



THE DISTRICT IN REVIEW

A Newsletter for the Northbrook School District 27 Community

FALL 2020

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



More months ago, it was difficult to guess what the 2020-2021 school year might look like. There was so much to work out in regard to facilities, materials, spacing, PPE, safety protocols, scheduling, technology – the logistics were endless. But here we are. The school year is truly off to a great start, and it is all thanks to the dedication of our talented staff, the resilience of our students, and the strong, unified efforts of our families and surrounding community.

I have always been proud of our District. There is a level of togetherness here that is unparalleled. While this school year feels quite different in terms of our physical environment, I am continually impressed with our ability to persevere and overcome. We are truly stronger together.

In this issue, you will learn more about the hybrid synchronous teaching model that we have been implementing since the school year started on August 24. This model was developed with the following goals in mind: providing the safest environment for our students and staff, maximizing in-person attendance for all students while adhering to IDPH and CDC guidelines per our space capacity, avoiding close contact, implementing aggressive virus mitigation to provide for the highest likelihood of stability in student and staff attendance, delivering our rigorous and coherent programs, and remaining agile and flexible to adapt as conditions and guidance evolves.

We are incredibly grateful for our partnership with the Northbrook Park District that has allowed us to lease space at the Park District's Leisure Center. This additional space allows our kindergarten and first-grade students to attend school everyday, in-person, should their families choose. It has been so heartwarming to see our students back in the school buildings after being in fully remote learning this past spring. The way they have quickly adapted to the new school environment and safety procedures is quite remarkable.

You will read in this issue that I plan to retire this coming summer. I can assure you this decision does not come lightly after spending 29 years of my career leading the District. However, I know that it is the right thing to do. As we move into the next five years, we have a number of key initiatives in our strategic plan. As I considered my future and that of the District, I felt it would be best to have a new superintendent shape these initiatives from start to finish. I also wanted to spend more time with my immediate and extended family, continue to teach and mentor young leaders into administrative roles at Northeastern Illinois University, and continue my professional writing.

I am so excited about the future of District 27 and how it will thrive. District 27 is truly a lighthouse district of which we all can be proud. I thank the community, parents, Board of Education, and our staff for your continued support over my years in the District. I am eternally grateful to have spent the last three decades of my worklife serving this wonderful community.

Respectfully,

David J. Kroeze, Ph.D.

Superintendent of Schools

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Are you following
District 27
on social media?



#Northbrook27



DISTRICT NEWS

SUPERINTENDENT ANNOUNCES PENDING RETIREMENT AFTER 29 YEARS

District 27 Superintendent Dr. David Kroeze has announced his intention to retire from the District following the 2020-2021 school year. Kroeze will have spent 29 years leading District 27. Some of the District's key achievements under Kroeze's leadership include: co-founding the First in the World Consortium with Dr. Paul Kimmelman, which identified and recognized that District 27 students and those in the Consortium rank in the highest levels of performance in mathematics and science in the world; implementing the Baldrige Performance Excellence framework; achieving 11 consecutive years of Certificate of Excellence Awards in Financial Reporting; receiving the Department of Education's Excellence Award for Wood Oaks Junior High School; establishing full-day kindergarten; renovating all of the District's state-of-the-art facilities; and, among several other notable achievements, sustaining District 27 schools in the top 1-2 percent of schools in the county and state for many years as noted by Chicago Magazine and the Illinois State Report Card. The Board of Education is beginning to interview search firms to find the next superintendent and will solicit input from parents, staff, and community members regarding the background and attributes they would seek in potential candidates. The new superintendent would tentatively start in July 2021.

DISTRICT 27 LAUNCHES HYBRID SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING MODEL

The District opened its doors on August 24, 2020 for the 2020-2021 school year under a hybrid synchronous learning model. Students in grades 2-8 attend school in person every other day, on an A/B schedule, while students in grades K-1 attend school in person every day. When the students are not attending school in person, they are participating in synchronous, remote learning with their teachers and classmates. The District had 17 percent of its 1,325 students elect to participate in fully remote learning at the start of the school year.

In addition, the District has been adhering to strict protocols and partnering with epidemiologists from the Cook County Department of Public Health to keep our schools safe during the global COVID-19 pandemic. All students, staff, and visitors are required to wear a mask, maintain 6 feet of physical distancing in our buildings and on buses, and practice good hand hygiene. Temperature checks are conducted on anyone entering our facilities.



**SCAN THIS CODE WITH YOUR CELL
PHONE CAMERA TO VIEW OUR
HYBRID LEARNING VIDEO!**



PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTHBROOK PARK DISTRICT ALLOWS EXTRA SPACE

As the 2020-2021 school year approached in the shadow of a global pandemic, it quickly became clear to District 27 administrators that the only way to safely bring students back into the schools would be with more space. Luckily, the Northbrook Park District had space to loan.

District 27 and the Northbrook Park District formalized an intergovernmental agreement on September 23, 2020 that allows the school district to lease 15,627 square feet of space from the Park District's Leisure Center, located at 3323 Walters Avenue, in Northbrook, for in-person kindergarten instruction this school year. The leased space is being referred to as the Kindergarten Center.

About 113 kindergarten students and 25 staff members have been attending the Kindergarten each day since school began on August 24.

"We are very grateful to have this additional space for our youngest learners," said Kimberly Arakelian, District 27 Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations.

(Photos by Tarah O'Connell)

BY THE NUMBERS

DISTRICT RECOGNIZED FOR FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY FOR 11TH STRAIGHT YEAR

For the 11th consecutive year, District 27 has received the Certificate of Excellence Awards in Financial Reporting from both the Government Finance Officers Association and the Association of School Business Officials International. The Board of Education recently recognized Dr. Kimberly Arakelian, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations, for these significant, long-running honors.

Both awards recognize districts that have met each of the organization's high standards for financial reporting and accountability. The District has earned the awards for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal years ending 2009 through 2019. These awards reflect the District's commitment to transparency and high-quality financial reporting.

District 27 Overview

3 SCHOOLS



**FEEDER DISTRICT TO
GLENBROOK NORTH
HIGH SCHOOL**



**1,297
STUDENTS**

**17-23
STUDENTS
PER CLASS**



225 EMPLOYEES

142 CERTIFIED STAFF

83 EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL

**17.5
AVERAGE
YEARS OF
TEACHING
EXPERIENCE**



**\$93,059
AVERAGE
TEACHER
SALARY**



**91%
TEACHERS WITH A
MASTER'S DEGREE
OR HIGHER**

DISTRICT BUDGET REFLECTS STABILITY WITH ANTICIPATED SURPLUS

District 27 continues to be in stable financial position, with the Board of Education approving a balanced \$29.3 million budget for FY21 at its meeting on September 17, 2020.

The District has contingencies of \$500,000 for additional COVID-19 expenses, if needed. The District ended the 2019-2020 school year with a 69 percent cumulative fund balance reserve. A percentage of the reserves will be dedicated to capital improvements, including completing our roof and HVAC replacements. This work will continue during the summer.

LOCAL: 95.19%

STATE: 3.70%

FEDERAL: 1.11%

**2020-21
REVENUE SOURCES**

95.19%

3.70% 1.11%

SALARIES: 65.6%

CAPITAL: 17.5%

BENEFITS: 7.9%

TECHNOLOGY: 3.5%

PENSION FUND: 2.8%

TRANSPORTATION: 2.7%

**2020-21
EXPENDITURES**

65.6%

3.5% 2.8% 2.7%

**1250 Sanders Road
 Northbrook, IL 60062**

Tarah O'Connell, Editor

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OUR SCHOOLS

HICKORY POINT

Grades K-2
 Mrs. Maureen Deely, *Principal*
 Mrs. Meggan Buchanan, *Asst. Principal*
HickoryPoint.nb27.org

SHABONEE

Grades 3-5
 Mr. John Panozzo, *Principal*
 Mrs. Meggan Buchanan, *Asst. Principal*
Shabonee.nb27.org

WOOD OAKS JR. HIGH

Grades 6-8
 Mr. Rob McElligott, *Principal*
 Mrs. Cari Beake, *Asst. Principal*
WoodOaks.nb27.org

SUBSTITUTES NEEDED

District 27 is still in need of substitute teachers for the 2020-2021 school year. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Theresa Fournier at fournier.t@nb27.org.

COMMUNITY 5K GOES VIRTUAL

This year marked the first time the PTA's annual 5K and 1-Mile Run was held virtually. Registered participants received a T-Shirt and were able to choose their own start time at a location of their choice.

September 26, 2020 was designated as a community-wide participation day so that there was still a sense of togetherness, even though participants maintained social distance and joined in on their own schedule.

More than 330 people registered this year. Proceeds benefit the Rohrabough Scholarship Fund, which awards scholarships to Glenbrook North High School seniors who are outstanding graduates of Wood Oaks. *(Photos submitted)*

OUR ADMINISTRATION

Dr. David J. Kroeze
Superintendent
 Dr. Theresa Fournier
*Asst. Superintendent for
 Personnel and Student Services*
 Dr. Katharine Olson
*Asst. Superintendent for
 Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment*
 Dr. Kimberly Arakelian
*Asst. Superintendent for
 Finance and Operations*

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