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A GREAT PLACE FOR A CHILD TO GROW
DISTRICT 23

The School Scene

Summer 2008

The Newsletter for Prospect Heights District 23

Update on District Objectives

Throughout the school year, the Board of Education and administration have focused on the four objectives established in the fall. Board and Staff have devoted much time and effort to studying, planning, and carrying out these goals. Here is a recap of what has been accomplished.

• ***Objective:*** *Develop a comprehensive five-year plan for the District that encompasses the educational, financial, and physical plant needs of the District.*

"We've made progress," said Board President Judi Zimmerman, "but I expect it to continue through the summer. We did review the 10-year life safety report and determined that we could sell $5 million in working cash bonds to cover the items within that report."

According to Zimmerman, this decision was influenced by the fact that the previous bond issue will be paid off this year, reducing the burden on taxpayers to 17 cents per $100 of equalized assessed valuation. In addition, current financial projections indicate that the District will continue to have a 25 percent cash reserve for the next several years.

The Board accepted bids in April to replace the roofs on Ross, Sullivan, and MacArthur schools and repair the parking lots. The work will be completed this summer.

"We also reviewed the engineering report on the cost of air conditioning the buildings," said Zimmerman. "The Board decided that the cost of that, $5 to $6 million, was too much for now. However, we will look into the possibility of adding air conditioning to common areas within Ross, Sullivan, and Mac in 2009 and 2010 to allow for more cooling centers within the schools if the heat and humidity becomes too much for the classes."

The engineering report, prepared by CS2 Design Group in Elk Grove, indicates that the first phase would include the Ross and Sullivan gyms and MacArthur cafeteria, gym and Little Theatre. The cost is estimated to be about $400,000 not including any structural roof modifications needed to accommodate the cooling equipment.

• ***Objective:*** *Investigate the development of a District-wide foreign language program.*

Over the summer, the District will continue to study how best to deliver a foreign language curriculum. Since so much of the day is taken up with core subjects, one of the first considerations will be determining where and how it will fit into the schedule.

• ***Objective:*** *Investigate the efficacy of providing a full-day option for kindergarten in the District.*

The committee studying this objective began meeting in November and conducted on-site visits to full-day kindergarten classrooms at four area schools. A survey of incoming kindergarten parents was completed and showed overwhelming support for full-day kindergarten. The committee delivered its final report to the Board on April 9 and recommended two sections of full-day kindergarten, one at Ross and one at Eisenhower, for "at risk" students for the 2008-09 school year. On Saturday, April 12, the Board of Education accepted the committee's recommendation and voted to pilot a program of two full-day kindergarten classes beginning this fall. All in-coming kindergartners will be screened in the spring and students in the lowest 15 to 20 percent will be eligible for the program.

• ***Objective:*** *Formalize the alignment of curriculum standards and student assessments for the District.*

The administration presented a proposal to the Board to formalize a contract with the ECRA Group. This will provide the District with a means to "warehouse" testing data and analyze and do research studies related to a variety of topics. The company utilizes specific software and educational resources and a staff of statisticians to study test results. According to Superintendent Greg Guarrine, this will help with the process of determining the effectiveness of particular projects in regard to determining how students are doing and forecasting exactly what students should be achieving.

"It's very exciting," said Guarrine. "It is another opportunity for us to see how well we're doing and what we can do better. We can look at our various programs, like gifted and reading, for example, that we are spending lots of time and effort on, and determine through empirical research whether or not they are producing the results we want. Right now we can say we think our programs are effective but are they accurate to the extent that we can say without a doubt our students are performing the way they should? This will provide us with conclusive documentation." •

Soaring into the future... creating communities of eager learners, daring to achieve great things.
District 23 Vision Statement

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SA Ambassadors Contribute to Cause

An ambitious group of Sullivan School students was invited to the April 3 taping of the Oprah Winfrey show for taking part in the O Ambassadors program.

The 35 children, selected through a school interview process in the fall, came together to find ways to help the needy in South Asia. Inspired by the school-based program developed through Oprah's Angel Network, the club took on the responsibility of getting all of Sullivan School involved in learning about poverty, education, health, and sustainable development in South Asia.

Calling themselves the SA (South Asia) Ambassadors, they created Candy Cane Grams containing printed information about poverty and sold them over the holidays to Sullivan students for a quarter each for a profit of $352.50.

In February, the Club sold Caring Grams and made a profit of $280.50. The group also staged a successful Dance-A-Thon on April 4. In all, the SA Ambassadors have raised over $6,000. And, although the Oprah segment has yet to air, the students have found they can make a difference in their own lives and someone else's.

"It is amazing to see the compassion the students have toward others in the world and how each student wants to make a difference," said Sullivan Principal Debbie Gardiner. ●

Lunch Menus Balance Nutrition and Tastes

After a long morning at school, every kid needs a tasty, nutritious lunch to get through the day. Those who don't bring their lunch rely on Arbor Management, District 23's food service provider, for a good meal. The District has used Arbor since 1989 and has had the same manager for the past 14 years.

"I love it. It's like home," said Pat Rogers, a Wheeling resident and the Arbor employee dedicated to District 23's food service operation. "I do enjoy it. I've been in the food business for 34 years. I like the challenges."

Pat starts every day in MacArthur's cafeteria at 5:30 a.m. with prep work. The actual cooking begins about 7:30 a.m. and everything needs to be packed and ready to be delivered to the schools by 10 a.m. Working out of one kitchen for four separate locations has its limitation. "We will never be like mom's kitchen, but we do make everything fresh and constantly check that the food we put in the warmers is at the correct serving temperatures," said Pat.

Representatives from Eisenhower's Student Senate and their sponsor Dara Saunders came to the January School Board meeting to voice

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New Principal hired for Betsy Ross

Claire M. Kowalczyk comes to District 23 with a wealth of educational, professional, and life experience relating to children. Ms. Kowalcyk received a Bachelor in Business Administration from St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin. She went on to earn a Master of Arts in Early Childhood Education from National Louis University in Evanston and a Master of Science in Educational Administration from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb.

She spent 10 years as a classroom teacher in Community Consolidated School District 15 in Palatine at Marion Jordan Elementary School, Lake Louise Elementary School, and John Conyers Learning Academy. Last July, Ms. Kolwalcyk was named Assistant Principal at Kimball Hill Elementary School in District 15.

"It has always been my dream to be the principal of a K-2 building," said Kowalcyk. "I am very excited about working in District 23. I have spent the last 11 years of my professional career preparing for this position."

Ms. Kowalcyk is currently the case manager for all students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and leader of the Secondary Intervention Team. She also is responsible for the recruitment, evaluation, and mentoring of certified and non-certified staff. She coordinates all testing including ISAT, IMAGE, MAP, ACCESS, and CoGat in addition to heading up the Leadership and School Improvement Plan teams at Kimball Hill.

She is the proud mother of five children and resides in Palatine with her family. ●

Summer School helps "at risk" students

This year, District 23 will offer Summer School for "at risk" students Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. beginning on Wednesday, June 11, and ending Friday, July 11. No school will take place on July 4. Because Eisenhower School is air conditioned, all Summer School classes are held there. The cost of Summer School is $100. Tuition waivers are available when requested in writing. Bus service also is offered.

Children currently in the Early Childhood program through grade 7 in District 23 and identified by their teachers as "at risk" are invited to attend the Summer School program. Letters have been sent to the parents of the selected students explaining the details of the program.

According to Robert Loranger, Principal of Eisenhower School and Summer School coordinator for the District, "at risk" means a student is significantly below grade level in language arts and, or, math.

"We ask teachers to use MAP, DIBELS, ISEL, or ISAT scores to justify their recommendations," said Loranger. The Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing, Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Illinois Snapshot of Early Literacy (ISEL), and Illinois Standard Achievement Test (ISAT) are all used in District 23 to assess each student's progress.

The remedial basic-skills curriculum in Summer School focuses on the areas of reading, language, and math. Teachers of students who enroll in the program forward current academic information to their Summer School teachers to ensure that individual learning goals are achieved. ●

Summer reading is important

Every child in District 23 received a bookmark printed with a recommended reading list for the summer. Teachers and librarians compiled the grade-appropriate book lists to make it easy to select enriching reading materials. Students are encouraged to visit libraries and bookstores to make book selections. The lists also are available on the *Summer Reading* link on the District Web site at www.d23.org and at local libraries including Prospect Heights at 12 Elm Street, Indian Trails at 355 Schoenbeck Road in Wheeling, and Arlington Heights at the corner of Dunton and Euclid avenues.

District 23 has partnered with local libraries to promote the "Get in the Game … Read!" program. The goal of the Summer Reading initiative is to encourage students to read every day over the summer – even if it's only for a few minutes. Studies support the importance of summer reading and show that a child's reading level can drop up to half a class grade without summer reading.

"Each school will be holding some kind of book discussion in their buildings when they return from summer vacation to discuss books that were starred on the bookmark," said Mary Ann Duderstadt, District 23 Reading Specialist. "This was an experiment we tried last year and it was really successful so we have expanded on it."

In addition, a book exchange was created for Summer School students. They will be given a book at the beginning of the Summer School session and encouraged to read it and exchange it for another book. This cycle will continue through the end of Summer School when the students will be given the books to take home and keep. ●

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For the Love of Carf...

Were there a hall of fame for teachers, Sylvia Carfagnini would be inducted unanimously. In the last 20 years, her hands-on approach to teaching inspired countless fifth graders to become better readers, writers, and thinkers. And her work to make the Springfield trip a reality provided many Sullivan students with one of their best memories of District 23.

"It's been a privilege to be a member of the team here," said Sylvia. "I have such passion for what I do and I think of myself as one link in a great District. Put them all together and create greatness."

Sylvia always said she would retire when her husband did, she just didn't expect it to be this year. "I have a wonderful husband," said Sylvia. "He sent me a beautiful bouquet of flowers the day I resigned with a note that read 'Congratulations on the beginning of our future.'"

That future includes spending the winter months in California, travel, sharing her life with her two grandchildren and finding new growth for herself. "I want to pursue something I've never had the opportunity to do," said Sylvia.

Thanks Sharon Faber!

How do you thank someone who has taught every Ross student for the last two decades? That's a lot of kids and a lot of gym classes in the memory bank of P.E. teacher Sharon Faber who is retiring after 21 years.

But that's exactly why Sharon feels her job has been so rewarding. "Not only is physical education an area most children love because they are children," remarked Sharon, "but it allowed me to get to know so many through the years. In leaving, those relationships will be the hardest to let go of."

Sharon says she is proud to be part of a staff where everyone works together to meet the needs of the children. "Each and every year our staff has stepped up and collaborated to help every child find success," said Sharon.

And what do P.E. teachers do when they retire? "Exercising and playing golf will continue to be a part of my life," replied Sharon. Volunteering is also high on her list as is devoting more time to family and friends.

So, on behalf of all those between the ages of five and 27 years who attended Betsy Ross School, the best we can do is say how much we've appreciated all you have done to make District 23 a great place for us to grow, Mrs. Faber!

Thomas D. Pawlik Appointed to the BOE

On March 13, the Board of Education appointed new Board Member Thomas D. Pawlik to fill the remainder of the term vacated by Thomas Klingner.

Mr. Pawlik is an Arlington Heights resident with two young children. He received a Bachelor's degree in Commerce and Master of Business Administration (MBA) from DePaul University in Chicago and has extensive experience in finance and auditing. He is currently Director of Internal Audit with CVS Caremark in Northbrook. His term on the Board of Education will expire in the spring of 2009.

"I look forward to working with this great Board and administration," said Mr. Pawlik. ●

Farewell to Principal Sharon Warner

Ask Sharon Warner about Betsy Ross School and she bubbles over with enthusiasm about all the great things going on everyday there. For this, she is quick to credit the "fine teachers, wonderful children, and supportive parents."

But those who have gotten to know Sharon during her nine years at Ross realize she is being characteristically humble. Much of what has been accomplished during her tenure can be directly attributed to her leadership, dedication, and passion for literacy. She has been instrumental in improving literacy instruction and growing the Early Childhood program. And, it was on her watch that the Ross library and playground were renovated.

But what Sharon enjoys most are the children. "I have always loved the spontaneity and honesty of three- to eight-year-olds," said Sharon. "They have delighted and challenged me every day at Betsy Ross."

She loved giving young learners the opportunity to begin public speaking by helping her with morning announcements. Talking with each child at Ross on their birthdays and giving them a new book provided by the PTO were some of her most cherished moments.

Sharon is most proud of the fine teaching staff at Ross. "They work so well together and always keep their focus on 'best practice' for our young children," she said.

As much as she will miss Ross, Sharon is looking forward to just taking it easy for awhile. Having no night commitments may just free up some time to spend with her son who lives in Chicago. She also plans to take advantage of mid-week airfares to visit her new grandson in Seattle whenever possible and, perhaps, fit in a few excursions to Denver to see her daughter who will be starting her medical residency there. "My husband and I are looking forward to spending some winter time in warmer climes," said Sharon.

Be sure to take all of our warm wishes for a happy retirement with you, too, Sharon! ●

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their concerns with the lunch program. In February, Pat and her supervisor, Kevin Harris, along with District 23 Business Administrator Rick Ewanio met with the students. They explained what the government guidelines require in a lunch program and how the service operates. They also worked out some improvements. As a result, more baby carrots and celery sticks are being offered now and, on Thursdays at Eisenhower, freshly-made cookies are available for purchase.

"I enjoyed meeting with the kids," said Pat. "Anytime they have a question, I want them to drop me a line and I'll get back to them. That's why I'm here. If I don't hear from them, I can't address their concerns."

The Board of Education has approved Arbor's contract for next year with some increases. The escalating prices of raw materials and fuel over the past year has forced Arbor to up the cost on complete meals and a la carte offerings for next school year. Both the student plate lunch and adult plate lunch will go up 20 cents to $2.25 and $2.50 respectively. A carton of milk will be 55 cents instead of 45 cents.

Prices aren't the only things that change; over the years, Pat says kids' tastes change, too. "We now offer a Chicken Caesar Salad twice a month at Ike and Sullivan. They really enjoy it. And the Ribwich was very popular in the past but not as much anymore. This group really likes the pastas." ●

Scholarship Winner

Mubeen Khan of Wheeling has been selected as the first recipient of the William P. Caputo Scholarship. A 2004 District 23 graduate, Mubeen will receive $1,000 toward her college education at Lincoln College in Lincoln, Illinois. She has been accepted into their six-year medical program and hopes to become a physician.

Mubeen graduates from Wheeling High School with a GPA of 5.43 and a class rank of seven. She is a National Honor Society (NHS) inductee and member of the Seven Semester Honor Roll. She has served in multiple roles on the school yearbook, been an NHS tutor, participated on the Principal's Forum, performed in the Display of Cultures, and been active in SHADES. Mubeen teaches at the Islamic Society of the Northwest Suburbs and has volunteered at Chicago's Muslim Community Center as a Sunday school teacher for the last four years. She is described by her teachers as both an exceptional student and an outstanding individual. She will attend this year's MacArthur promotion ceremony June 4 to receive her scholarship award.

The William P. Caputo Scholarship Fund was established in 2007 to honor the memory of longtime District 23 board member Bill Caputo. ●

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(847) 870-3868	(847) 870-3875	(847) 870-3865	(847) 870-3879

Employee Awards/Retirements

At the annual employee recognition dinner held Friday, May 30, *Michelle Vetter,* Third Grade Teacher at Sullivan School, was named **Teacher of the Year.** *Sharon Warner,* Betsy Ross Principal, was chosen as **Employee of the Year.** Staff receiving retirement recognition included *Sharon Faber,* Betsy Ross Physical Education Teacher, with **21 years of service,** *Sylvia Carfagnini,* Sullivan Fifth Grade Teacher, with **20 years of service,** and *Sharon Warner,* Ross Principal for **nine years**.

Employees who also received recognition are:

- **30 Years** *Darlene Anderson*
- **25 Years** *Joanne Bina*
- **20 Years** *Jodi Hernandez, Brian Hitzman, Carol Petrusha*
- **15 Years** *Linda Brimm, Juan Chavez, Lee Magno, Julie Murray, Nancy Sorensen, Bonnie Zbaraz*
- **10 Years** *Filomeno Del Pilar, Denise Haala, Janet Kopp, Bob Miller, Michelyn Sabath, Patti Walsh, Amy Walter, Lee Wright*
- **5 Years** *David Alexander, Laura Barbanente, Jill Birschbach, Sebastiano Bondi, Marianne Broms, Kristene Ganek, Melissa Ross, Jill Schloman*

Good luck, Mr. Loranger

Robert Loranger, principal of Eisenhower Elementary School, resigned his position effective June 30, 2008, to pursue other opportunities. Mr. Loranger came to District 23 in July of 2005.

"I have enjoyed getting to know the families in the Eisenhower community," said Loranger. "The level of parent involvement in our school district has always impressed me."

Good bye, Mr. Loranger, and best of luck in your future endeavors.

Upcoming Events

June 4	MacArthur 8th Grade Promotion
June 4	Last Day of Kindergarten Classes
June 5	Last Day of Classes
June 11	Summer School Begins
June 11	Board of Education Meeting 7 PM
July 4	No Summer School, Independence Day
July 9	Board of Education Meeting 7 PM
July 11	Summer School Ends
August 13	Board of Education Meeting 7 PM
August 25	No School, Teacher Institute Day
August 26	First day of Student Attendance
September 1	No School, Labor Day
September 2	First Day of Kindergarten/Early Childhood Classes
September 10	Board of Education Meeting 7 PM

Question of the Day...

What's your favorite field trip over the summer?

Marianne Broms (Maribeth-4th grade at Sullivan)

Gilson Park in Wilmette on Lake Michigan to relax, play and swim.

Susanne Flowers (John Paul-2nd grade at Ross)

Getting out into nature.