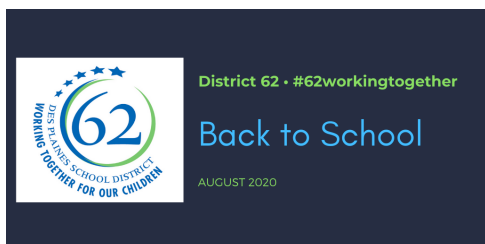


NewsBits



July 2020

Looking Forward to a New School Year



As we officially wrapped up the 2019-2020 school year, to say that 2020 has been an incredible year would most certainly be an understatement. Our students, staff, families and community continue to be on my mind as we plan and prepare for the upcoming school year.

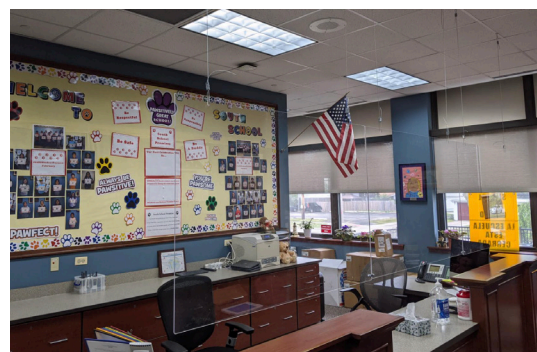
Our priorities remain the same--centering around safety, our well being (physical and social emotional) as well as equity. We have begun conversations with our union leadership team so that we can prepare for a safe and successful transition this fall. Our custodial teams are working hard as we speak to get our schools ready for our students' eventual return. Plexiglass barriers are being installed in all our office spaces, personal protective equipment (PPE) have been ordered for all staff and hand sanitizer stations will be installed throughout our schools and buildings.

While there is still uncertainty regarding all the details surrounding this upcoming school year, rest assured that work has begun and will continue this summer. This month, we begin the process of convening the D62 Back to School Taskforce. Over the next few weeks, we will closely review the guidelines that have been shared with us from the Illinois State Board of Education so we can be successful in preparing both our students and staff for their return to school.

March 13 is a day that I will forever remember as everything changed and in a very short amount of time. My hope is that we all gain some perspective from this experience so that we can learn, grow and be better not only for ourselves but for the children District 62 works so hard to support, educate and empower. I am very confident in this learning community and that will never change.

Sincerely,

Paul E. Hertel, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



District 62 recognizes its Difference Makers

This year, District 62 began a formal recognition program to honor those staff members considered “Difference Makers”.



This recognition program aligns directly with Goal 3 (Work Environment) of the district’s five-year strategic plan. Each staff member being recognized as a Difference Maker will receive a coin to commemorate this honor.

What is a Difference Maker?

Difference Makers are a defining example for the learning community of District 62. They do a great deal for others without seeking recognition or acknowledgment. They are selfless leaders who do what is best for children. They aspire to make the District 62 learning community a better place through their dedication, commitment and support of public education. It is an honor and privilege to recognize the men and women of District 62 who have been lauded as Difference Makers.

Congratulations to the District 62 Difference Makers for the 2019-2020 school year:

Judy Pecucci, Administration Center

A valued member of the District 62 Technology department,



Judy has not missed a day since the beginning of the district’s remote work began in March. This technology specialist has single handedly distributed 100’s of devices to staff and students, as well as hot spots to families and staff hotspots to families and staff who do not have wireless connectivity at home. Additionally, she is now collecting non-returning staff and 8th grade student devices. Judy has stepped up and put the people of D62 first.

Marie Novak and Roxanne Rubey, Cumberland Elementary School

Marie and Roxanne are paraeducators who serve the Student Services department. They have been on the frontlines of the district’s food distribution program since day one. Both care

Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 1: **Student Growth and Achievement**

Engage all students in learning that leads to academic growth, achievement, and readiness for high school, college, career, and life.

Goal 2: **Learning Environment**

Provide personal support to each student to develop the skills and confidence to be self-sufficient learners.

Goal 3: **Work Environment**

Provide personal support to each staff member to develop the skills and confidence to be innovative, exemplary, and visionary leaders of the district and their profession.

Goal 4: **Family and Community Connections**

Engage families and the community as partners to support student success.

Goal 5: **Resources**

Effectively, efficiently, and equitably manage the district’s facilities and financial resources.

Stay informed

Visit our website at www.d62.org to stay up-to-date on communications, news and resources for families.

deeply about giving back to our community and in doing so have been asked to be the leaders of our continued Summer Food Distribution Program.

Dustin Cody Bowen, Orchard Place Elementary School

Dustin came to Orchard Place as a custodial substitute and quickly became an indispensable part of the OP team. On top of completing his duties efficiently and to the benefit of our community, Dustin mentored students by taking his time to get to know students and engage with them during the school day. He went above and beyond to ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone who worked and visited Orchard Place, and had a pride in his work that was greatly admired.

District 62 Instructional Coaches

From left to right: Leah Strom, Jennifer Bergstrom,



Maria Kolligris, Sara Kranz and Stella Barnaba. The district's Instructional Coaches are being

recognized for their hard work and dedication to the staff and families of the district. They have been a constant source of support for the teachers this school year, especially during this spring when remote learning was in effect and the need to help and engage students was critical.

Leigh Radnitzer, Central Elementary School

The Central Team Leaders unanimously declared that Leigh is a difference maker at Central. She ensures that the school library is stocked with up-to-date relevant titles that deal with current issues ranging from racism, transgender, inclusion, and mental health. Leigh goes above and beyond to support the classroom teachers with technology enhancements and worked hard to have all our devices set and ready for the start of remote

District 62 Education Foundation Footnotes

The D62 Education Foundation has been meeting electronically, and recently held an in-person meeting at the end of June to discuss the way to proceed this year. The Foundation extends its sincere appreciation to all who supported the Benefit Dinner on March 6! A total of \$18,000 was raised to fulfill our mission to support and enhance educational opportunities for the students of District 62. We would also like to thank the District 62 Des Plaines Education Association for their generous donations of \$1,000 for the Benefit, and \$500 in honor of the retiring teachers.

The Foundation has been addressing how we can best support the staff and students of D62. Once plans are made for the reopening of our schools, we will plan accordingly. We know things will not be exactly as they were, at least for a while. Suggestions and ideas from staff, parents, and students would be welcomed! Ideas are encouraged to be send to d62foundation@gmail.com or feel free to contact one of us personally with your thoughts.

learning.

FinanceBits

Fiscal year 2020 (FY20) concluded at the of June, and much has happened over the last year in District 62. During the fall of 2019, the district retired \$28 million in bond debt, and refunded remaining outstanding debt, which will save taxpayers over \$11 million over the next five years. More recently, the district has had to respond to the challenges caused by Covid-19. Looking ahead to fiscal year 2021 (FY21), state and federal funding is expected to be consistent with FY20. The district is monitoring how local revenues will be affected by the pandemic. Regardless of what the future holds, District 62

District 62 welcomes new administrators to the team

A veteran educator, **Donald Jones** was named the next Principal of Algonquin



Middle School.

"I am thankful and excited to join the staff at Algonquin and District 62," said Jones. "I am

eager to meet with staff, students and parents and get to work."

Jones comes to District 62 from George Washington Middle School in Lyons, Illinois. Before becoming principal, he served as an assistant principal, special education coordinator and special education teacher.

With over 15 years of experience in education,

Dr. Kermit Blakley was named the next Principal of Chippewa Middle School.



Dr. Blakley replaces John Swanson who retired at the end of this school year after 13 years of service to the district. "I am very excited to join an awesome team of leaders and staff in District 62," said Dr. Blakley. "I look forward to meeting the students, parents and staff members to best serve the Chippewa Middle School, District 62 and Des Plaines community." Dr. Blakley comes to the district from MacArthur Middle School in Berkeley. His teaching career began as a math and physical

education teacher at Harbor Academy of West 40 Regional Safe Schools Program. He then was principal for five years at the alternative high school in Harbor focusing on social emotional learning, relationship building and academics.

Dominique Pacini was named the Cumberland Elementary School Assistant Principal. Pacini has spent the last few years at North Suburban Special Education District (NSSD) where she used her skills as a board certified behavior analyst as a self contained teacher, a program supervisor, and an instructional coach.

"I am honored to be given the opportunity to join the team at Cumberland Elementary School," said Pacini. "I am eager to meet the staff, students, and families. I look forward to collaborating



with all stakeholders to ensure we are promoting growth and success of the students."

Heather Cassidy was named the North Elementary School Assistant Principal. Cassidy was an assistant principal at Berkeley District 87 and prior to that served as an instructional coach and teacher.

"I am honored and excited about this opportunity to work in District 62 as North Elementary's new Assistant Principal," said Cassidy. "I have been an



educator for 15 years in a variety of different educational settings and look forward to collaborating and making connections with parents, staff and students in this new position."

Benjamin Keele and **Jami Shlensky** join the district as Student Services Coordinators.

"I am honored to be given this opportunity to work in District 62 as a Student Services Coordinator," said Keele. "I have been a teacher for 12 years in district 69 in Skokie, IL and value the experiences I gained as both a general education and special education teacher. I look forward to working and collaborating with all parents, staff and students in this new position."

"I am so excited about the opportunity to serve as a Student Services Coordinator in District



62," said Shlensky. "From my previous experiences I have harbored my passion for providing

the highest quality of education to all students. I look forward to being able to work with students, staff, and parents to provide a respectful, open, and safe environment for students to engage in the learning that best satisfies their needs and allows them to obtain their educational outcomes."

