Grades 3-5 |
| Donna Strollo | Network Manager | Grades K-8 |
| Anna Toczycki | Ross LBS Teacher | Grades K-2 |
| Laura Walker | Sullivan Social Work Intern | Grades 3-5 |
| Emily Wilson | Ross Social Work Intern | Grades K-2 |
| Suzanne Wojtalewicz | Ross Special Education Teacher Assistant | Early Childhood |

Tenured Teachers

Five teachers were recently honored at a Board of Education meeting for reaching tenured status in District 23. They are Carolyn Ranieri (Administration Center), and, from MacArthur, Kristen Bearwald, Amy Mailloux, Andre Poisson, and Lora Robertson.

New teachers in District 23 serve a probationary period for four years before being considered for tenure. Non-tenured teachers are evaluated once a year, and through this process, receive instructive guidance, corrective action, or further development, all with the goal of helping teachers achieve excellence. ●

Update on Summer Construction

The Board of Education and Administration embarked on an ambitious capital project this summer to improve the physical plant needs of the District. Construction began June 9 to remove the old roofs at Betsy Ross and Anne Sullivan schools and replace them with new, more energy efficient ones. The roofing project at MacArthur started June 23 and was completed the week of August 11.

Parking lots were resurfaced over the summer months and have offered a welcomed improvement. Before the paving began, sewer work was completed to minimize standing water and improve drainage around the buildings.

Some doors and door hardware on many of the buildings in the District have been replaced. A nice addition to Eisenhower School is the garden shed completed by the Eagle Scouts. And, as part of yearly routine maintenance, the interiors of all the schools were given a thorough cleaning prior to the opening of school.

Some projects the Board of Education may consider in the future include enhancements to the main entrance of the Grodsky Administration Building in the way of landscaping, lighting for the stairs, handrails, and resurfacing of the stairs and landing with stone. The Board also may research the cost of fire system upgrades, phone system upgrades, tuck-pointing, miscellaneous mechanical equipment replacements, and remaining roof replacement. The Building and Sites Committee will take a look at these projects in the next few months and make recommendations to the Board. ●

The Olympian from District 23



Jorge Torres, who represented the United States in the 10,000 meter race at the Beijing Summer Olympic Games, got his running start at MacArthur Middle School.

The 1995 District 23 graduate ran as a sixth grader at Mac along with his twin brother Edwardo. After the regular season ended, Jorge won the USA Track and Field junior nationals in Mobile, Alabama, as a sixth grader and began dreaming of the Olympics. He and Edwardo led Wheeling High School to third place in the Class AA state cross country meet in 1997 and the championship in 1998. Jorge won two consecutive individual championships, while Edwardo finished third his senior year. The brothers attended the University of Colorado in Boulder where they continue to live and train.

Both ran the 10,000-meter Olympic time trial July 4 in Eugene, Oregon. Jorge finished third to secure a spot on the Olympic team. In the 10,000 meters in Beijing, he ran

28.13.93 to finish 25th out of 38 runners who started the race.

"The experience was great," said Jorge. "I'm an Olympian and no one can take that away from me."

Congratulations, Jorge. You made us proud! ●



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Martha Olsen, Vice President
Mari-Lynn Peters, Secretary
Carol Botwinski
Jeff Bowes
Randy DeCoursey
David Hess

DISTRICT WEB SITE

www.d23.org

Betsy Ross Elementary School (847) 870-3868 **Sullivan Elementary School (847) 870-3865** **Eisenhower Elementary School (847) 870-3875** **MacArthur Middle School (847) 870-3879**

2009 School Board Elections

The next school board elections will be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2009. The three District 23 School Board members whose terms expire in 2009 are Randy DeCoursey, Martha Olsen, and Judi Zimmerman.

School Board members are unpaid elected officials who run for four-year terms. Consisting of seven members, the Board of Education's powers and duties include the authority to adopt and enforce all necessary policies for the management and government of the public elementary schools in Prospect Heights.

Three positions on the District 23 Board will be on the April ballot. To be eligible to run for one of the positions, a candidate must be, on the date of the election, a United States citizen, at least 18 years of age, a resident of the State of Illinois and the School District for at least one year preceding the election, and a registered voter. The school board election is nonpartisan and candidates do not run under any party affiliation.

Any candidate who meets the requirements and wishes to have his or her name on the April ballot must file nominating papers by January 26, 2009. The nominating papers must include at least 50 signatures of registered voters who reside in District 23. The first day to begin circulating nominating papers for signatures was October 28, 2008. The first day to file nominating papers at the District 23 business office is January 20, 2009. Forms and instructions for filing the required papers are available at the District 23 business office, the county clerk's office, or the Illinois State Board of Elections. Candidates also must obtain a receipt from the County Clerk showing that a Statement of Economic Interests was filed for the calendar year of the election.

Upcoming Events

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|-----------------------|--|
| Nov. 4 | No School, Teacher Institute Day |
| Nov. 10 | No School, Parent/Teacher Conferences (1-8 PM) |
| Nov. 11 | No School, Veterans Day |
| Nov. 12 | Board of Education Meeting, 7 PM |
| Nov. 26-28 | No School, Thanksgiving Holiday |
| Dec. 10 | Board of Education Meeting, 7 PM |
| Dec. 22 | No School, Winter Break begins |
| Jan. 5 | School Resumes, Winter Break ends |
| Jan. 14 | Board of Education Meeting, 7 PM |
| Jan. 19 | No School, Martin Luther King Day |
| Jan. 26 | No School, Teacher Institute Day |
| Feb. 11 | Board of Education Meeting, 7 PM |
| Feb. 16 | No School, Presidents Day |
| Feb. 23 | No School, Parent/Teacher Conferences (1-8 PM) |
| March 11 | Board of Education Meeting, 7 PM |
| March 23-27 | No School, Spring Vacation |

Two of the three Board members whose terms expire in April are on the Executive Board — Judi Zimmerman, President, and Martha Olsen, Vice President. The Executive Board positions are not voted on in the general election but are determined when the board reorganizes after the election. The newly-seated Board will then nominate and vote on an Executive Board including President, Vice President, and Secretary.

For more information, contact the District 23 business office. ●