

DEAR DISTRICT 39 COMMUNITY,

Another school year comes to an end. Students, staff, and parents are all ready for the summer break with time to relax and unwind.

As soon as the students are gone, construction will begin on the improvements to the Library/Media/Technology Centers at McKenzie and Romona. The work will be completed over the summer and students will return to a revitalized space for 21st century learning. At that point, we will have the libraries in five of our six buildings updated; we are currently conducting a space study at Highcrest to determine next steps.

Congratulations to Harper School on its 75th birthday! We celebrated on May 24th and it was wonderful to see so many former and present students and staff turn out for this happy occasion.

Next year will bring changes to the start and end times in all buildings. This grew out of the need for more teacher collaboration time for elementary teachers. As we added time in K-4, we were able to give WJHS a later start time, addressing the need for adolescents to get more sleep. We developed the new start/end times with input from parents and staff and will initiate these adjustments at the start of 2017-18:

Elementary 8:35 - 3:15
Highcrest 8:50 - 3:35
WJHS 8:25 - 3:10

You'll read inside about our April Board of Education elections. As we welcome new members to our Board, we express our sincere gratitude to departing Board members Kimberly Alcantara, John Flanagin, and Cindy Levine. Each one made enormous contributions during their eight years of service and worked toward lasting improvements in our District.

We are also saying goodbye to Dr. Denise Welter who is retiring after ten years at the helm of McKenzie School. Denise's instructional leadership has been remarkable and she will be missed. On page two you will meet Rachel Filippi, the new McKenzie Principal. We welcome Rachel to the D39 family and look forward to her arrival.

Your partner in education,



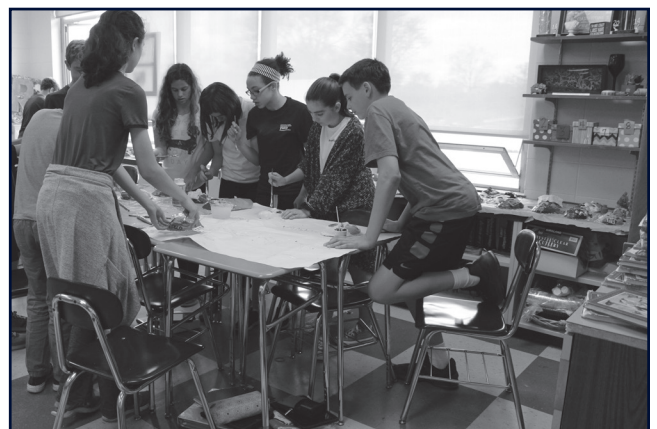
Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D
 Superintendent
 Wilmette Public Schools District 39



75th Birthday Celebration at Harper School



McKenzie 1st graders at the annual Mexican Mercado



WJHS eighth graders make Greek masks in Latin class.

WELCOME NEW ADMINISTRATOR

RACHEL FILIPPI

INCOMING PRINCIPAL MCKENZIE SCHOOL

Rachel Filippi will officially become the Principal of McKenzie School on July 1st. She comes to District 39 after four years of administrative experience with District 109 in Deerfield. For the last three years, Ms. Filippi was Assistant Principal at Walden School; prior to that she was Assistant Principal for Student Services at Sheppard Middle School.

Ms. Filippi holds a bachelor's degree in marketing and management from the University of Iowa, a master's degree in special education from National Louis University, and a master's degree in school leadership from Concordia University.

McKenzie parents had opportunities to meet Ms. Filippi. In addition, she has had transition meetings with administrators and staff, which will continue into the summer.



BOARD OF EDUCATION UPDATES

As a result of the April 4th election, there are some changes on the District 39 Board of Education. Three members depart the Board after two terms: Kimberly Alcantara, John Flanagin, and Cindy Levine. Mark Steen was reelected for a second term, and was chosen as Board president. Jon Cesaretti, Lisa Schneider-Fabes, and Ellen Sternweiler were all elected to their first terms. Continuing Board member Frank Panzica was elected vice president.



Dr. Lechner swears in D39 Board members: newly elected members include Ellen Sternweiler (far left), Lisa Scheneider-Fabes, Jon Cesaretti (far right). Mark Steen is starting a second term.

Dear District 39 Community,

I am honored that you have reelected me to the Board of Education and that my fellow board members subsequently selected me as Board President.

Our community asks the Board to balance two vital mandates: the education of our children and the prudent use of public funds. Past boards have struck that balance well, using the lowest operating cost per pupil in the Township to maintain and evolve schools that care for the academic, social, and emotional development of each student. I am confident that the new Board will continue that tradition, protecting the excellence of D39 while constantly seeking its improvement.

It is truly a privilege to have this opportunity to contribute to the growth of our students, the success of our staff, and the strength of our community. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Steen'.

Mark Steen

President, District 39 Board of Education

CURRICULUM UPDATE - WRITING

CONFERRING: AN ESSENTIAL PART OF TEACHING

Teaching writing must become more like coaching a sport and less like presenting information. You have to do more than call out the errors. Lucy Calkins, Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, Columbia University

The reading and writing curriculum has been under review for several years. This year the revised writing curriculum was implemented and included a focus on the workshop approach to teaching.

Writing is like playing a sport. Students have a variety of skills and experiences that work together to help reach a target or “score.” District 39 teachers demonstrate the rules of the writing “game” and guide students in strengthening their performance. Like a sports coach, who offers personalized advice to help each athlete or team improve, teachers give individualized or group feedback that enhances learning.



Within the workshop approach, teachers invite students to apply varied writing techniques. Teachers move within the classroom to where the students are practicing writing. Here the teacher begins meeting with individuals or small groups. They confer during this independent writing time because the side-by-side feeling of a writing conference helps teachers build important learning relationships with students. The District has learned that conferring with students is an essential part of differentiating instruction in a deliberate, intentional, and individualized way.

SUMMER CONSTRUCTION

As soon as school is out for the summer, D39 will begin some construction. The biggest projects will be the Learning Commons spaces at Romona and McKenzie; both include the updating of heating and air conditioning. McKenzie is also getting a partial roof replacement. Romona is also having the last 16 original classroom unit ventilators replaced. Students at these two schools will come back in the fall to these new library/technology/media centers. The other piece of summer construction is a new boiler for WJHS.



Learning Commons at WJHS (top) and Harper (left) opened at the start of the 2016-17 school year.

REFLECTIONS

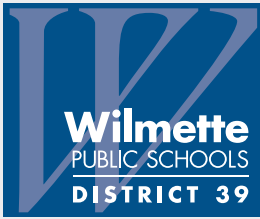
On May 10th, District 39 staff past and present gathered for Reflections, the annual event that honors retiring staff members and those reaching significant career milestones. There were five staff members retiring and each was highlighted in a video and given a personal send-off by their administrator. In addition, there were 26 employees celebrating five years of service, 22 completing 15 years, and five people marking 25 years with District 39.



D39 15 year honorees



Superintendent Dr. Ray Lechner with retiring McKenzie Principal Dr. Denise Welter



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POSTAL PATRON LOCAL

DISTRICT 39 EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION UPDATE

The Foundation granted over \$21,000 in **Spring Gripp Grants** to three District 39 schools.

Highcrest will test a pedal desk (combination exercise bike and desk) to determine effectiveness on concentration and productivity for students with sensory needs and ADHD.

Romona will add a gazebo to its outdoor garden as part of the school's 21st century learning environment.

WJHS students will use Breakout EDU boxes to promote creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking.

On April 27th, hundreds of people gathered to honor **10 Every Day Heroes** selected from the D39 school community: Lynn Bosinsky, Alec Childress, Anne Clark, Fabian Estrada, Oshana Khoshaba, Mary Norkett, Kathleen Peth, Ellen Smith, Leslie Williams, and Conrad Wolski. What a wonderful evening to celebrate the exemplary work, commitment, and joy these individuals bring to families and co-workers in the District.

Over 50 families joined **Science Olympiad** students and teachers at the program Open House. Highcrest and WJHS students plus 4th graders looking to learn about Science Olympiad were treated to enthusiastic

student presentations about their STEM accomplishments.

Patent attorney Greg Mayer talked to WJHS students on April 4th as part of Math in the Real World. He discussed a medical device patent lawsuit, rivets in F-15 aircraft, and a patent directed to the rescue of a satellite.

In March, Highcrest 6th graders played improv games with **ComedySportz** facilitators to work on skills of presence, owning your own communication, and supporting your partner. This event was sponsored by the Foundation's Fine Arts Committee.

The Foundation and District 39 partnered to host **Swiss Artist Verena Brassel**. Ms. Brassel conducted a workshop with 8th graders enrolled in 2-D and 3-D art classes on the theme of Courageous People culminating in an art exhibit. She visited WJHS and Highcrest German students to share her Swiss German accent and customs. The program was funded through the Foundation's Lydia Martin Memorial Fund.



10
Every Day
Heroes

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We are interested in your ideas, feedback, and suggestions, whether or not you have children in our schools. Find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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