

Connect 41

THE GLEN ELLYN SCHOOL DISTRICT 41 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

GLEN ELLYN GLENDALE HEIGHTS CAROL STREAM LOMBARD WHEATON

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Thanks to community support and a lot of collaboration and hard work, District 41's referendum construction has begun! The District broke ground on April 3 at Hadley Junior High with Board of Education members, Village of Glen Ellyn officials, representatives from FQC and Wight & Co. along with community members, staff and students. These projects, to be completed over the next 18 months, will eliminate the remaining portables, improve safety and address infrastructure needs. The majority of the work through summer 2018 will take place at Hadley and Churchill Elementary School. All schools will be impacted by construction through the fall of 2019.



The new building addition at Hadley Junior High School will include classroom space that will replace the portables, new music classrooms, and also space for collaboration and flexibility. We will also see some renovations to the existing PODs auditorium and classroom areas as well as a lot of work on addressing infrastructure needs.

This summer we will be starting work at Churchill Elementary School. At the start of next school year, students and staff will come back to a new, safer entryway as well as a number of other needed facility improvements inside the building.

I am proud of the collaborative process that included all District 41 stakeholders. We spent several years working to determine the highest facility needs across the District. We are incredibly thankful for the community members who supported the referendum. These projects will ensure that our students have the best and safest learning environments possible.

I want to take this opportunity to thank a few groups of people:

- Thank you to the community of voters for your support of these needed improvements!
- Thank you to the past and current Board for providing support and approval of these projects.

- Thank you to the volunteer community referendum committee led by Lee Fruit and Jodi Herbold. This volunteer committee helped communicate the needs of the District and gained support for the needed improvements.
- Thank you to the Community Facilities Task Force for the over nine months of work leading up to the referendum. This group was co-chaired by community members Lori Taylor and Tom Voltaggio. Thank you all for your many hours of dedication and hard work.

- Thank you to the staff and team in the District who supported all of the work and collaboration, especially Director of Buildings and Grounds Dave Scarmardo.
- Thank you to those who are working now to make these improvements a reality, including our partners at FQC and Wight and Co. We have a dynamic team in these two companies.
- Thank you to the Village officials in Glen Ellyn and the representatives in the City of Wheaton who have worked with us along the way to provide permits and approvals.

It takes all of us to make a difference. Great schools matter and we do have great schools because of all of your amazing support!

For more information about District 41 referendum construction projects, go to www.d41.org/facilityplan

Sincerely,

Dr. Paul Gordon
Superintendent



FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY IS A BOARD OF EDUCATION PRIORITY

Over the past year, the Board of Education has been focused on ways to help relieve some of the burden on taxpayers in District 41. There are a few reasons you may see a reduction in the District 41 portion of your tax bill this year.

First, the District retired the 1998 referendum bond of \$28.1 million with the final payment in January 2018. The 2017 referendum bond issue has an annual principal and interest payment that is approximately \$1.7 million lower than the former bond issue. The lower bond and interest payment will result in a reduction of approximately \$160 dollars for a typical \$400,000 home.

In addition, the District has worked to contain spending resulting in a \$5.4 million surplus. Based on the Annual Financial Report (AFR) for the year

ended June 30, 2017, District 41 increased the District fund reserve balance by \$5.4 million. This was due in part to revenue coming in 2.5 percent above budget, along with expenditures ending the year 5.5 percent below budget. Due to this financial prudence, the Board made the decision to zero the tax levy.

Another factor impacting your tax bill is connected to the Board of Education decision to limit the 2017 tax levy. Specifically, the Board elected to issue the levy with a 0% CPI factor.

What does a zero percent levy mean to homeowners in District 41 boundaries?

The District 41 portion of taxes will go down or be very similar to the previous year taxes due to the Board decision to not increase the levy.

In addition, the Board of Education

approved the utilization of an estimate of \$15 million in new property growth on the 2017 levy. The intent was to capture all of the new property growth in the levy. During the week of March 19, 2018, the DuPage County Clerk released the 2017 Tentative Tax Rates and Tax Extensions. That report identified the actual new property growth for 2017 was \$11.1 million. The difference between the estimate of \$15 million and the actual of \$11.1 resulted in additional taxes of approximately \$125,826.

What will District 41 do with the additional revenue?

The Board voted to abate the \$125,826 in additional revenue back to the taxpayers. That action will assure that the total tax collection for the 2017 levy will be set at a 0% CPI increment while capturing exactly 100% of new property growth.

NEWS & NOTES

FIRST GRADE TEACHER LISA BUCHHOLZ HONORED WITH PRESTIGIOUS GOLDEN APPLE AWARD

Abraham Lincoln School first grade teacher Lisa Buchholz is a recipient of the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching. Mrs. Buchholz is one of only 10 Golden Apple Award recipients for 2018. CBS2 News Reporter Rob Johnson along with Mrs. Buchholz's family, representatives from the Golden Apple Awards, and a number of District staff members surprised Mrs. Buchholz in her classroom with the news. It was an electric moment as her room was quickly taken over by TV camera crews to document her reaction.

In addition to the honor of receiving the Golden Apple Award, Mrs. Buchholz will also be the recipient of a tuition-free, spring quarter sabbatical to study at Northwestern University. She also receives a \$5,000 cash award from Golden Apple. In addition, Award recipients become Fellows of the Golden Apple Academy of Educators. *Congratulations to Mrs. Buchholz!*



Students celebrate with Mrs. Buchholz along with Superintendent Dr. Paul Gordon, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Marci Conlin, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning and Accountability Dr. Katie McCluskey, as well as Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Facilities and Operations Eric DePorter.

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR IS MUSIC TEACHER JANET WEILAND

Elementary music teacher Janet Weiland is the Glen Ellyn Chamber of Commerce District 41 Educator of the Year. Superintendent Gordon surprised Mrs. Weiland with the announcement during one of her classes. Mrs. Weiland was honored at the Glen Ellyn Chamber of Commerce Awards Breakfast on Saturday, March 3. She has worked as a band teacher in schools for over 20 years. *Congratulations to Mrs. Weiland!*



BOARD OF EDUCATION LEGACY GOALS

The Board of Education identified and have been working toward three Board Legacy Goals. This is a process that many Boards go through as a way to focus their time and work as a Board. The three District 41 Board Legacy Goals are:

Model District: Identify what we are doing that no other districts do to make a difference for the students of District 41.

Budget: Reduce taxpayer burden.

Program Space: Evaluation to expand or enhance the current Early Childhood (EC)/Pre Kindergarten (Pre K) program and a possible Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) in some type of capacity.

The Board identified action steps and directed the District to work through plans to accomplish each goal. In January and again in March of 2018, administration provided an update to the Board of Education and the Board provided further direction to the District. Together they continue to work on these goals.

Model District Next Steps

- *Mentoring Program:* Continue to explore creating a mentoring program for teachers.
- *Extended Day Kindergarten for Some of our Most At-Risk Students:* Continue to explore this option in relationship to how it would support closing the achievement gap.

The administration will also provide further updates on academic connections to the Legacy goals. This includes an update on the Social Emotional Learning data, information on Science at all grade levels and a report on what programs are offered by benchmark districts.

Program Space Next Steps

- *Early Childhood Classroom Addition at Hadley:* Continue to explore this option in relationship to how it would support creating space in our schools and provide a quality early learning program.
- *Collaboration with Local Government Partners:* Continue to explore options with other local partnerships to help solve space challenges in District 41.

- *Hire Consultant to Study Small Parcel Availability:* Revisit this option following a report on the cost and timeline of hiring a consultant.

Budget Next Steps

- *Fund Balance Policy:* Hold off on engaging Finance Advisory Committee at this time and for administration to report back in greater detail on the overall process.
- *Prioritized Spending Plan:* Explore ways to prioritize spending that would support funding model district and program space initiatives.

The Board of Education will continue to monitor the next steps and the District administration will report progress to the Board at the start of the next school year. In addition, throughout the Legacy Workshops, the Board has asked for a number of other information items to help guide decision making. The information will be presented as explored and collected.

For a list of Board of Education meetings, agendas, minutes, and materials, visit the School Board section of the District 41 website, www.d41.org.

PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING INTEGRATES PROBLEM SOLVING INTO THE CURRICULUM

ELEMENTARY STUDENTS EXPLORE HOW TO HELP NATIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS SURVIVE

As part of Forest Glen 3rd Grader Problem-Based Learning Inquiry, "How can we help our native plants and animals survive?," the students visited the Morton Arboretum and Educational Center. Arboretum experts took small teams of students through an inquiry-based learning adventure through the Arboretum's Illinois habitat. Thank you to our partner, the Morton Arboretum!

HADLEY STUDENTS FOCUS STUDIES ON HEALTHY LIVING

This year, 8th graders participated in the first expo-style expert panel as part of their cross-curricular Healthy Living Problem-Based Learning unit at Hadley Junior High School. Several hundred students presented to panelists and their peers on the topics of work-life balance, healthy habits and stress/anxiety. Their objective was to educate one another about strategies, products and plans to maximize their well-being as they move forward to high school.





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Paul Gordon, *Superintendent*

Board of Education
Stephanie Clark, President
Kurt Buchholz, Vice President
Jason Loebach, Secretary
Robert Bruno
Bruce Currie
Linda D'Ambrosio
Erica Nelson

Meetings are held at the District Central Services Office
793 N. Main, Glen Ellyn

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About District 41

District 41 serves approximately 3,500 Pre-K through 8th grade students from five communities — Glen Ellyn, Glendale Heights, Carol Stream, Lombard and Wheaton. There are four elementary schools (Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, Churchill, and Forest Glen) and one junior high school (William M. Hadley Junior High) in the district.

All District 41 students transition to Glenbard West High School in Glen Ellyn.



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We want to hear from you!

Send your comments and questions to:

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Connect41 is published for the residents of Glen Ellyn School District 41.