



Superintendent Message

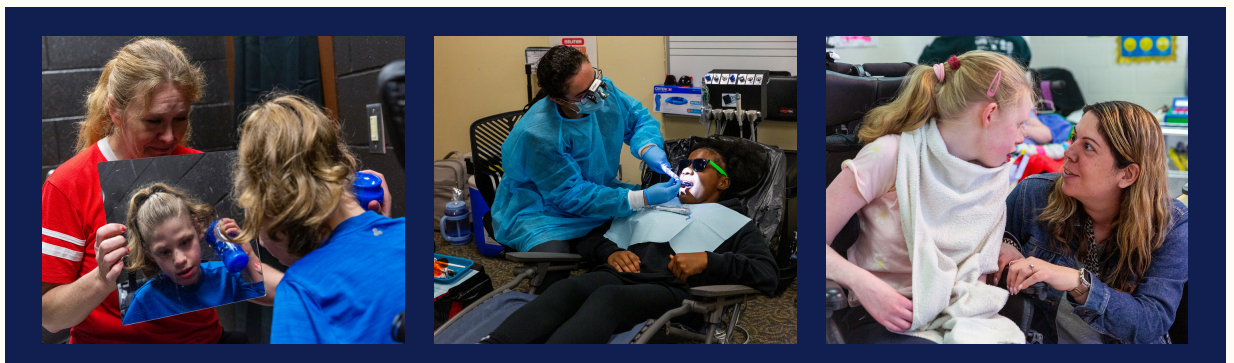
### Building the Bridge Forward

This is such an exciting and promising time of change as we continue to work on smooth transitions of SEDOL leadership. The SEDOL Leadership team is working closely with Dr. Jennifer Thomas, our incoming SEDOL Superintendent, and Mr. Dave Shepherd, incoming CSBO. Bridging several discussions and events with incoming leaders will enhance continuity for future planning through a streamlined approach. Dr. Thomas and Mr. Shepard are attending Board meetings and leadership discussions, which will strengthen our bridge-building focus during the transition and best prepare SEDOL for a well-articulated plan for the future.

At April's Executive Board meeting, the Board approved additional days for the 2026-27 school year for the current co-interim CSBOs, Stephen Johns and Becky Allard, to provide additional guidance and support for the many SEDOL business system changes, including the approved tuition restructuring and new state and internal processes. An update on SEDOL's tentative budget was also provided, and a follow-up meeting with district leaders included tuition costs and member district budget projections.

SEDOL has also been busy interviewing and hiring leaders for several key open program leadership roles. We have been thrilled to have such talented and passionate candidates interested in roles and committees of program staff engaged in the process. Laremont School's new principal will be Mrs. Traci Strieter, who returns to SEDOL in a role that brings her experience as a principal and a special educator full circle. Lynsea Volbrecht is joining the Fairhaven leadership duo as the Assistant Principal.

As we celebrate Staff Appreciation week, we are in awe of the tireless efforts of an incredible SEDOL staff, the love, care and talents of our team is evident in everything SEDOL staff does and whatever the role, whatever the situations are - "bringing your best self to do what's best for students" is the purpose of every day and the positive impact of that purpose shows. We are so fortunate to work with the best!





Student Recognition

### April STAR Student

We want to give a massive round of applause to Kellen for being such an incredible team player at the Beachwaver site. Kellen's proactive attitude and dedication are helping our whole crew shine!

Kellen does an amazing job using his communication app to stay connected with his coach, crewmates, and Beachwaver co-workers. Kellen's tech-savvy approach keeps our workflow smooth! He is a true warehouse "MVP," always ready to jump in and do whatever is needed.

Kellen's impact is inspiring the rest of the team! Several staff members have been so moved by these positive interactions that they've asked the site coach to teach them a few signs to further enhance their communication and connection with one another.

Thank you, Kellen, for your hard work and for making our job site a more inclusive, collaborative place to be!



Staff Recognition

### Employee of the Month: Ashley Merkel

Ashley consistently puts students at the center of everything she does, ensuring each learner feels supported, challenged, and inspired. Her passion for education shines through in the engaging, thoughtful experiences she creates to meet the diverse needs of her classroom.

Beyond her work with students, Ashley is an invaluable member of our staff community. She readily shares ideas, supports colleagues, and fosters a collaborative, positive environment. Her openness and encouragement make her a trusted resource for others.

Ashley is also a leader in innovation, continuously exploring new strategies and integrating technology to enhance instruction. Her commitment to growth extends beyond the classroom through her active involvement in committees and school initiatives.

Congratulations, Ashley, on this well-deserved recognition.





## Board Meeting Highlights

Want to stay updated with the decisions of SEDOL's Governing and Executive Boards? Keep track of everything with meeting summaries on our website.

[Click here for more....](#)

CIP Program Highlights

### Individualized Education Program Manuals

We are thrilled to share an exciting milestone in our journey toward academic and operational excellence! As part of CIP Goal 3: Advancing High Standards and Expectations, SEDOL is launching a comprehensive IEP Manual—a game-changing resource designed to support our incredible staff and students.

This manual serves as a single, go-to location for staff guidance when developing IEP's for each student. It provides crystal-clear clarity on compliance requirements and helps our teams understand how every component of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) works together to support student growth.

#### A Collaborative, Data-Driven Process

This wasn't just a project—it was a collaboration! The SEDOL team worked closely with:

- **ISBE Representatives** to align with the latest state guidance.
- **Member District Partners** to ensure a shared perspective.
- **Legal Experts** to reflect current best practices.

We are looking forward to launching this resource soon!



SEDOL Foundation

### Pucks for Autism



We need more volunteers to support this important cause! Pucks for Autism is an adult hockey tournament with all the proceeds benefitting programming for children and young adults with Autism. Volunteers are needed to keep score and run the clock for a three-hour shift. No prior experience is necessary, and it's really easy and fun.

Just [click on this link](#) to select a time/shift and location that works for you

Questions? Contact Ann Subry at [asubry@sedol.us](mailto:asubry@sedol.us)

## Upcoming Events

Please click the event title to view it's flyer...

Unified Sports Day @ *Laremont*

Prom @ *Fairhaven*

Parent University

Cop on a Roof

(Dunkin' Donuts in Third Lake & Vernon Hills)

Promotion/Graduation @ *Cyd Lash*

Transition Recognition

Promotion/Graduation @ *Laremont*

Retirement Ceremony @ *GLS Community Room*

DHH High School Graduation @ *Grayslake North*

Promotion/Graduation @ *Fairhaven*

DHH 8<sup>th</sup> grade Graduation @ *Vernon Hills HS*

Fri., May 8<sup>th</sup> All Day

Fri., May 8<sup>th</sup>, from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Thur., May 14<sup>th</sup>, starting at 6:30 p.m.

Fri., May 15<sup>th</sup>, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Fri., May 15<sup>th</sup>, starting at 10 a.m.

Wed., May 20<sup>th</sup>, from 6 to 7 p.m.

Wed., May 20<sup>th</sup>, starting at 9:30 a.m.

Thur., May 21<sup>st</sup>, starting at 4 p.m.

Thur., May 21<sup>st</sup>, starting at 7 p.m.

Fri., May 22<sup>nd</sup>, starting at 1 p.m.

Fri., May 29<sup>th</sup>, starting at 6 p.m.

