After a busy summer in District 89, our students have now settled into what will be another productive school year.

As a result of the successful bond referendum for facility maintenance and improvements last February, children returned to improved school buildings this fall. A great deal of work was completed over the summer, including improvements to roofs, parking lots, drainage and emergency lighting systems. Additional improvements to internal building safety and technology infrastructure also took place. The balance of the referendum-related projects, including the installation of air conditioning at Arbor View, Park View and Westfield Elementary Schools and Glen Crest Middle School, will be completed by the start of school in the fall of 2009. These improvements would not have been possible without the support of the community.

As you may know, one of our schools, Briar Glen Elementary, sustained significant damage during a July 18 roof replacement fire. There were no students or staff on the grounds at the time of the fire, and school was not in session. Fire departments from fourteen agencies responded to the fire with damage contained to approximately 1/3 of the building. While the fire did not enter the building, smoke and water significantly damaged the building and many rooms had to be completely gutted and restored. District 89 worked in cooperation with several agencies including an environmental firm to ensure restoration work was completed effectively for the safety of all. Representatives from the Regional Office of Education performed an inspection of the building on August 22 and granted permission for full occupancy of the building.

The fire was regrettable, but the outpouring of community support that was shown in the days and weeks that followed was greatly appreciated. All those involved with the fire response, clean-up and restoration have our deepest gratitude.

Our group of dedicated staff look forward to serving the students and residents of District 89 during the 2008-09 school year. Thank you for supporting our mission of Learning for Life!

Sincerely,

John S. Perdue, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Students were welcomed back to school by an enthusiastic staff on Wednesday, August 27. Above: A group of Glen Crest Middle School students exit their bus. Right: Park View parent Tim Loversky poses with his children Sam and Maggie.
Community Comes Together in Response to Briar Glen Fire

On July 18, fire fighters from 14 agencies responded to an accidental roof fire at Briar Glen Elementary School in Wheaton. The only individuals on site at the time were workers who were replacing the building’s roof.

The first responders were on site within four minutes of receiving the call, and while the fire was brought under control within 45 minutes, significant water and smoke damage affected the southern 1/3 of the building. In the subsequent weeks, several classrooms were completely gutted and restored in a collaborative effort which included dehumidification, floor tile removal/replacement and interior restoration.

A key component of the restoration effort was environmental testing work completed by an independent agency, Environ Inc, which performed ongoing environmental and air quality testing at Briar Glen. The final Environ report is posted on the District 89 web site, and the report includes observations, test procedures and test results.

In addition to the restoration work, thousands of instructional materials and 2,600 titles from the building’s learning media center had to be replaced. With the exception of a few backordered items, most instructional and LMC materials have been delivered.

District 89’s insurance company paid most of the costs for the work and will seek reimbursement from the roof contractor’s insurance company. According to Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations Susan Caddy, it is not yet known whether the District will have to absorb any of the costs associated with the restoration project. “Every attempt has been made for the District to be held harmless, and we are continuing to work with our insurance company,” Caddy said.

Phone System Use to be Expanded

In an effort to continually improve the quality of the communication in District 89, an automated phone system is now used to alert parents of important issues that relate to their child’s education. Last year the automated phone system was used to alert families of snow days and to notify parents of the fire at Briar Glen. The system’s use will be expanded this year so that parents can receive information about other important and timely events such as curriculum nights, parent-teacher conferences, etc.

Similarly, District 89 has increased its usage of e-newsletter software. Each month, those who have provided an e-mail address receive a message from the superintendent and a summary of the previous month’s board of education meeting. If you are not receiving these e-newsletters and would like to subscribe, please contact Marjie or Janis at (630) 469-8900 and provide your name, e-mail address and school affiliation if applicable. If you do not have a child enrolled in District 89 schools, you are still welcome to subscribe to this service.
We Want to Hear From You!

Please use the space below to provide suggestions or comments about this newsletter or other issues that affect education in Community Consolidated School District 89. Please mail your comment sheet to:

Superintendent Dr. John S. Perdue
Community Consolidated School District 89
22W600 Butterfield Road
Glen Ellyn, IL  60137

The Glen Crest Middle School Library Media Center recently received a $47,692 grant as part of the federal Library Services and Technology Act’s “In Sync With Technology” grant program. The grant provides libraries with the opportunity to expand library services for learning. It will also provide access to information and educational resources in a variety of formats. For students, this means integrating new technologies and the acquisition of significant equipment. Glen Crest intends to use the grant to replace the traditional Social Studies textbook with expanded access to Internet materials. Through the grant, Glen Crest will receive:

• 30 Laptops and a Recharging Cart
• An Interactive Whiteboard and LCD Projector
• A Document Camera
• A High Definition Television
• A Student Response system

“By using the equipment funded through the grant and redesigning curriculum we can engage students and improve reading in the content area,” LMC Director Pam McDermott said. “Information literacy skills and technology will be embedded in the World History curriculum, and students will explore historic sites, participate in online fieldtrips, contact experts, and most importantly compare the information they find in print to that online. This will develop critical thinking skills for our students.”

McDermott was recognized for the grant at a ceremony held September 24 at Navy Pier in Chicago.

Pictured above are (L-R): District 89 Assistant Superintendent for Learning Dr. Jamie Reilly, Glenna White (representing her father, Secretary of State and State Librarian Jessie White), and Glen Crest LMC Director Pam McDermott.
District 89 Forms Enrollment Study Committee to Review Trends, Offer Solutions

District 89 has created an Enrollment Study Committee which will explore declining student enrollment trends and offer solutions in the areas of class sections and class sizes.

Assistant Superintendent for Learning Dr. Jamie Reilly will lead the group, which is expected to meet over the next 2-4 months. “The committee will review enrollment patterns and their relationship to the number of class sections we offer and the class sizes we have,” said Reilly. “The committee will be asked to recommend both short and long-term solutions to how District 89 can respond to our changing student demographic base.”

The committee will include teachers and parents from each of the District’s four elementary schools, one principal and one school board member. They are expected to present their findings at either the January or February Board of Education meeting.

According to Reilly, District 89 student enrollment has been decreasing by approximately 40-45 students per year. “We have some schools with very low class sizes at certain grade levels while other schools have some fairly high class sizes at the same grade level,” Reilly said. “The committee’s goal is to come up with a solution that provides more equity across the board at all grade levels.”

District 89 Board of Education members decided to form the committee after reviewing school-by-school and grade-by-grade enrollment data at a meeting held in September. “We need to offer comparable class sizes across all of our buildings,” said Superintendent Dr. John S. Perdue. “The issue of class size and equity is a serious one, and we want to hear from our parents and teachers as to how they feel the situation can best be addressed.”