

# 39EXPRESS

FALL 2023

## Welcome New Administrators

### A Message from the Superintendent



I hope that the early part of the school year has brought you as much joy as it has brought to our educators and students. The smiles and positive energy from students and staff alike have been plentiful throughout our buildings. I could not be more proud of the focused effort and invigorating energy from everyone in our learning community. It truly makes a difference!

We have so much to celebrate and be proud of inside District 39. From our dedicated educators, to our talented students and our engaged families, our connected learning community is rooted together in the common mission of engaging, empowering, and inspiring our students to lead academically successful, socially responsible, compassionate, and purposeful lives. This collaboration and partnership is part of what makes this community special—working toward the common goal of ensuring each and every student is supported to be successful and well prepared for the next step in their academic journey.

As we enter year three of our five-year strategic plan, we have spent countless hours charting our course to ensure that we continue to make the necessary progress toward our goals. After spending much of the summer evaluating progress, identifying areas of need and finalizing our action steps for the 2023-24 academic year, we are excited about our partnered and purposeful work ahead. There is a famous quote that says “Opportunities don’t just happen. You create them.” Through intentional work and collaboration, we strive to continue to create opportunities for our students, our faculty and staff, and our families to achieve tremendous levels of opportunity and success.

I want to share my gratitude for your advocacy and support. Each member of our community plays a vital role in educating our children and I am appreciative of our partnership.

Your partner in education,

Kari Cremascoli, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Wilmette Public Schools District 39



**Melissa Feinberg**  
Assistant Principal,  
Harper Elementary



**Meghan Otto**  
Assistant Principal,  
Central Elementary



### Stay Connected



**Social Media:** Follow us @Wilmette39 on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**Neighborhood Lists:** Visit [www.wilmette39.org/neighbor](http://www.wilmette39.org/neighbor) to subscribe to our local neighbor email lists in order to keep up with the D39 school news going on in your community.

**Email:** Email us at [communications@wilmette39.org](mailto:communications@wilmette39.org) with your questions, feedback and suggestions.

# D39 Approves FY24 Budget

The Wilmette Public Schools Board of Education unanimously approved the Wilmette Public Schools Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget during the Board's September meeting. The budget reflects the District's commitment to fiscal responsibility while financing educational projects that support the academic, social-emotional, and physical well-being of each student.

## What to know about the budget

- In order to maintain fiscal stability, the Wilmette Board of Education has a long-term goal of sustaining the overall end-of-fiscal-year operating fund balance at a level equivalent to 40% or more of operating expenditures. This ratio is projected to be 44% at the end of the fiscal year.
- The budget figures below do not include \$19 million for the Teacher Pension Flow-Through, which is the payment made by the state toward D39's pension obligation.



## FY24 Budget at a Glance

<b>Total Operating Revenues.....</b>	<b>\$75,885,293</b>
Educational (81.5%) .....	\$61,901,657
Operations and Maintenance (12.3%).....	\$9,311,529
Transportation (2.7%).....	\$2,031,757
IMRF/Social Security (2.5%).....	\$1,876,469
Tort (0.8%) .....	\$644,233
Working Cash (0.2%) .....	\$119,648

**Non-Operating Funds ..... \$1,875,461**

<b>Total Operating Expenditures.....</b>	<b>\$70,171,604</b>
Educational (85.2%) .....	\$59,767,811
Operations and Maintenance (7.8%).....	\$5,443,883
Transportation (3.7%).....	\$2,579,927
IMRF/Social Security (2.3%).....	\$1,597,481
Tort (1.1%) .....	\$782,501
Working Cash (0%) .....	\$0

**Construction Projects ..... \$11,021,825**  
**Non-Operating Funds ..... \$4,209,357**

### Total Revenues and Other Sources of Funding

**\$77,760,754\***

### Total Expenditures and Other Uses of Funding

**\$85,402,788\***

\* Excludes transfers between funds and the Teacher Pension Flow-Through revenues/expenses described above



The FY24 budget reflects a planned deficit due to one-time construction projects for classroom air conditioning at Central Elementary, Harper Elementary, Romona Elementary, and Highcrest Middle School as well as piping replacement at the Mikaelian Education Center that is primarily funded through an \$11.2 million bond issuance.

**Budget Deficit \$7,642,032**

To learn more about the strategies and the 2023–24 action steps for the strategic plan, please visit [www.wilmette39.org](http://www.wilmette39.org) and click on “Strategic Plan” in the About Us section.

# District 39 Strategic Plan

## Engage, Empower, Inspire



A Wilmette District 39 education engages, empowers, and inspires students to lead academically successful, socially responsible, compassionate, and purposeful lives. As we move into year three of our five-year strategic plan, we continue to evaluate our progress and thoughtfully plan our next steps. Below are our high-priority action steps for the 2023–24 academic year. Please scan the QR code or click [here](#) to view our Fall 2023 Strategic Plan progress report.



### 2023–24 High-Priority Action Steps



#### **Goal I: Student Achievement and Growth**

1. Building MTSS Teams will analyze student data and track progress to determine intervention needs
2. New intervention services will be implemented by teachers or other staff in supportive roles
3. Special education teachers trained in research-based strategies for instruction
4. General education teachers will engage in continuous learning in research-based strategies for reading and math and implement approaches
5. Literacy curriculum materials will undergo a review to align with student needs
6. Students will engage in goal-setting as a class and/or an individual in line with developmental level



#### **Goal II: Supportive Community**

1. Building Foundations Teams will implement Tier 1 procedures for identified common areas (halls, cafeteria, playground)
2. Social-emotional curriculum pilot at grades 5–8 and professional development differentiated
3. Recommended grades 5–8 schedule to include time for social-emotional skill instruction
4. Home-school reporting system for social-emotional learning
5. Implement aligned process for SEL problem solving
6. Build staff capacity and responsiveness around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB)



#### **Goal III: Professional Community**

1. 2023–24 District Strategic Advisory Team meets regularly
2. District committee members will represent various disciplines and experience
3. Seek and publicize staff feedback regarding personal/professional needs and priorities to plan for future training
4. A committee of faculty, staff and administrators will make recommendations to target and address culture/climate needs based on newly collected survey data
5. Training for productive conversations regarding student needs
6. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Task Force recommendations for hiring and retaining employees of color



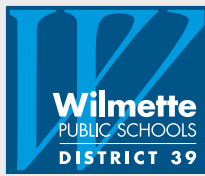
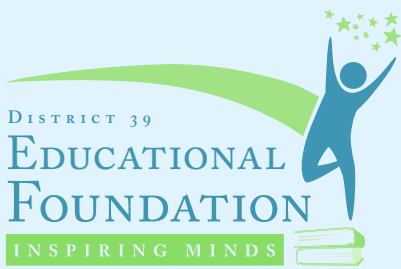
#### **Goal IV: Family Partnerships**

1. Increase social media following and engagement, partially through advertising
2. Complete the redesign of district and school websites
3. District will choose an online newsletter tool that provides consistency in look, ability to be embedded in email, and valuable analytics for all teachers and schools
4. Increase communication for parent understanding and learning around diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging
5. Development of a comprehensive transition plan from grade 6 to 7 that aligns with identified areas of need from student and parent surveys
6. Deliver academic pathways document



#### **Goal V: Stewardship of Resources**

1. Bi-Annual review of five-year capital improvement plan
2. Prioritize scheduling of building-based capital improvements
3. Monitor legislative adjustments and their potential impact on D39 finances/planning
4. Implement a process to evaluate class size and staffing of non-homeroom instructional environments and align with new, recommended 5–8 master schedule



39 exPRESS is published by the District 39 Board of Education to provide information to local citizens about educational programs and activities. 39 exPRESS is printed on recycled paper.

Mikaelian Education Center  
615 Locust Road  
Wilmette, IL 60091  
(847) 512-6000  
www.wilmette39.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
ECRWSS  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
WILMETTE, IL  
60091  
PERMIT NO. 93

POSTAL PATRON LOCAL

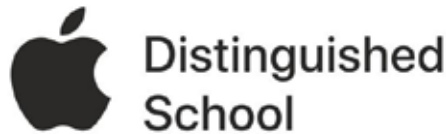
The District 39 Educational Foundation, a 501c(3) non-profit organization, raises funds for projects that expand, enrich, and complement educational opportunities for the students, staff, and community in District 39. Visit us online at [d39foundation.org](http://d39foundation.org) for more information.

**Gripp Grants:** The District 39 Educational Foundation grants funds for **innovative educational programs, experiences, and technologies that expand, enrich, and complement the schools' curricula.** Grant applications are welcome from anyone—teachers, staff, parents and students in District 39—or any organization that makes a proposal consistent with the mission of the Foundation. Our grant program is named in memory of D39 teacher and founding Foundation Board Trustee Phyllis Gripp.

Grant applications are reviewed two times a year by the Recommendations Gripp Grant Committee (RGGC), which includes District 39 teachers (representing each school building as well as various grade levels and areas of curriculum), Foundation trustees, and community members. Please reach out to the Gripp Grant Chair at [grippgrant@d39foundation.org](mailto:grippgrant@d39foundation.org) prior to submitting an application to get more information and to discuss your Gripp Grant idea. **The next deadline for submission is March 4, 2024.**

Please visit [www.d39foundation.org](http://www.d39foundation.org) for more information on the work of the Educational Foundation.

## Four District 39 Schools Named Apple Distinguished Schools for 2023–26



Congratulations to our four District 39 elementary schools (Central, Harper, McKenzie, and Romona) for being named Apple Distinguished Schools for 2023–26. This award recognizes the efforts of our elementary schools in using Apple technology in innovative ways that inspire creativity, collaboration, and critical teaching and learning among its learning community. From our technology teachers to our classroom teachers, our faculty consistently integrate technology in new and creative ways to help our students in the pursuit of academic excellence and growth.



## Romona Elementary Named National Blue Ribbon School



Congratulations to Romona Elementary for being named a National Blue Ribbon School! The National Blue Ribbon School award celebrates the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in striving for—and attaining—exemplary achievement. Romona was recognized by National Blue Ribbon Schools as an “Exemplary High Performing School,” one of only 14 in the State of Illinois to be honored in that category. Schools earning this designation are among their state’s highest-performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests.

