



LAKE ZURICH COMMUNITY UNIT School District 95

Empower every learner to achieve personal excellence.

STRATEGIC
INITIATIVES
UPDATE
2024



Dear District 95 Community Members,

We all know that schools are at the heart of any community - providing students with high quality academic and extra-curricular opportunities, while also fostering a nurturing and safe environment. I am incredibly proud of all of our District 95 schools

and hope that whether or not you currently have children in our schools, you share this sentiment. It brings me great pleasure to share the outstanding progress of Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95 through this publication which focuses on our strategic initiatives.

As Superintendent, I have had the privilege to serve this community for the past five years and to work with an array of incredibly talented and caring staff members who make this an outstanding school district. Equally important is the support and commitment of the wider community, which consistently shows support for each other and for our schools. These are just some of the factors that make this a very special learning community.

Last school year, the school district spent many months in a strategic planning process – involving many stake-

holder groups – to help determine the most important, strategic work of the district for the next five years. This publication primarily focuses on some of the many successful strategic initiatives completed through the Forward95 strategic plan (2017-2023) and the new strategic plan, Empower95, (2023-2028). I would like to thank taxpayers in this community for their financial support with the 2018 referendum that funded Forward95 projects including a new school, air-conditioning in all schools, improved libraries, and many other exciting and important building initiatives.

As responsible stewards of the taxpayer dollars, the district administration and Board of Education are highly committed to maintaining a strong fiscal position including our AAA bond rating – while also delivering academic excellence. Please visit our website to view our award-winning financial dashboard.



As you read through this newsletter, I encourage you to access the QR codes provided – each one is unique. The QR code on the left will take you to a brief survey so we know more about how and what to communicate – including for those without students in our schools. Many thanks for your ongoing support!

Dr. Kelley Gallt, Superintendent

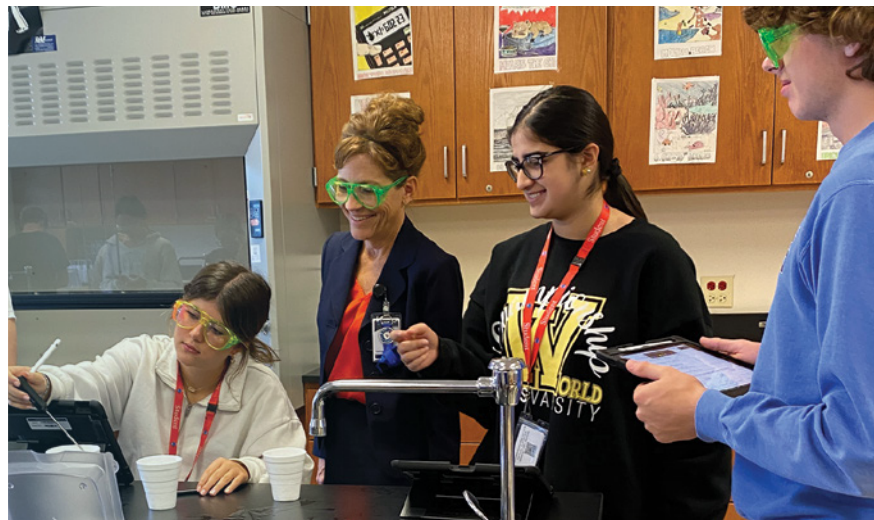
COMMUNICATION SURVEY

Tell us what you'd
like to know!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Young Adult Center	2
Empower95 Strategic Plan (2023-2028)	3-5
Forward95 Strategic Plan (2017-2023)	6-10
Green Initiatives	10
Softball Field and Weight Room	11
Safety and Security	Back Cover



DISTRICT 95 YOUNG ADULT CENTER

In October of 2022, the Board of Education approved the renovation of the old district administration building (at the corner of Surryse Road and South Old Rand Road) for the purpose of providing more comprehensive programming offerings for 18–22 year-old students with special education needs. Students receiving transition services have Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and have already completed high school graduation requirements, but require additional services to support post-secondary employment, education and/or training, and independent living preparation needs. The renovated building – named the Young Adult Center – became operational in March 2024

and provides students with classroom space, a vocational lab, a commons area, a kitchen and dining room, as well as conference and office spaces for staff members. The renovation also included a new roof, code-related upgrades, and the addition of an elevator for full accessibility to all three floors. The high-level plan for a renovated space for servicing students with transition services was part of the district's long-range facilities plan, which is incorporated in both the Forward95 and Empower95 strategic plans. Some photos shown here are from the Young Adult Center ribbon-cutting ceremony, held in early February.



Illinois State Board of Education President Dr. Tony Sanders (center) joins students, staff, families, and District 95 Board of Education members for the grand opening of the District 95 Young Adult Center.



EMPOWER95

EMPOWER95 Strategic Plan: July 2023 through June 2028

Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95 is excited to announce the launch of Empower95, a strategic plan crafted to guide our district towards new levels of educational excellence and builds upon the achievements of our previous Forward95 initiative. This new strategic plan outlines our ambition to not just maintain, but significantly enhance opportunities for our students, faculty, and the broader community.

Central to Empower95 is the newly developed "Portrait of a Graduate," a visionary blueprint that encapsulates the essential skills and attributes our students will embody upon graduation. This forward-thinking framework is designed to prepare our students for success in a rapidly evolving world, ensuring they are not only academically proficient but also equipped with critical life skills such as creativity, resilience, communication, and leadership.

The development of Empower95 and the Portrait of a

Graduate involved extensive input from various stakeholders, including parents, educators, students, Board members and community members. This collaborative effort ensures that our strategic plan is not only comprehensive but also reflective of our community's values and aspirations.

As we embark on this exciting journey with Empower95, we are dedicated to keeping our taxpaying community informed and engaged. Visit our Empower95 Strategic Planning Dashboard, (which can be accessed through the QR code to the right) to track our progress throughout each year of the plan as we continue to innovate, inspire, and empower our students, shaping them into the leaders of tomorrow.

EMPOWER95 DASHBOARD



Scan to check our progress.



This poster appears in classrooms and offices throughout the school district, serving as a reminder of our Empower95 mission and values. The images are symbolic and help to remind us of our plans in a more abstract way. For example, the stacked rocks are all different sizes, shapes, textures, and colors, and are part of a bigger plan or purpose. The water droplet creates a rippling effect, reflective of how our interactions and behavior can have influence beyond ourselves.

Vision: Portrait of a Graduate

A dedicated team of stakeholders - the Portrait of a Graduate team - was formed during the strategic planning process to develop, incorporate feedback, and refine characteristics of a District 95 Graduate and serves as the Vision for the district. Five characteristics were ultimately identified for the Portrait of a



This poster is in all school district classrooms and offices and the image serves as a reminder that a person's path is not always straight - represented by the curved stepping stones. Additionally, the stones near the front of the image are in the sharpest focus - in the same way that one may know what step to take next but may be less sure of subsequent steps right now. Finally, the background is open but is not clear - much in the way that the future is wide open for our graduates, with endless possibilities.

Mission & Values

The District 95 mission was reaffirmed and will be carried forward as part of the Empower95 strategic plan, because "empower every learner to achieve personal excellence" very much represents the primary purpose of the school district. The Strategic Planning committee felt this mission statement continued to ring true because "every learner" means students, staff, and everyone who is part of the District 95 learning community. "Personal excellence" represents all learners, whose goals and aspirations are unique to each individual.

Through stakeholder feedback and Strategic Planning committee discussions, seven values were adopted as part of the Empower95 Strategic Plan. Values were defined as "what we stand for" or "the lines we will not cross". Most of the values from the previous strategic plan were carried forward: **Collaboration, Equity, Integrity, Perseverance, and Respect**. In addition, two new values, **Academic Excellence** and **Accountability** were added. The Strategic Planning committee felt these seven values were most important and serve as guideposts for how we act as individuals and as an organization.

Graduate based on the work of the team and feedback from the broader learning community and the Strategic Planning team. While there are many other characteristics that are important and desirable, these five continually rose to the top as the Vision for District 95 graduates: **Effective Communicator, Global Citizen, Advocate for Self & Others, Future Ready, Growth Oriented**.

Students at all levels can demonstrate at least some of these characteristics in an age/ability-appropriate manner - and will continue to develop these skills over time. Each characteristic is defined by several "Demonstrated By" statements that tell students and others what to look for when developing or mastering these characteristics.

Strategies & Goals

After the Mission, Values, and Vision were finalized, the Strategic Planning team focused on Strategies, which are the key objectives that will be addressed by the five year plan. Each school year, Action Plans are developed by the administration to work toward fulfilling each of the strategies.

The Strategies delineated in the Empower95 Strategic Plan emerged from the committee's efforts during the development of a SWOT analysis. This analysis systematically identified the district's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (threats

typically identify potential external concerns beyond the district's control).

Strategies were grouped into four major Goal Areas: Students, Staff, Resources, Family and Community, and can be seen on our website by scanning the code here. These strategies identify the focus of our work for the next five years. Each year, the district administration will develop specific action plans to address strategies over the course of the five year plan.



Action Plans in Progress for 2023-24 School Year

Action Plans were developed for the 2023-24 school year and are outlined in greater detail on our website. For more specific information about Action Plans and the Empower95 strategic plan, scan the QR code on the right using your smartphone camera. For each year of the five year plan, the Action Plans on the website will be updated with current year initiatives, with the goal of meeting the objectives of each strategy by the end of the strategic plan life cycle in 2028.



Learn More about Empower95 from Our Students!

Paige Kutsor (left) and Lucas McMahon (right) are Lake Zurich High School students who participated as members of the Empower95 Strategic Planning Team. These high school seniors explain in their own words why a strategic plan is important for a school district, how the team reached consensus, what they learned from the process, and more. Follow the QR code or visit www.lz95.org/empower95 to watch a short video featuring Paige and Lucas!

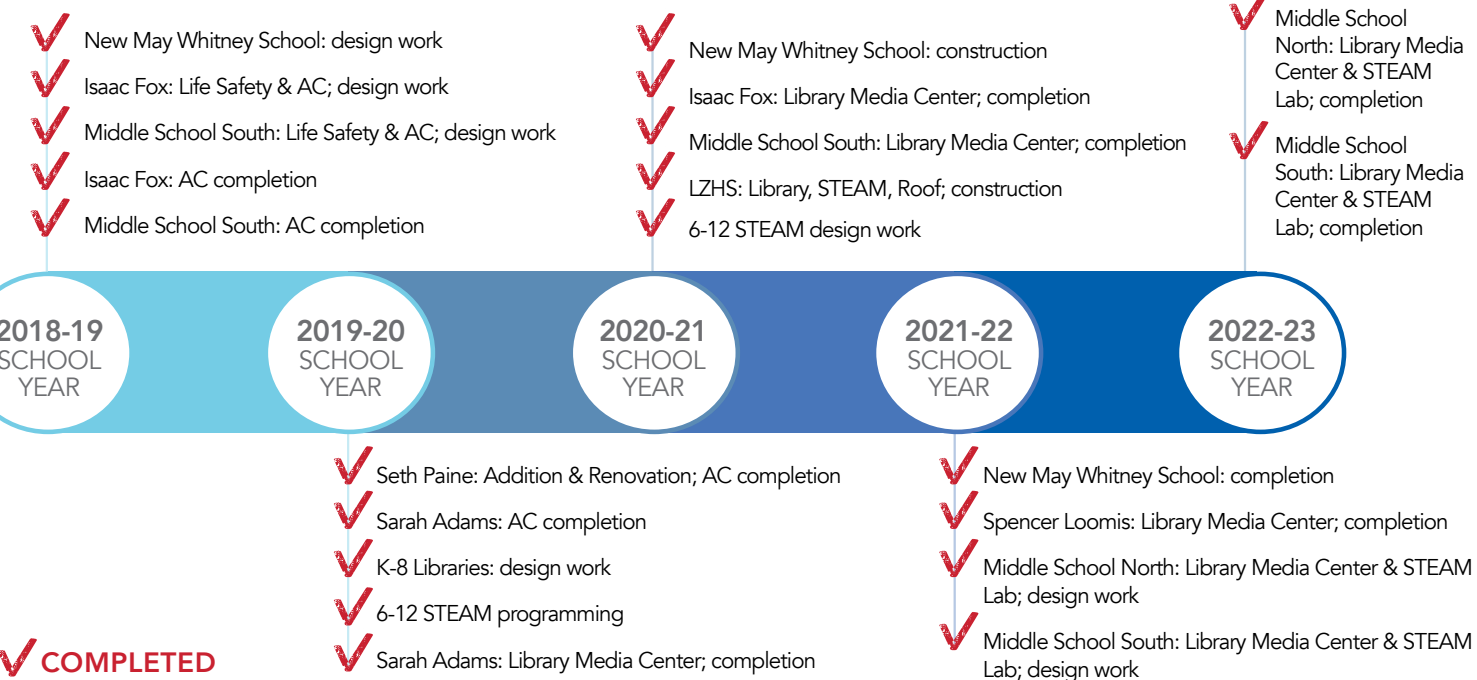


FORWARD95 Strategic Plan: July 2017 through June 2023

Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95 is thrilled to announce the successful completion of the Forward95 strategic plan, as of June 30, 2023. The completion of this strategic plan has profoundly impacted both our educational system and the greater Lake Zurich community.

Over the course of five years, 23 action plans were successfully completed by the district. Many of the projects defined in the Forward95 plan involved important significant facility improvements. On March 20th, 2018, an inspiring future was secured for District 95 students, staff, and the community, as more than 67% of voters supported the District issuing \$77.6 million in bonds to fund facility improvements including air conditioning at all schools, renovated libraries, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) Labs, and a

CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE



brand new elementary school (May Whitney). As a result of these and other Forward95 projects, the everyday learning environments of our students and staff were transformed to better empower students and staff to achieve personal excellence.

The graphic below gives a visual depiction of the construction-related work completed under Forward 95, and the following pages highlight some of those projects in greater detail. **District 95 is proud to have completed these projects, fulfilling the commitment to taxpayers, within budget and on time (except for one project – classroom furniture - delayed due to the pandemic).**

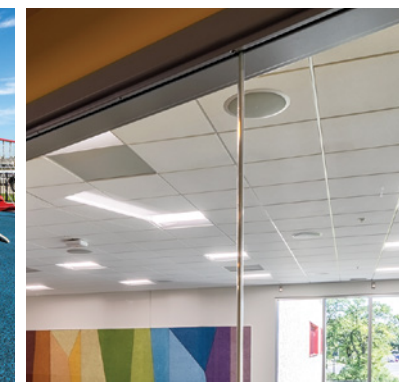
For more details about the Forward95 Strategic Plan and the referendum construction projects, please visit our website at www.lz95.org/Forward95 or scan the QR code to the right with your smartphone.



May Whitney Elementary: New School



The new May Whitney Elementary School opened its doors in August 2021 and features:

- Five section classroom wings for grades K-5
- Breakout spaces, 3 per wing
- Early Childhood wing, with separate entrance, 4 classrooms, and an indoor motor-skills therapy area
- State-of-the-art storm shelter large enough for all building occupants
- Large learning spaces for multiple class activities
- ADA accessible outdoor play areas (both K-5 and Early Childhood)
- Energy efficient geothermal heating and cooling for the entire building
- Energy efficient LED lighting
- Motion sensing lighting to reduce energy use when spaces are not in use
- Rooftop solar panels
- Electric vehicle charging stations





Lake Zurich High School: Learning & Innovation Hub

The LZHS Learning & Innovation Hub replaced the high school library and traditional classrooms with its grand opening in Fall 2022 and features:

- Learning HUB to provide multiple learning environments and resources
- Dedicated lab for design, construction, and programming of robotics
- Fabrication lab for engineering related creation and designs
- Dedicated Computer Aided Design (CAD) lab for engineering and programming
- INCubatoredu classroom in support of entrepreneurial programming
- Learning stairs with high-definition projection capabilities
-  LED energy-efficient lighting
- Breakout spaces for student collaboration and large group activities
-  Increased natural lighting



Middle School North & South STEAM Labs:

- Modern classrooms with flexible walls
- Breakout spaces for collaboration and large group activities
- Flexible furniture, large storage spaces for projects in-progress
-  LED energy-efficient lighting
- Technology-centric classroom environments
-  Bright and colorful learning environments with natural light



Elementary and Middle School Library: Media Center Renovations

(Isaac Fox, Sarah Adams, Spencer Loomis, Seth Paine and Middle School South shown here)

- Modern, flexible furniture suitable for collaborative work
- LED energy-efficient lighting
- Innovation/creation spaces connected
- Flexible technology and classroom tools for delivering instruction
- Bright and colorful learning environments



Green Initiatives



District 95 is proud to be named a U.S. Department of Education – Green Ribbon Schools, District Sustainability Awardee – just one of ten school districts across the nation to receive this honor!

An EV (electric vehicle) charging station with two dedicated parking spots was installed at the new May Whitney building. These spots are open exclusively to staff members on school days from 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and to the community outside of school hours. For questions, please contact the District 95 Business Office at businessoffice@lz95.org.

May Whitney rooftop solar panels.



Throughout this publication just a few of our green initiatives are highlighted by this symbol.

The new May Whitney Elementary School, operates using geothermal heating and cooling to keep the building temperate and cost efficient.

Geothermal heating and cooling was retrofitted at Sarah Adams and Seth Paine Elementary Schools.

State-of-the-art solar panels were installed on the roof of May Whitney.

LZHS Weight Room Renovation & LZHS Softball Field

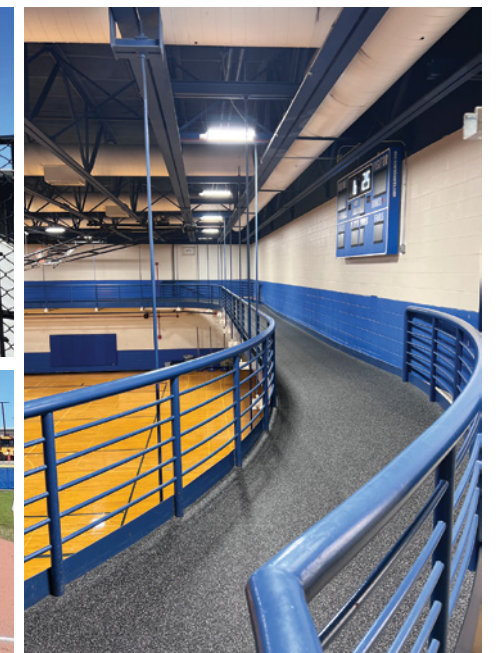
During the 2023-24 school year, renovations were made to the high school weight room and a new softball field was constructed on the site of the old May Whitney building. Both projects were funded through the district's reserves (Fund Balance).

WEIGHT ROOM

- Permanent wall added with windows overlooking gym
- LED lighting installed
- New rubber floor in weight room and running track
- New ADA compliant fitness and strengthening equipment

SOFTBALL FIELD

- New dugouts with storage area and bullpens
- Field design allows for future artificial turf, if desired
- State-of-the-art scoreboard
- Entryway honors the past with bricks and engraved stone from original Ela Township school



Safety & Security



School safety is an important part of both the current (Empower95) and previous (Forward95) strategic plans. Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95 places the safety and well-being of students, staff, and visitors as its highest priority. A uniform, planned, and practiced response to any incident is the foundation of a safe school. In 2022, District 95 adopted a nationally recognized Standard Response Protocol (SRP), from the "I Love U Guys" foundation. The SRP is based on

an all-hazards approach - as opposed to individual scenarios - and utilizes clear common language while allowing for flexibility in responses during a crisis situation. There are five specific actions that can be performed during an incident: Hold, Secure, Lock-down, Evacuate, and Shelter. This protocol was created with extensive collaboration between experts such as first responders, public safety, schools, districts, and communities. Its tactics are data-driven, researched and based on experience and best practices. The district continues to emphasize safety and security, continually staying on top of best practices and enhancing school district protocols.

LAKE ZURICH COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 95



2022 Illinois Association of School Boards, School Board Governance Recognition Recipient



2024 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools, District Sustainability Awardee



2024 Great Place to Work designation for Lake Zurich School District 95



Lake Zurich High School U.S. News National Best High School Ranking



All District 95 schools given Exemplary or Commendable summative designation by the Illinois State Board of Education



2024 Project Lead the Way PLTW Distinguished Launch Schools: Isaac Fox, May Whitney, Sarah Adams, Seth Paine, Spencer Loomis



AAA bond rating by Standard & Poor's for Lake Zurich School District 95

Contact District 95 Administration at:
 Feedback@lz95.org
 832 S. Rand Rd., Lake Zurich, IL 60047
 847.438.2831

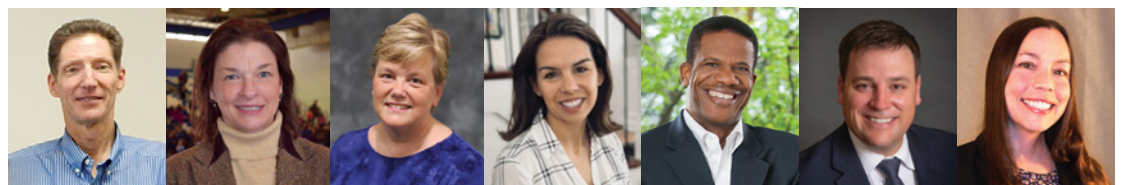
*A final 'thank you' to the school district's seven publicly elected **Board of Education** members, who serve without compensation and dedicate many hours of their personal time. Please thank a Board member if you have the opportunity - their support of the staff and administrative team is critically important to our collective success!*

VISIT our website at: www.lz95.org

f FOLLOW US on Facebook at: LZDistrict95

✂ FOLLOW US on X at: @LZDistrict95, @GalltKelley

📷 FOLLOW US on Instagram at: LZDistrict95



Doug Goldberg PRESIDENT **Eileen Maloney** VICE-PRESIDENT **Lisa Warren** SECRETARY **Natashia Dannegger** **Peter Etienne** **Mark Haave** **Kelly Pinter**

Contact the Lake Zurich Community Unit School District 95 Board of Education at: BoardMembers@lz95.org