



...from the April 11, 2017 Board of Education Meeting

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

National Merit Finalists

Thirteen York Community High School seniors named among the 16,000 National Merit Semifinalists identified by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) this fall were recently confirmed as NMSC Finalists. They are: Elizabeth Brown, Amy Choi, Emily Landreth, Kevin Lipkin, Maria Muehleis, Noah Neidigh, Amelia O'Halloran, Mateo Sanchez, Colin Sandstrom, Amalia Siavelis, Sehe Tinfang, Gavin Vandenberg and Flanagan Waldherr. These students were honored by proclamation of the Elmhurst District 205 Board of Education at its April 11 meeting ([view Board Recognitions](#)).

"We are so incredibly proud of these students for their tenacious dedication to academia. They are being recognized for going above and beyond in an extraordinarily challenging selection process. I am thrilled for the students and the opportunities this will provide them moving forward," said York High School Principal Erin DeLuga.

All NMSC Finalists will be considered for National Merit Scholarships offered in 2017. The selection of some 7,500 Merit Scholarship winners from the group of more than 15,000 Finalists is now in progress. Scholarship winners will be announced by NMSC in four groups from April through July.

Focus 205 Final Presentation

Kara Caforio, co-chair of the Focus 205 Community Engagement process, presented the [Final Report to the Board](#), along with recommendations of the 18-member Focus 205 Facilitating Team. The report reviewed the Board's charge to the Facilitating Team and contained highlights of each of the six large group meetings held over a period of 18 months, including the focus groups which took place at the three middle schools in October of 2016. Highlights of the [Thoughtexchange survey](#) from last fall were also shared.

"We, the Facilitating Team, endorse these Focus 205 findings and would offer the following recommendations to the Board," said Mrs. Caforio. "That:

- Specific pricing and impact details be attached to several scenarios which would support and sustain excellent public education in Elmhurst, including an All-Day Kindergarten feasibility study and pressing facility needs
- The Board and Administration investigate funding sources to support critical and ongoing facility needs
- The Administration begin working to develop a Facilities Master Plan which addresses the needs of Lincoln and Field elementary schools in the short term
- Best practice continue to be implemented, providing resources and programming to support Future Ready Learning and STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math.

- Continued community engagement and input opportunities will be provided, including an annual State of the District presentation in the fall and small group opportunities similar to this past fall's focus groups.

The Focus 205 process has provided a good model for two-way communication and dialogue in District 205. We must continue to build trust and confidence among our constituents by enhancing our two-way communication efforts. We must arrive at a point where District 205 residents understand and appreciate the successes occurring in our District and the challenges we face to sustain that level and move our District to an even higher level."

She also delivered a [Letter of Transmittal](#) which stated that even though Focus 205 will continue in Phase 2, the work of the Facilitating Team has come to an end, having fulfilled its mission and purpose. Mrs. Caforio thanked the dedicated members of the Team, which spent over 40 hours in actual meeting time over the last two years.

Margaret Harrell asked the Facilitating Team to stand and be recognized. She also asked Kara to "unpack" the Facilitating Team's recommendations.

"One of the frustrations we heard a lot from the community was that there wasn't a specific price tag. I think everyone understands that you could have the greatest idea in the world, but if we don't have the money to pay for that – or if it's going to come at the cost of something else – the community wants to know that," said Mrs. Caforio. "Until they do know that, it feels like we're in a holding pattern.

"Regarding the feasibility study, all-day kindergarten impacts so many things. Do you have room at each school? What's the cost? What does it look like? It's more than just a question of what this community values.

"The need for a facilities master plan also came out loud and clear. The community wants to know there's a long-term plan for facilities to make sure we're getting the most for our money.

"STEM speaks for itself. Clearly, that was the top educational priority identified. When given a blank sheet of paper (through the Thoughtexchange process), that was what the community said they wanted to see more than anything else.

"Lastly, that there be opportunities for community engagement. If you look back, we've never done anything like this before. Even though it wasn't a perfect process, and there were some bumps in the road, it still came up with a pretty good product and people had a voice, and a way to participate that we've never done before. It will continue to change and grow, but it's still a foundation for communication between the community and the Board and administration."

John McDonough commented that "I too want to say thank you for all of the hard work. A lot of folks did this over a long period of time. We're really grateful; this is how you really make your mark on the community and leave a lasting legacy.

"I was interested in the neighborhood schools question. It ended up fifth on the Thoughtexchange survey findings. It just seems like that one of the first questions you answer, the first fork in the road. I think the community is very much interested in keeping the neighborhood school model that we currently have," he said. And Mrs. Caforio agreed that it's a community value.

"Sometimes in a neighborhood school system, people don't really know what's going on at other schools, but there seems to be a recognition that there are disparate needs at a couple of our schools," Mr. McDonough noted.

"It comes down to providing information. If people begin to understand that if you fix Lincoln, for example, then the resources that you would have had to use to keep it going can be dispersed to be used across the District and address some of the pressing needs that those schools have. By addressing significant needs, ideally, you can get your maintenance needs at other school progressing a little faster. And that's how those schools benefit. So even though it may not feel like your school is receiving a direct benefit, it is," said Mrs. Caforio.

Mr. McDonough also asked what Focus 205 Phase 2 looks like.

"The Facilitating Team is not going to stay on in their same capacity. That doesn't mean there won't be people who will continue on in other roles. They already did a year more than was expected. They're very dedicated and it took a lot of time," she said.

"We're definitely in the process of taking this input and putting it together into a coherent document that becomes an operation plan for the District. There definitely are plans for additional extensive community input on facilities, concepts and costs," said Superintendent Dr. Dave Moyer.

"Internally, we've been planning over the last two years as this process has unfolded to develop strategies to keep it moving forward once the findings were reported to the Board. The future configuration of this is going to need to look different because this phase was designed to serve a certain purpose. The next phase will involve different mechanisms to engage the community – whether that is more focus groups, maybe polling data. We need to get some direction from the Board regarding what it is going to authorize Administration to do to try and obtain the type of information necessary so that people can react to it.

"The Thoughtexchange survey was popular. We would probably have to engage with a future marketing/consultant to help guide some of the planning of this. There are multiple different opportunities that I envision. A specific plan is not developed, other than we believe we need design concepts and costs so we can determine what the community is willing to support, but that's just the facilities side. Other things we can plan to implement, for example if we want to move toward dual language – which is more internal planning and allocation of resources.

"I think the next steps could take a variety of forms, but much of it, particularly with the facilities questions, will involve additional extensive community involvement and will continue under the Focus 205 name, because that is something we want people to continue to identify with, but it won't be driven by the Facilitating Team in its current form," he concluded.

Karen Stuefen also thanked everyone who worked on this process and asked questions about the context around the Thoughtexchange survey.

Mrs. Caforio explained that "Some people felt there was too much information being presented by the District and not enough coming up from the community – which is a hard balance. So the Thoughtexchange survey was added to Focus 205 process. Literally, participants received three open-ended questions and they could talk about anything. If you look at the comments, they're all over the place. The point was to let the community speak on whatever they wanted to and [the process allowed] people to see what others were talking about. STEM blew it out of the water; it clearly was the number one topic."

Dr. Moyer reminded the Board that this was an interactive process and the ways those themes emerged was that people reacted to everybody else's thoughts. Some 1,600 parents and community members shared over 2,400 thoughts and weighed in on a variety of topics by applying over 118,000 stars (likes) during this bottom-up process.

Mrs. Stuefen also asked if the facilitating team had an idea regarding on-going opportunities for continued community engagement and input as we take the next steps.

Mrs. Caforio responded that Phase 1 was about gathering ideas and input. She noted that people seem to be tired of giving input and want to move to action. "One idea was to have one big state of the district session a year where the administration presents celebrations from the previous year and shares goals for the coming year(s). That provides a connection so people can see who the administrators and Board members are. You would run it like these [Focus 205] sessions were run, with a presentation and table topics to discuss, because that gave good feedback.

"Also, people really liked the focus groups; it was a really positive thing. They were in their middle school, in a small group; they were asked a few questions. It was definitely a different group of people then came to the larger sessions. And there may be an opportunity for another survey in the future. People loved Thoughtexchange because they could do it on their mobile device while waiting to pick up their kids," she said.

Emily Bastedo commented that "As a Board, we're always talking about how we can hear from the community. It's very hard to engage a community of 43,000 people; we're always searching for ways to do it. We had the Harris survey a few years ago and tried to make some improvements based on that. Dr. Moyer goes to schools to listen to people. And we try to go to PTA meetings; we see people in the community.

"So I know that it's challenging. Your team of volunteers really tried hard to communicate. I wanted to emphasize this list of ways you did that – short mailings, long mailings, social media, newspapers, public access television. I think it's great that you posted all of the comments [www.focus205.org]; you seemed to be very transparent. I know that you did the best you could to try to engage people and hear from everybody. I commend you on that because I know it's tough. This was done on a volunteer basis, so thank you for everybody's time on this."

Jim Collins asked if there was anything that might have been missed in the process. "Have you uncovered the right issues and the community's priorities? Are we on the right track?"

"I don't think anything was missed. The challenge really was taking all of this information and getting it down to what's important and significant. One of the biggest challenges was that this process was begun under a previous administration. I think that's something that affected the process. Dr. Moyer jumped into something that was already planned out, with the agenda set by an administrator who was no longer there," noted Mrs. Caforio.

"The Facilitating Team tried really hard to work with the feedback that we heard to make the sessions beneficial for the participants. It's hard to come out in the evening on a weeknight, so you really want it to be worth people's time. The Facilitating Team worked really, really hard to make it a good experience. We are talking about things we would never be talking about if we hadn't done this. It is now part of the District conversation; people know the vocabulary. They know some of our challenges and are asking how we're going to address those. Prior to that, there was no avenue

for this kind of a conversation; that's why I volunteered to do this. I think we have addressed the current most pressing conditions," she stated.

"Thanks to the team, thanks to the community, thanks to the staff for their time and special thanks to [Board members] Margaret and Shannon, who volunteered on our behalf," said Chris Blum. "I want to rewind to where this started, with a group of parents who had started to gather some momentum around a referendum to rebuild Lincoln. We asked those parents to be patient with us – and it's taken a while – to hang on and, before we do something in a microcosm, allow us to figure out what education's going to look. Let's design a facilities plan around what that vision is. This is one step in a long process that's been going on for a while and will go on. The challenge that we have is to get community feedback, focus on the issues and boil this down to something that we can actually start to formulate around. And thank you so much for helping us do that.

"We need to balance the need for rigorous investigation of alternatives and thoughtful discussion with moving toward implementation, given that Lincoln hasn't gotten any younger and the needs continue to grow. With that in mind, I want to make sure that we keep moving. I don't want to leave it at this, right here today.

"I think you've outlined the need for an operating plan, a financing plan and an implementation plan. It would be helpful for the administration to outline this, given the pressing need for implementation. Can we, as a Board, set a target date to coalesce around a vision, a path forward? How quickly can we get to this, recognizing that we need to do this right and continue to gather input? I'd love to understand the components you are investigating and have a conversation about that timeline as soon as possible," said Mr. Blum.

"We've begun the process of drafting a plan that includes the three components you talked about – the student achievement, sustainability and facilities, with input from the Focus 205 process. The facilities piece is a little bit tricky at this point. I was hoping to have the Cabinet have a chance to vet that and bring that back to the Board, so that would be the process through May and June. I was hoping, if all goes well, to present an operational plan to the Board in July, which we would adopt as our roadmap or guiding document," Dr. Moyer answered.

Mr. Blum responded that he'd like a one-page timeline with some key dates and next steps as soon as possible, as well as an understanding of the components being investigated, to make sure it's aligned with expectations. "We can do that very easily," said Dr. Moyer.

"One of the first points we talked about was the importance of having costs attached to a few different scenarios, so I think that needs to be our first step in keeping with the Facilitating Team's recommendations," said Dr. Harrell.

"At the April 25 Board meeting, we will have a presentation by Elizabeth Hennessy of William Blair to begin talking about some of those specifics. That is what we would like to proceed with as soon as possible, so I think we're all on the same page," Dr. Moyer replied.

Board President Shannon Ebner noted that even though people wanted something specific to look at, it was "a fine balance between getting ideas from the community and feeding too much information, therefore being accused of already having a plan in place, which we didn't. It was a really open-ended process through which we wanted to extract from the community their thoughts and values regarding our educational priorities. I think you did a great job with all the brainstorming to be able to boil it down to these recommendations. Thank you."

English Learners (EL) Update

District 205 English Learners Coordinator Ariana Leonard presented an [EL/Bilingual Programming Update](#) to the Board. The number of English Learners (ELs) increased by almost 100 between 2015 and 2016, to 644 students.

“Our numbers are going to continue to rise because the proficiency levels have been raised to correspond to elevated content standards and assessments,” noted Ms. Leonard. “In 2016, 15% of students who took the [ACCESS test](#) (which determines English language proficiency) exited the program. With increased rigor, it is anticipated that in 2017, only 5.9% will be proficient enough to exit the program,” said Ms. Leonard.

There are 57 different home languages represented in Elmhurst District 205. The top five most spoken languages are:

- Spanish - from a wide variety of Spanish-speaking countries in Central and South America
- Malayalam - spoken in India, primarily in the south-westernmost region
- Polish
- Urdu - spoken in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan
- Greek

Of D205’s current EL students, the top 5 most spoken languages are: Spanish, Polish, Malayalam, Urdu and Arabic.

Current EL programming in District 205

The state of Illinois has certain criteria for eligibility of EL services. It starts with the Home Language Survey (HLS). This is a part of every student’s registration packet. When a student has home language or speaks a home language other than English, they are screened for eligibility into the EL/Bilingual programs. District 205 has two:

- Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) – must be offered when 20 or more students of the same language are in one school. English and math must be taught in the native language. Native language support is provided in social studies and science. The goal is to transition students out of EL.
- Transitional Program of Instruction (TPI) – ELs of various backgrounds with 19 or fewer students of the same language in one school; provides intense English instruction and support with the goal to transition students out of EL.

District 205 currently has TPI in every school and TBE in 4 buildings - Madison, Fischer, Churchville and York. They both have the same goal: to transition students to the mainstream English-speaking classroom, just different ways of getting there.

EL Progress in Elmhurst

“When looking at EL progress in Elmhurst, we have typically looked at student achievement (proficiency on meeting standards) for the EL subgroup on standardized assessments. The problem with looking at data in this manner is that the EL subgroup is comprised of EL students who are not yet proficient in English, and we are assessing their achievement on an English standardized assessment. It does not accurately reflect our students. Further, once a student becomes proficient in English, they are no longer in the subgroup of EL. Therefore, we look at ACCESS data to measure language development, and then look at former EL student data to evaluate the program

of services," Ms. Leonard explained.

Scores of students who have exited the program 1-2 years previously are as follows:

- Reading - 21% on target, almost 40% near target and 39% below the target
- Math - 19.5% on target, 36% near target and 45% below target

Scores of former EL students who have exited more than 2 years earlier are as follows:

- Reading - 35% on target, over 42% near target and 23% below target
- Math - 28% on target, 38% near target and 34% below target

Scores for all students in District 205 are as follows:

- Reading - 48% on target, 36% near target and 16% below target
- Math - 49.5% on target, 29% near target, 21% below target

The fact is, most EL students need from 7-10 years in order to acquire academic English (versus conversational English) on a level comparable to their native-speaking peers.

"We need to continue to have high expectations for our EL students. We need to look at their assets, not at their deficits. Teachers must continue to have high expectations and provide opportunities for ELs to demonstrate learning in multiple ways," she said.

"When we look at the progress of our EL students on their trajectory toward meeting college and career readiness standards, we look at the most recent NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) data to see how our former EL students compare to the general population.

"Knowing that we need to transform our EL/Bilingual programming, the next question is where do we go from here? After looking at the current TBE and TPI programs, it is clear that the focus on transitioning to English as quickly as possible is not serving our students well.

"It's a myth that we need to teach EL kids literacy in lieu of content. We need to find a way to do that in tandem. With regard to EL programming, another myth is that there isn't a most effective program, when in reality there is – dual language (most effective), co-teaching (fosters inclusivity) and developmental bilingual education. Dual language has a mix of native speakers in two languages; developmental bilingual education has only one native language, working to become proficient in two," said Ms. Leonard.

Dual-language programs, often called Two-Way Immersion programs, are designed to deliver instruction in both the majority and minority languages. Students learn content in both languages along with develop into bilingual and bicultural individuals. The program is ideally comprised of a 1:1 ratio of language majority and language minority students. The program is for native English speakers, native Spanish speakers, bilingual English/Spanish speakers, as well as those who speak a different language at home.

Dual language programs have proven to be the best type of program for both EL students and language majority students. Decades of research has proven that these bilingual, biliterate students outperform their native language peers on all student achievement assessments. Further, the research of [Thomas and Collier](#) have proven that dual language programs have been proven to fully close the achievement gap.

"To quote Frank Smith, 'One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.' For me, this demonstrates the importance of learning a language and why I am excited about where we are going with EL/Bilingual programming," Ms. Leonard concluded.

"We think there's a model out there whereby we could offer several languages. It's cost neutral if you have the right staff. We would like to pilot this at one of our schools in the near future," said Dr. Moyer. This will be included in the July operational plan.

Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy

District 205 was one of the first districts in the state to offer the Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy. The first year it was piloted through World Language classrooms. In the graduating class of 2015, ten Seals were awarded in Spanish and French.

In 2016, 41 Seals and 20 Commendations were awarded to 59 students in Arabic, Chinese, French, Greek, Italian, Polish, Russian and Spanish. Of those, four were current EL students and seven were former EL students. Further, four students earned the Seal and/or Commendation in multiple languages.

In 2017, a total of 152 will be awarded: 65 Seals and 87 Commendations to 147 students in Chinese, French, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Turkish and Urdu. Several students earned recognition in multiple languages.

Technology Report

Director of Technology Dave Smith presented the annual [Technology Update for FY18](#). In it, he covered the following topics:

- FY18 Instructional Tech Plans for elementary, middle and high school
- Changes to Technology Repairs and Support
- Technology Projects
- Budget Summary

In 2017-18, there will be nearly 11,000 devices in the District. Changes include the following:

- 1:1 computing in grades 3-12; take home Chromebooks in grades 6-12
- Pilot devices in K-2, upgrade during the school year (not yet 1:1)
- Technology Service Internship (TSI) will increase from 3 to 4 periods (0.8 Full Time Equivalents or FTE) and increase of parts inventory to improve repair turnaround time

Grades 3-5

- 1:1 Chromebooks in carts (new Chromebooks in grades 3 & 4)
- In-school use only at this time

Grades 6-8

- Discussion of take-home Chromebooks
- New protective cases
- Carts stay in school for storage/charging as needed
- Chromebooks checked in for summer

Freshman Chromebooks

- Tentatively Acer C738T
- Touchscreen
- Damage resistant Gorilla glass
- Latest processor and graphic technology
- 360-degree hinge for laptop, "tent," or tablet mode
- \$300 for Chromebook only (no case supplied – variety of options available for a discount)

Chromebook Protection Plan (CPP) for take-home Chromebooks

- D205-administered accidental damage protection plan (\$15 additional fee for students in grades 6-12)
- Unlimited out-of-warranty repairs (parts failure after manufacturer warranty ends)
- Accidental damage ("drop protection") – 1 claim/student/year
- No coverage for loss/theft
- Grade 6-12 Tech Fee increased from \$50 to \$65 to offset CPP cost.

Tech Support:

- K-8 tech media assistants to tech assistants – one position/school (no change in FTE)
- Add 10 days to calendar
- Possible reclassification to higher salary schedule
- Estimated \$45-\$55K salary and benefit increase – total for 11 FTE (FTE)

FY 18 technology projects include: upgrade of Internet bandwidth (1G to 2G); upgrade VoIP telephone system; deployment of 450+ staff laptops, 2,000 Chromebooks and 12 Konica Minolta printers; major release upgrade for PowerSchool/Gradebook; and automate data sync from Skyward to Active Directory. These upgrades, along with the new equipment should amount result in a net expenditure of just under \$3 million.

Mr. Smith noted that 45 or 50 Wi-Fi hot spots have been issued, mostly at York High School. He also pointed out the tremendous growth in the number of devices over the last 10 years.

"We are seeing about the same number of help tickets, with the Chromebooks leading the way. We're turning tickets around about twice as fast this year as we did last. Customer satisfaction is level; we're modifying what we do and how we do it as we go along. The bottom line is we have a lot more devices, have leveled our staffing and customer satisfaction is holding its ground," he said.

Mr. Blum asked to hear from Dr. Mary Henderson-Baum, Assistant Superintendent for Learning and Teaching, about the learner side of this influx of new technology. "I'd like to hear what we're going to do with some of the new devices. I'm glad to see the TIS class increased to four periods," he commented.

"The teachers are crying for the technology because they see the educational value of it," said Mr. Smith.

Mr. Collins complimented Mr. Smith on the fact that the number of devices have doubled over the last few years, while increasing customer satisfaction and decreasing turnaround time. "Those efforts are greatly appreciated," said Mr. Collins.

"I'm feeling sentimental at my last full Board meeting. I feel like you always do more with less, think creatively about the budget you have and bring good news to the Board," said Mrs. Bastedo.

SUPERINTENDENT'S AGENDA - ACTION

At the conclusion of a closed session that followed the main meeting, the Board voted 5-0 (since two Board members had left) to approve the following agenda item:

- Administrative Positions Reorganization

Superintendent Dave Moyer made the recommendation to change the District STEM Coordinator and Literacy Coordinator positions to Director of STEM Education and Director of Literacy. To reflect Cabinet status, current Directors' titles would be changed to Executive Director with no increased compensation.

A Director would facilitate parent education, lead professional learning, supervise department chairs, other leaders and committee work, actively plan and coordinate curriculum development work with a focus on interdisciplinary units of instruction, and play a more prominent role in the assessment development work in the district, which must be a top priority for the foreseeable future. As the District moves to more program evaluation, the directors will support the Executive Director for Research and Program Analysis in this area.

Changing the title from Coordinator to Director will allow the District to attract candidates with more leadership experience, including current principals, because it would be a vertical, not a lateral move, both professionally and monetarily.

The Administrative Cabinet would like to promote Dave Beedy to the Director of STEM Education position. His leadership, initiative, and the quality of his work has been outstanding. We would then post the position for Director of Literacy.

This recommendation is designed to strengthen the leadership and systematic coordination of District operations. As opportunities are presented, the District Office will continue to look for ways to improve its effectiveness.

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMUNICATION

April Report

Dr. Moyer, along with Dr. Mary Henderson-Baum and Dr. Kathleen Kosteck, attended a District Management Group workshop hosted by Elgin U-46 entitled *Cost-Effective Strategies to Close the Achievement Gap for Struggling Students* on Friday, April 8.

Along with Focus 205 co-chair Kara Caforio, Superintendent Moyer recently attended the quarterly meeting of the Illinois Association of School Administrators, where Mrs. Caforio was named an IASA 2017 Honoree. Dr. Moyer noted that the discussion that day was about redefining ready. There are different ways to determine if a student is college ready and/or life ready (see www.redefiningready.org). Dr. Dave Schuler is the superintendent for Township High School District 214 and served as the president of AASA (the national School Superintendent's Association). He spearheaded *Redefining Ready!* which is a national initiative launched by the AASA to introduce new research-based metrics to more appropriately assess that students are college ready, career ready and life ready.

BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Harrell introduced the topic of meeting efficiencies. She would like for the Board to consider the

following items:

- How to best manage items on the agenda
- How all items can be posted in advance on BoardDocs, so that the Board is fully prepared
- How information from committee meetings can be more thoroughly captured
 - Should there be a Committee of the Whole?
 - Should committee meetings be audiotaped?
 - Are committee meetings even necessary?

Mrs. Ebner suggested that Policy 2:220 be updated. Mr. McDonough reminded the Board that it should discuss this publicly before changing the policy.

UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

April 25 – Board of Education Meeting and Reorganization – 7:30 PM – District 205 Center

May 3 – Board of Education Meeting – 7:30 PM – District 205 Center

May 21 – York High School Commencement – Joe Newton Fieldhouse

NOTE: Video footage of all Board of Education regular meetings are usually posted on [205TV](#) within 48-72 hours. Audio is posted within 24 hours at <http://www.elmhurst205.org/Audio> (please click on appropriate meeting date).