District 89 Welcomes New Administrators for 2010-2011 School Year

The 2010-11 school year is well underway and students are off to a great start. District enrollment this year is 2,021 or 19 fewer students than one year ago. Over the last several years enrollment had been dropping at a rate of about 50 students per year. We will continue to monitor enrollment data to see if this year’s numbers are an anomaly or perhaps the beginning of a shift in enrollment trends.

This year we have three new administrators on the District 89 administrative team, and we are also welcoming back a few familiar faces. Maureen Jones, our new Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations, has many years of experience as a school business official. Similarly, Kimberly Price, our new Westfield Elementary School Principal, is bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience to her new role. Emily Tammaru, former Briar Glen Principal, is now serving in the role of Assistant Superintendent for Learning. While we search for a permanent new principal for Briar Glen, retired District 89 principals Kevin Diehl and Dr. Jackie Strum are sharing the administrative duties at the school this year.

Student achievement in District 89 continues to be a strength. As a school district, 90.9% of our students have either met or exceeded grade level performance expectations on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, compared to a state average of 81.6%. Achievement data from on-going assessments indicates that 90% of our students are proficient in Reading and Math in grades 2 through 8. These scores are a testament to our hard-working students and staff and are indicative of District 89’s standing as an educational leader. Still, as achievement gaps among some student groups increase, we must continue to utilize differentiated learning methods to ensure we are reaching all of our students and providing the greatest opportunities for District-wide success.

We’re looking forward to a wonderful school year and encourage all parents to become active participants in their kids’ educations.

Sincerely,

John S. Perdue, Ed. D.
Superintendent

Calling All Potential School Board Members!

Three seats on the seven-member Community Consolidated School District 89 Board of Education will be filled at the April 5, 2011 election. The terms of office are for four years. Nominating petition forms may be picked up at the District Administration Center, 22W600 Butterfield Road in Glen Ellyn, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM.

• To be eligible to serve, a school board member must be,
  • on the date of the election:
  • A U.S. citizen
  • At least 18 years of age
  • A resident of Illinois and of District 89 for at least one year preceding the election
  • A registered voter

Further information on becoming a candidate may be obtained by contacting Janis Karr, Board Secretary, at the District 89 Administration Center, 630-469-8900, ext. 3503.
District 89 Teachers Receive 2010-2011 PEP Grants

Six teachers from District 89 will be enhancing their teaching this school year through grants received from the Partnership for Educational Progress (PEP).

Mary Lou Andacht and Joy Salzman of Arbor View will engage their students with a PEP project called, “Poetry Jam, Poetry Gram, Poetry Grand Slam.” This poetry unit will expose students to different types of poetry such as haiku, free verse, lyric poetry and cinquain.

Briar Glen students in Linda Perlini’s class will be taking important steps in improving their oral reading fluency by participating in a “Readers’ Theater.” In order for students to perform “hands free” in the theater, Perlini’s PEP grant was used to purchase a set of music stands and for the purchase of color coded, multi-level scripts which will be shared throughout the school.

At Glen Crest Middle School, Julie Breen’s students will be introduced to tchoukball (pronounced chukeball) in their Physical Education classes. The sport is played on an indoor court and at each end there is a frame similar to a trampoline and a semicircular ‘D.’ Teams can score on both ends on the field by throwing a ball that hits the frame and bounces outside the ‘D’ without being caught by the defending team.

A PEP grant entitled, “Graphically Reading,” will enable all students at Arbor View and Briar Glen to look on the library shelves to find books which interest them. Joy Salzman, Barbara Olker and Sally Dillon are collaborating to build a new collection of graphic books. Their project involves using graphic books to teach combined reading strategies and fine arts skills.

The annual PEP Grant Program is supported by tax-deductible gifts. Since 1992, the PEP foundation has awarded more than 375 Teacher Grants in the Glenbard system worth over $200,000.

District 89 Students Participate in “One Community Reading Together” Reading Project

The 2010-2011 school year in District 89 will connect all five schools in a major community-wide reading project. Aimed at improving literacy, the program was created by District 89’s five Library Media Center Directors.

LMC Directors Pam McDermott, Joy Salzman, Barbara Olker, Carolyn Kouwe and Sharon Hultquist wanted to bring the entire district together by developing an ongoing reading program that connects students, staff and parents through reading together and meeting in person and online to share experiences. They felt yearlong activities would keep the importance of literacy in the center of instruction in school and at home.

Participants are reading selected books by author Sally Walker, and the goals of the program are to:

- Promote literacy
- Enhance communication skills
- Connect elementary and middle school students
- Link communities
- Integrate science, social studies and art.

The project participants met for the first time recently at Arbor View Elementary School, where parents, K-5 children and middle school volunteer reading buddies gathered for reading activities.

At the event, Glen Crest Middle School students read to K-5 students, kids made crafts that related to the stories being read, and everyone got to watch a short movie.

“Our students and community will benefit in many ways through this project,” said Superintendent Dr. John S. Perdue. “Reading helps with the development of language skills and it stimulates imagination and creativity. Additionally, by bringing participants of all ages together we are fostering a life-long love of reading.”

The One Community Reading Together project will culminate on April 15, 2011 with a visit and presentations by Walker. Walker will visit schools during the day and a community presentation will be open to all that evening. You can learn more about this exciting literacy project on the Glen Crest Middle School web page, which can be accessed through the District 89 web site (www.ccsd89.org).
The reading lab classroom at Glen Crest Middle School is receiving a state-of-the-art educational facelift this fall, compliments of the “Flip This Classroom” research program.

Flip This Classroom at Glen Crest Middle School is a pro bono demonstration project that transforms a traditional classroom into a high-performance educational environment based on student learning styles. Over a dozen Chicago-area firms (including architects, interior designers, contractors, distributors, and manufacturers) are donating products and services for this project.

The purpose of “Flip This Classroom” is to demonstrate that classroom environments impact student performance. The reading lab classroom, serving students in grades 6 - 8 will be transformed for the project. Once complete, Glen Crest teachers will monitor student progress to determine how the transformed classroom impacts student achievement, behaviors, and attitudes, as well as teacher morale.

The layout for the room was finalized in mid-October and equipment was ordered a few weeks ago. The renovation and installations will take place over Winter Break so that when students return to school in January, they can benefit from a completely renovated reading lab.

“We are excited to be participating in this project with such valuable partnerships to extend learning,” said Superintendent Dr. John S. Perdue. “The environment affects learning, and this demonstration project will benefit learning at Glen Crest.”

“Flip This Classroom” is an original research activity created by America’s Schoolhouse Council (ASC), a national consortium of educational architects. The first flip occurred at Van Cortlandtville Elementary School in Mohegan Lake, New York. Legat Architects, an ASC member, brought the program to Chicago and recently completed a flip for the Chicago Bulls College Prep School in a disadvantaged area of Chicago.

A podcast about the Flip project is available on the District 89 web site at the Flip This Classroom link.

District 89 Maintains Educational Excellence During Difficult Economy

Years of prudent financial practices have allowed District 89 to maintain its teaching staff and valuable educational programs during this difficult economy.

While school districts across the state are responding to the economic recession by laying off teachers and eliminating educational programs, District 89 officials are proud to announce that they have been able to preserve beneficial programs while not having to lay off any teachers.

“The District 89 Board of Education has been very careful over the years to live within its means and develop fund balances for emergencies,” said Superintendent Dr. John S. Perdue. “As a result, we are in a much better position than most of the school districts in the state to respond to the current economic climate and the State’s delays in making its payments to school districts.”

During the budget planning season in the summer of 2009, the District had anticipated an operating deficit of $518,200 for the 2009-2010 school year. However, the District ended the year with an operating deficit of only $214,240. This was due in large part to a collective “tightening of the belts” by all staff. Although this was the second year of deficit spending, the District has actively sought creative ways to keep more money in the classroom. The anticipated operating deficit for the 2010-2011 school year is $297,275.

The Board of Education approved $552,000 in budget cuts for the 2010-11 school year, emphasizing cuts farthest removed from the students. In addition to the economy’s negative impact on education funding, State aid payments from Illinois are lagging far behind. At the end of the 2009-10 fiscal year, the state owed the District $830,204. Fund balances cannot continue to be used to offset budget shortfalls.

“District 89 has approached the state and local economic crisis in a proactive manner without jeopardizing the services and educational programs offered to our children,” said Marueen Jones, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations.
Aging Computers Replaced in Schools

District 89 students are benefiting this year from updated computer labs at Arbor View, Park View and Westfield Elementary Schools.

According to Technology Coordinator Jeff Romani, 105 replacement computers were ordered in early October and the team recently finished installing, configuring and networking them in the buildings. “The computer labs at Arbor View, Park View and Westfield had really old machines that did not work well with the modern software students are using in District 89,” Romani said. “We are excited about the new computers, and we look forward to seeing our students benefit from them.”

The computers were funded by one-time federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, remaining funds from district grants, building budgets, and the technology budget. The purchases have brought aging computer labs across the district up-to-date.

Superintendent Dr. John S. Perdue expressed similar excitement over the arrival of the new computers. “As our students learn to become productive citizens of the digital age, having current technology is critical,” he said. “With the arrival and installation of these new desktop computers, District 89 now sits in a stellar position with significant technology resources for learning.”

According to Romani, the installations were completed two weeks ahead of schedule.