



## 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.



# Connect 41

THE GLEN ELLYN SCHOOL DISTRICT 41 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

GLEN ELLYN ■ GLENDALE HEIGHTS ■ CAROL STREAM ■ LOMBARD ■ WHEATON



## Message from the Superintendent

I can't believe summer break is only a few weeks away. It has been a fantastic school year so far and our students are growing

in their learning everyday! I can tell you this first hand through a structure we call, "Student for a Day" in each one of our schools. I attended from the first school bell of the morning all the way through lunch and even recess to the end of the day for pick up. Although I did have a fun time engaging with our students, my reason for visiting was quite serious. It is important for me to fully understand the student experience in each of our school communities.

I confirmed what many of us already know which is that we have incredible students who are focused, kind, hardworking, and engaged. I saw this through their work together in groups, their solving of problems related to what they were

learning, their respect for their teachers and peers, the critical thinking they exhibited by asking deep questions, and through their knowledge of the core academics.

I always enjoy seeing our teachers in action and the students engaged in learning. As I was sitting on the carpet as a student for the day with one group, I looked up at the teacher who generously volunteered to allow me in her class and I was again reminded why teachers are the single most important element to the learning and growth of every student. District 41 staff take their roles very seriously and are dedicated to honing their skills through continuing education. I was not surprised to learn that 70 percent of our teachers have earned master's degrees or above. They create active learning environments that instill the love of learning into every student.

I know we still have areas to improve upon such as, closing the achievement gap for students with "at-risk" factors such as poverty and students learning English. We are committed to ensuring every student in District 41 has every opportunity to grow as a learner.

Great schools matter and I am proud that our schools are thriving. I hope this gives you an idea of what our school environments look like today. District 41 is committed to working together with all of the communities we serve to support the continued growth and success for our students. We are fortunate to have fantastic students, parents, teachers, staff, and community members who collectively support education.

Thank you for your partnership,

Dr. Paul Gordon

## Educator of the Year Wayne Wittenberg

Benjamin Franklin 4th grade teacher Wayne Wittenberg was selected as the District 41 Glen Ellyn Chamber of Commerce Educator of the Year. This recognition is very well-deserved and is especially fitting as Mr. Wittenberg plans to retire at the end of the year with 35 years of teaching, 29 of those years in District 41 at Benjamin Franklin School. Two of Wayne's colleagues, Randy Jones and Susie Thomas, nominated him for this award.

*“Wayne Wittenberg has been a teacher in District 41 for close to 30 years. In that time he has touched the lives of hundreds of children. Wayne has been the go to guy when it comes to science making kits, putting together lessons, and spending many hours after school sharing his expertise in this area for teachers to learn, never asking for anything.*

*Wayne has touched the lives of teachers and children across the nation through Golden Apple, working at Fermilab. I have never seen someone so dedicated to his classes, the children at Ben Franklin have been so fortunate to have called him their teacher over the last 30 years.*

*Wayne spends every lunch period reteaching lessons that students did not do well on so they can be successful when they test. These are students who otherwise would not have*



*Educator of the year Wayne Wittenberg*

*been successful. They come out of his room smiling and feeling great about themselves. Wayne also does a Waffle Wednesday for students in his class that are helpers that week. Wayne makes waffles and serves the kids at a special table that is decorated. These kids are so proud of being chosen and spending time with him during lunch.*

*Wayne has been an inspiration to all of Ben Franklin teachers, parents, and all of District 41. We are proud to call him our lifelong friend.”*

Mr. Wittenberg was honored at the Glen Ellyn Chamber of Commerce Community Awards Breakfast in March. He was also featured in the “Spotlight on Schools” section of the Daily Herald on March 11. Superintendent Gordon commented, “We are extremely lucky that Wayne has called District 41 his professional home for the majority of his career. The impact he has had on kids is a gift to his students and to our learning community. I am proud to call Wayne a colleague and wish him all the best as he finishes his last year teaching with us.”

## Phase I Complete - Goodbye Elementary Portable Classrooms!

Portable classrooms have been used in District 41 since 2001. In 2014, the District initiated and funded the 1st phase of a project to replace all of the elementary portable classrooms by building classroom replacements at each of the schools. The last of the previously existing 22 elementary school portable classrooms were recently moved! Ten portables still remain at Hadley Junior High School. A Community Facilities Task Force has presented a recommendation for Phase II including the removal and replacement of the portables still at the junior high school. To read the full report go to [www.d41.org](http://www.d41.org).

“Having all of our students and teachers together inside of their learning communities is significant,” said Superintendent Paul Gordon. “Our teachers are now able to more easily collaborate with each other and students are not losing valuable time going in and out of the portables. Above all, the safety of the students is greatly improved for those who were once in the portables.”

*Thank you to the 2013 Board of Education members who made the new classrooms and removal of portables possible:*

**Sam Black**, President  
**John Kenwood**, Vice President  
**Dean Elger**, Secretary  
**Joe Bochenski**  
**Drew Ellis**  
**Patrick Escalante**  
**Erica Nelson**

# Language Programs Expand the World for Students

One way District 41 prepares students for a global environment is through language programs. In 2011, District 41 was awarded a planning grant to explore Foreign Language instruction/programs at the elementary grades. A group of teachers, administrators and Glenbard High School District 87 staff members came together to better understand opportunities at the high school, identified goals, and began to study the research behind foreign language instruction at the elementary grades.

Today, District 41 provides two language programs including Foreign Language for

Elementary Schools (FLES) and a Dual Language Program. Through FLES, District 41 provides Spanish instruction for a half an hour everyday. Students in the FLES program will develop proficient communicative competence in Spanish and will learn about diverse cultural perspectives.

In addition to FLES, District 41 offers a Dual Language Spanish Immersion Program starting in kindergarten. The vision of the Dual Language Program is, "Students in the Dual language program will be bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. Students will exhibit high academic achievement in the

content areas in both languages." The Dual Language Program is located at Churchill School, however all District 41 parents of kindergartners may apply.

*"The introduction of a foreign language learning program at the elementary level is very beneficial for younger kids. This gives younger kids exposure to language and cultures and helps them develop interest by the time they are in middle school. This opens up a lot of opportunities for them and paves a strong path of a foreign language by the time they are in high school."*

*~Forest Glen School Parent*



## Problem-Based Learning Ignites Critical Thinking

by Kayla Wheeler, District 41 PBL Coach

In its second year of implementation, District 41's Problem-Based Learning (PBL) has grown to include a rich network of experts in fields like engineering, healthcare, science, industry, service, and higher education. Driven by required state and national standards, anchored in subject matter content, and framed by math and literacy skills, this year's range of real-world issues and challenges have been suggested by students, teachers, and experts in the D41 PBL network.

Across the district's five schools and the K through 8 grade levels, students have engaged in more than 55 PBLs which have utilized critical thinking, problem-solving, design challenges, engineering projects, and extensive collaboration with adults and peers.

Students have participated in all phases of problem-based learning from launch and problem definition, through research and solution development, through feedback gathering and presentations, and finally, with implementation of solutions.

Through this authentic work, District 41 students are making a difference in the ways that matter most to them. Through disciplinary lenses, District 41 students are gaining a deeper understanding of the world in which they live. Through this real-world, connected work, District 41 students are developing the learner characteristics critical to their accomplishments in elementary and junior high school, and ultimately, their success in college and career.

## Thank you to our community partners who support Problem-Based Learning in District 41

*"Partner" is defined as a group/organization that has given students a problem and directly engaged with our students during a PBL.*

Bonnie Gahrns  
BR Ryall YMCA  
Cantigny Park and McMormick Museum  
College of DuPage  
Cosley Zoo  
Conservation Foundation  
DuPage County Farm Bureau  
DuPage County Forest Preserve  
DuPage County Historical Museum  
DuPage County Storm Water  
DuPage Federation on Human Services  
Fermilab  
Glen Ellyn Environmental Commission  
Glen Ellyn Food Pantry  
Glen Ellyn Historical Society  
Glen Ellyn Park District  
Glen Ellyn Police Department  
Glen Ellyn Public Library  
Glen Ellyn Children's Resource Center  
Glen Ellyn Sustainability Group  
Glenbard West  
Glendale Heights Park District  
Hephzibah Children's Association  
Jennifer Umlauf  
Magenium (GE Business)  
Prairie Food Co-op  
Renae Frigo  
SCARCE  
West Suburban Humane Shelter  
Village of Glen Ellyn

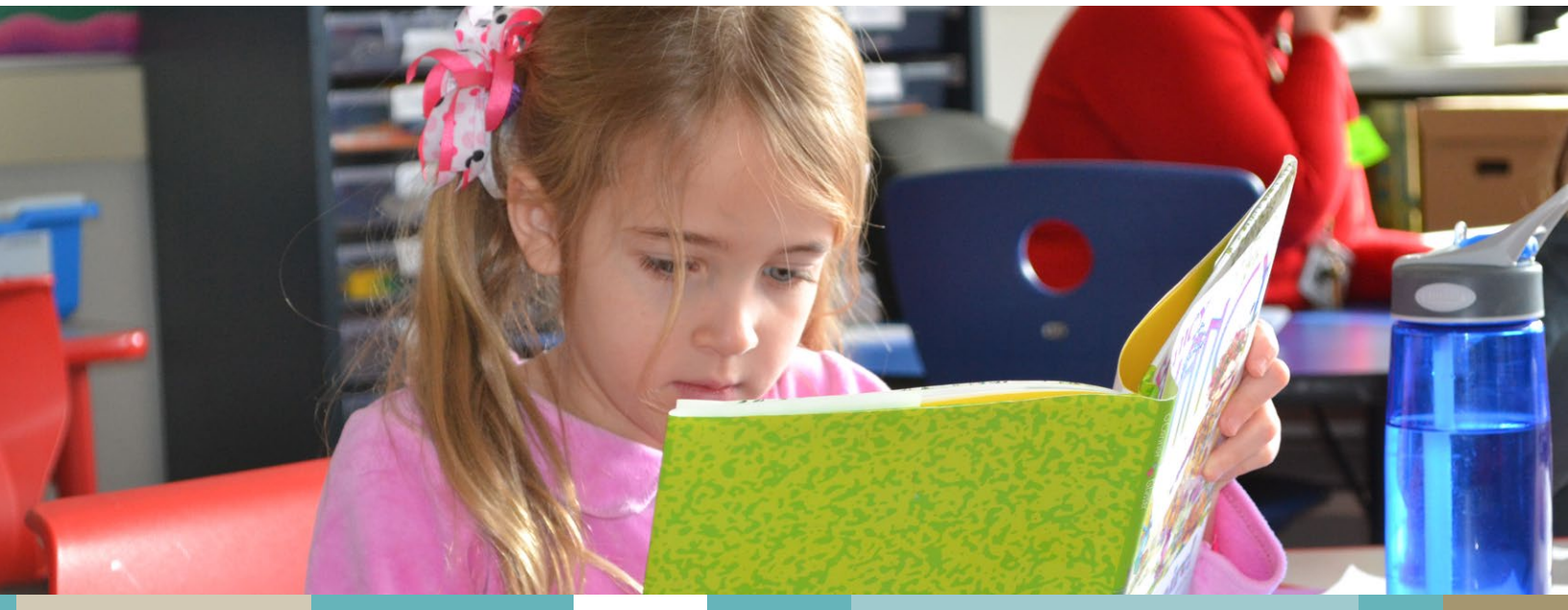


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**Paul Gordon, Superintendent**  
**Board of Education**  
Erica Nelson, President  
Drew Ellis, Vice President  
Dean Elger, Secretary  
Joe Bochenski  
Kurt Buchholz  
Stephanie Clark  
Patrick Escalante

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

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## Connect with us!

District 41 has a new website: [www.d41.org](http://www.d41.org)

Subscribe to get e-mail news items and the District Digest email newsletter at [www.d41.org](http://www.d41.org).

- Facebook (Glen Ellyn School District 41)
- Twitter (@Glenellynd41)

We want to hear from you! Send your comments and questions to:

Erika Krehbiel - *Chief Communications Officer*  
[ekrehbiel@d41.org](mailto:ekrehbiel@d41.org) | (630) 534-7218.