



February 18, 2025

Presentations/Recognitions

Recognition of Spelling Bee Champions and District 62 Education Foundation Update

The district recognized the winners of the first-ever District 62 Education Foundation Spelling Bee that was held in November at the Des Plaines Theater. More than 30 students from across the district participated. Students were recognized in three different categories, of which two ended up in a tie!

- Third/Fourth grade level: Isaias Bartolo, a 3rd grade, Cumberland and Emin Nurke a 3rd grade, Central.
- Fifth/Sixth grade level: Luke Skarbek, a 6th grade, Iroquois.
- Seventh/Eighth grade level: Lance Hagad a 7th grade, Chippewa and Mahi Shah, 7th grade, Chippewa.

Special recognition went to Luke Skarbek from ICS who won by spelling the word “decibels”.

Following student recognition, District 62 Education Foundation President Betty Murphy provided an update from the Foundation regarding their work to support the children of District 62. This past year, the Foundation gave out over 42 grants to staff. The Foundation Board is made up of parents, community business members, retired District 62 staff as well as current District 62 staff. Mrs. Murphy acknowledged the loss of Maxine Hubbard who was a beloved member of the District 62 community and Foundation. Mrs. Hubbard devoted her life to supporting the children of District 62 and will be deeply missed. Mrs. Murphy announced two upcoming events that include a Pizza Wars event on February 23 and a Trivia Night on March 14. To register, click [here](#).



District 62 Board of Education

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Vice President

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Tina Garrett
Member

Gene Haring
Member

Beth Morley
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Member

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Student Learning and Support Services Update

Review of Proposed 2025/2026 Staffing

The administrative staff annually reviews district programming needs and projected enrollment for the upcoming school year. The expected outcome from this review is to make a staffing recommendation to the Board of Education for the new school year. During the month of January, the administration began the staffing plan process.

The comprehensive staffing process described above allows administration to effectively staff for students' instructional and social emotional needs.

At this time the administration recommends an increase of six total FTE change in order to address the educational needs of students amid an enrollment increase particularly in our multilingual (ML) student population and programmatic shifts in ML and Special Education throughout the district, as well as potential changes in administrative structures to more effectively and efficiently meet student and staff needs

The staffing plan is based on current student enrollment projections and needs. As consistent with past practice, dollars will be budgeted for teacher and paraprofessional salaries in the event there is a need for additional positions. In the spring, the administration will be reviewing student assessment data to assist in refining staffing assignments. In addition, special education and ML staffing needs are driven by annual student reviews and student enrollment changes. The administration may need to make staffing changes as these reviews are completed. The administration will continue to collect data and evaluate staffing needs for the March staffing plan. The approval of any additional positions would require Board of Education action through the personnel report. As programmatic and student needs evolve, the administration will refine the staffing needs and communicate those changes to the Board of Education.

Review of Budget Assumptions

As in past years, the Administration shares with the Board of Education the tentative budget assumptions that will be used to develop the budget for the next fiscal year. School district budget assumptions concern one of four categories: revenue, expenditure, enrollment and staffing.

Enrollment: It appears that total enrollment will be up slightly over this year with our new arrival students. However, overall enrollment is down from ten years ago.

District 62 Administration

Dr. Michael Amadei

Superintendent of Schools

Mark Bertolozzi, Assistant

Superintendent of Business Services

Kathleen Kelly Colgan, Assistant

Superintendent for Human Resources

Amy Cengel, Assistant

Superintendent for Instructional Services

Dr. Ramona DeCristofaro

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

Adam Denenberg,

Chief Technology Officer

Jennifer Tempest Bova, Director

of Community Relations

Colin Baer, Director of Social

Emotional Learning

Dr. Julie Fogarty,

Director of Curriculum

Elizabeth Juskiewicz, Director of

Multilingual Programs

Heidi Rudy, Director of Student

Services

Michael Vilendrer, Director

of Operations, Maintenance and Transportation

Christina Bowman,

Curriculum Coordinator and Data Specialist

Anel Escamilla, Multilingual Coordinator

Electra Giannakopoulos,

Multilingual Coordinator

Karina Paul, Multilingual

Coordinator

Erica Tae, Multilingual Coordinator

Jill Dzik, Student Services

Coordinator

Benjamin Keele, Student Services

Coordinator

Angela Riggio, Student Services

Coordinator

Brandon Schaefer, Student

Services Coordinator

Katerina Vasselopoulos, Student

Services Coordinator

Staffing: An overall increase 6.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions are being recommended at this time. However, the staffing needs may change once spring assessments are analyzed and registrations have been collected.

The Pension Cost Shift & Property Tax “Freeze”: A major factor influencing the FY2026 budget, and the budgets in later years, is the possibility of a tax levy freeze and a pension cost shift. The general consensus is that a pension cost shift is unlikely to occur in the next two years, however, there is a good chance one will be gradually implemented in later years. The state may also try to pass a tax levy freeze to offset other tax increases. While the levy freeze and pension cost shift are unlikely to occur in the next two years, the chance of those proposals passing legislatively increases in the longer-term.

Approval of Contract for Construction Management Services

Over the last several months, the administration has been working on securing construction management services for the district. All of the requirements of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process as required by state law for architectural services were followed. After selecting a group of firms to be interviewed from the ten valid submissions and then ranking each firm, Pepper Construction was the firm ranked first. Pepper has already been meeting with the district on moving forward with Full Day Kindergarten and related improvements.

Consent Agenda

Proposed 2025-2026 Calendars for 10-month and Iroquois Community School

The Board of Education approved the 2025-2026 school calendars for our 10-month schools and Iroquois Community School. Below are key dates for the 2025-2026 school year:

10-month Schools

Beginning of the School Year: First day of student attendance, grades 1-8 on August 21, 2025. Preschool and kindergarten on August 22, 2025

Fall Break: November 24 through 28, 2025

Winter Break: December 22, 2025 through January 2, 2026

Spring Break: March 23, 2026 through March 27, 2026

End of the School Year: June 4, 2026 (no emergency days used)

Iroquois Community School

Beginning of the School Year: First day of student attendance, grades 1-8 on July 16, 2025 and kindergarten on July 17, 2025

Intersession: September 15, 2025 through October 3, 2025

Fall break: November 26 through 28, 2025

Intersession: December 15, 2025 through December 19, 2025

Winter Break: December 22, 2025 through January 2, 2026

Spring Break: March 23, 2026 through March 27, 2026

Intersession: March 30 through April 10, 2026

End of the School Year: June 4, 2026 (no emergency days used)

District 62 Emergency Days

- January 5, 2026, May 8, 2026, June 5, 2026 and June 8, 2026
- June 9, 2026 (Emergency Day/Records Day)

Communications

Board of Education

Board Member Duckmann reminded the Board of upcoming professional development opportunities for the Board. Board Member Haring shared that he had the pleasure of partnering with the Des Plaines History Center to bring the Treasure Trunk Show to North Elementary School.

Superintendent

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Amadei shared that February 18 was Institute Day that began with keynote speaker Dr. Doug Bolton who addressed all staff. The impact of the presentation was profound as Dr. Bolton focused on supporting students through trauma. Dr. Amadei also reflected on the winter weather on February 11 and the time spent analyzing the decision to keep schools open. In conclusion, Dr. Amadei shared this month's [D62Story](#) highlighting the Newcomer program at Chippewa Middle School.



Dashboard: District Financial Profile 2020-2024

The district has maintained recognition status for the past 19 years. With the debt retirement in FY2020, the percentage of long-term debt capacity increased enough to give District 62 a perfect 4.0 Financial Profile Score. The district should be able to maintain this score for many years provided that it reduces expenses presently paid for by short-term federal funding. The district's strong financial position is the result of years of prudent financial management. To view a copy of the dashboard report, [click here](#).