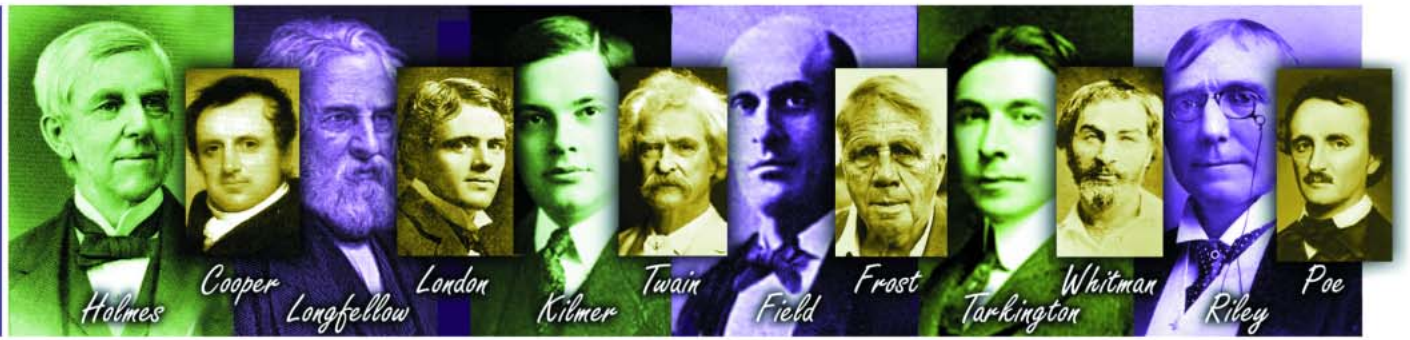


THE DISTRICT 21 Author



Enhancing Community Partnership through Dialog

The Newsletter of School District 21

Summer 2007

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Message from the Superintendent

Summer is traditionally a time of transition in education, and in this issue we focus on welcoming new staff to the District 21 team and extending heartfelt thanks and best wishes to those who are moving on.

Retiring administrators and teachers have earned their community's gratitude. Their dedication to the children of District 21 is something they can be very proud of. They have given of their time and lives most generously to the school district, and we all appreciate it.

Ellen Clark made her farewells at the May Board of Education meeting after 12 years of service on the board, including the last four as president. Ellen has helped guide District 21 through two successful referendums, redrawing of the district boundaries, a superintendent search, countless administrative and staff changes, several union contract negotiations and twelve student graduations.

When Ellen began, her twins, who are ready to start their freshman year at Wheeling High

School, were just three. Her oldest son, who was in 5th grade, has now graduated from college. We wish Ellen well as she continues her career as an educator at the high school level. Thank you, Ellen, for your many contributions.

Bill Harrison will be stepping up to the position of Board of Education President. Bill has demonstrated great dedication to District 21 and has committed himself to understanding the responsibilities of board president. He is well prepared to lead the board through its coming challenges.

Staci Allan, who joined the Board in May, will be a great addition. Staci contributed to the re-drawing of District boundaries, and has since worked to help families who need additional services. She coordinated the Winter Coat Drive and secured donations from local businesses to aid the Family Learning Program.

District Earns United Way Gold Award

District 21 was honored May 18 by the Northwest Suburban United Way at their annual community celebration in the Chicago Hilton ballroom – receiving the Gold Award as the top educational campaign.

Every year, the employees of District 21 contribute to the Northwest Suburban United Way through payroll deduction or checks. All of the buildings and administration contribute together. This year, District 21 staff raised \$40,543.

“Over the past several years, the District total has gone up due to the concern and generosity of all our employees,” said Lavonne Ellis, retiring Assistant Superintendent for Support Services.”

“I visit each building at the beginning of the school year to talk about the importance of giving to help families less fortunate than we are, and I have been so thrilled at the dramatic increase in

donations,” said Ellis, who plans to volunteer for United Way after retirement. “Our staff members are generous and caring, and always willing to come forward to help those in need, both within the school walls and beyond.”

Groups who benefit from the District 21 donations include: OMNI Youth Services, Shelter Inc. for homeless children, CEDA Northwest for emergency housing, Lifespan for domestic abuse victims, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, Jewish Federation, The Bridge for substance abuse and prevention, Clearbrook Center, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

“Our social workers and nurses are among those who see first hand the benefits of how these agencies help the children,” Ellis said. “It’s very heartwarming to see how this can make a difference in the lives of our children and families.”

“Our staff members are generous and caring... both within the school walls and beyond.”





Front: Gheorghe Trifon, Director of Operations
Back Row: Dave Rossow, Lead Man; Randy Wildenhain, Custodian Supervisor; Ed Locke, Maintenance Supervisor

Maintaining the Educational Environment

District 21's maintenance and custodial staff works behind the scenes every day. Their work is largely unseen, but their efforts make the educational environment possible. Day-to-day operations in our schools run smoothly thanks to Operations Director Gheorghe Trifon and his staff. They make sure the lights go on, the temperature is controlled, and things are running smoothly.

"This department is a reflection of Gheorghe's personality and background," said Daniel Schuler, Assistant Superintendent for Planning. "They always look to do quality work, and they always look to do it at the best possible price. This is especially valuable because money that does not go into maintenance of facilities can be used for more direct educational goals."

"It's challenging, and I like it," said Trifon. "Our part is indirect, but we support the educational process by providing a safe and secure environment. We try to keep on top of technology and provide the safest learning environment to help children achieve the most knowledge that they can."

Ten days before Cooper Middle School's spring musical was scheduled, the stage lights stopped working. "I left Gheorghe a voice-

mail," said Cooper Principal Jason Klein. "By 6:30 a.m. the next day, Karl was in action. Also, Gheorghe spent a few hours with me working on the lockers. His attention-to-detail and willingness to give of his time resulted in the creation of a locker numbering scheme that will help many future sixth grade students (and their parents) along with secretaries, administrators and teachers."

Additionally, the district received a letter from the building inspector with the Suburban Cook County Regional Office of Education. Gheorghe was commended for his cooperation and open dialogue. Through his efforts, the district was recognized for schools that are exceptionally clean and safe with all required certificates and paperwork in impeccable condition.

"We try to correct situations before they get out of hand," Trifon said. "We have a wonderful crew of dedicated maintenance and custodians who take pride in their job, and if they see an unsafe situation, they report it right away. They are my eyes and ears in the buildings. They make sure everything is working smoothly."

Trifon is looking forward to a summer of getting the buildings ready for the next school year.

We have a wonderful crew of dedicated custodians who take pride in their job



New Tools for Teachers and Parents

MAP Findings Put into Action

District 21's Professional Learning Community has spent the past year using a new tool from Northwest Evaluation Association called Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) to measure student achievement. MAP is a computer-based test that finds the level where each student is learning.

"We have developed reading and math goals," explained Dr. Kate Hyland, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Learning. "With the MAP results, we now have baseline data that will tell us what is working and what is not. This summer we will be spending time analyzing the data to learn what it can tell us."

"The implementation of MAP has been a big initiative this year," Hyland said. "We will be providing teachers with professional development so they know how to access and use this data to inform their instruction. Using MAP data will be central to helping grade level teams work together to ensure that the needs of children are met. Professional development remains important in the district, whether training teachers in the use of MAP, effective teaming, reading and math strategies,

or the myriad of other school and/or district initiatives."

A New Look for Report Cards

The District will be piloting a new report card in grades 3-5 next year. "We have identified Power Standards that we feel are essential for all kids to know and be able to do," said Dr. Kate Hyland.

These standards will help teachers know where to put their efforts with each child and where the focus should be. These standards will be reflected in the new report cards.

A report card committee gathered input from administrators, teachers and parents when developing the standards-based report card. The new report card will provide parents with information about their child's growth, progress, and mastery of specific skills.

"Right now, there are many different report cards in the District," Hyland said. "We are working to make the report card reflect our District standards and be consistent from school to school. We are excited about this. It will be a good thing for teachers, kids and parents to have consistency within the District".



Welcome to New Administrators and Promotions on the District 21 Team

Dr. Candace Thompson, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services

Dr. Thompson served as Director of Student Services in Mundelein School District 120 and Student Services Coordinator/Psychologist at Naperville School District 204. She completed her doctorate from Aurora University in 2003. In District 120, she served as the District Testing Accommodation Coordinator and Bilingual/ESL Coordinator. At Indian Prairie School District 204 she implemented the Flexible Service Delivery Model Program (District 21 is currently using this model and training staff to use this model).

Rosemarie Meyer, Assistant Superintendent for Bilingual/ESL Programs

Meyer was originally hired in 1987 as a bilingual teacher aid and in 1991 became a 5th Grade Bilingual Teacher. In 1995 she was appointed as Bilingual Coordinator and in 2002 she became the Director of Bilingual/ESL Programs. She has degrees from Illinois State University, DePaul University, National-Louis University and the University of New Mexico.

Pat McAndrews, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

McAndrews was hired in 1999 as the Accounting Supervisor. In 2003 she was appointed Director of Business. Prior to being hired in District 21, she was the Accountant/Bookkeeper at High School District 21. She completed her Masters Degree in Education and earned her Chief School Business Official certification.

Janelle Hockett, Director of Curriculum and Achievement

Hockett was hired as a 4th grade teacher in 1994. In 2000 she became Mark Twain's Instructional Specialist and then the district Science/Social Studies Coordinator in 2002. She has recently received her master of education de-

gree in administration and supervision from National-Louis University.

Dr. Jason Klein, Director of Technology

Dr. Klein was hired in 1996 as an 8th Grade Science teacher at Jack London Middle School. After a year leave of absence in 1999, he earned his doctorate and was appointed Dean of Students at Cooper Middle School. He became principal at Hawthorne Academy in 2001, Co-Principal of Cooper in 2002 and then Principal at Cooper in 2003 to the present.

Dr. Joe Arduino, Principal of Tarkington School

Dr. Arduino has a strong background in student learning and school leadership. Prior to his appointment, Dr. Arduino served as Principal of Stone Elementary School in Addison District 4 and Principal/Assistant Principal in Carpentersville District 300. He completed his doctorate this past December from Northern Illinois University.

Dr. Maureen Reilly, Principal of Cooper Middle School

Dr. Reilly also has a strong background in student learning and school leadership. She served as Principal of South Middle School in Arlington Heights and as Assistant Principal at Geneva Middle School in Geneva, IL. She completed her doctorate from Loyola University in 2002.

John Stieper, Assistant Principal of Cooper Middle School

Stieper comes to District 21 from Wilmette School District 39 where he served as Director of Technology & Media Services since 2005. He has his Master of Science in Educational Administration from Eastern Illinois University, Master of Library & Information Science from Dominican University-Rosary College in River Forest, IL and his Master of Arts in Liberal Studies from DePaul University. John anticipates completing his doctorate in 2008 from Aurora University.



Celebrating Excellence

District 21 salutes the hard work and efforts of our teachers. In selecting candidates to nominate for Celebrating Excellence, we gather feedback from all staff members to highlight members of the District Team who represent the values of our Professional Learning Communities. Twice each year the principals nominate a staff member or team to be recognized at a Board meeting, given a pin of excellence and acknowledged at their school's staff meeting.

Awards for the 2006/2007 School Year:

Cooper Middle School:

Bob Gurney, Math Resource Teacher
Christine Hickey, Sara Massier and Jennifer Wong, Algebra Proficiency Team

Field Elementary School:

Lisa Porter, Learning Coach
Laurie Bussau and Gordana Bajanski, ELL Teachers

Frost Elementary School:

Nelson Tapias and Lisa Zimmerman, 2nd Grade Bilingual Teachers
Vickie Hallman, Margy Keefe, Kim Miller, Patty Puetz, Jennifer Romano and Michelle Sidman, 4th Grade Team

Holmes Middle School:

Sue Stein, 8th Grade Teacher
Amy Eisen, Special Education Teacher

London Middle School:

Laura Levine, Bilingual Assistant/Community Liaison
Jeff Brusso, 6th Grade Bilingual Teacher

Kilmer Elementary School:

Maria Fernandez, 2nd Grade Bilingual Teacher
Jan Ehas, 1st Grade Teacher

Longfellow Elementary School:

Kelly Kruk, Julie Long and Jessica Roemer, 4th Grade Team
Catherine Joy, Learning Coach

Poe Elementary School:

Pam Argyris and Judy Kellen, 3rd Grade Teachers
Dara Bengelsdorf, Music Teacher

Riley Elementary School:

Susan Johnson, Developmental Kindergarten Teacher
Susie Layton, Physical Education Teacher

Tarkington Elementary School:

Ann Libit, 4th Grade Teacher
Chris Lapetino, 4th Grade Teacher

Twain Elementary School:

Jennifer Bercovitz and Michelle Salvetti, ELL Teachers
Phyllis Schneider, Special Education Teacher Assistant

Whitman Elementary School:

Gloria Porras, Grade 1 CLC Bilingual Teacher
Fran Evens, Music Teacher



Cooper Middle School Hosts Summer Wonders

This summer, Cooper Middle School will host Summer Wonders, a program created by The Center for Gifted of National-Louis University, which provides creative, exciting programs for bright and talented children entering kindergarten to 6th grades.

"We are glad to partner with The Center for the Gifted," said Kara Coglianese, Director of the District Gifted and Talented Education program (GATE). The Center's director, Joan Smutny, and I have interacted through the Illinois Association for Gifted Children (IAGC). They were looking for a host site, and we think this will be an excellent way to extend gifted classes for our students throughout the summer."

The program will be open to students from other districts as well. It will provide a great opportunity for District 21 students to extend their learning by working with other gifted and talented students in a more informal summer environment, explore topics they may not have been exposed to in the regular classroom and dig

deep into creative activities.

"It's always exciting to start at a new site. I think Cooper Middle School will be a splendid location," said Smutny. "It's a beautiful building. We are privileged to be in Wheeling. It's geographically very well located."

Three sessions will be offered: June 18-29, July 2-13 and July 16-27.

Classes range from The Math and Science of Building and Medieval Mania for kindergarten and 1st graders to Musical Theater and Roller Coaster Physics for 2nd to 6th graders.

Founded in 1983, the Center for Gifted serves children who express capacity for high performance in diverse areas of intelligence. Their programs support gifted students through creative strategies, materials and curricula that enhance individual talents and provide creative opportunities for student growth. Check out their website at info@centerforgifted.org or call 847 901-0173 for more information.



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Rosemarie Meyer, *Asst. Supt./Bilingual & ESL Programs*
Dr. Candace Thompson, *Asst. Supt./Support Services*
Daniel Schuler, *Asst. Supt./Planning*

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Frost Elementary School
Holmes Middle School
Kilmer Elementary School
London Middle School
Longfellow Elementary School
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Tarkington Elementary School
Twain Elementary School
Whitman Elementary School
Hawthorne Early Childhood Center

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**2006-2007
Donations to District 21
Programs**

Thanks to the following businesses for donating to the Family Learning Program:

Potbelly Sandwich Works,
1520 E. Lake Cook Road, Wheeling
(\$1,450)

Rotary Club of Wheeling
(\$500.00)

Smith Family Construction,
40 Prairie Park Drive, Wheeling
(\$1,800)

Gary Levitas, Northfield Properties
(\$1,000)

Thank you to the Just Pass It Foundation in memory of former student, Jon-Paul Calandra:

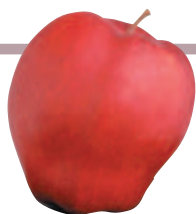
\$2,000 to Holmes Middle School

\$500 to Hawthorne Preschool Program

\$2,000 to Field School in memory of teacher, John Witucke

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*District 21 is a great place
to make friends and to
grow professionally*



Best Wishes to Retiring Staff

The end of a school year always brings its share of farewells. This summer the District 21 family extends best wishes to retiring staff who have helped give our district its students-first, cutting-edge direction.

Dr. Char Cieply, Assistant Superintendent for Special Projects

Dr. Cieply started in District 21 as a first grade teacher in 1974. She served as a reading specialist in several district schools and as district-wide Director of Language Arts. "I've loved all of my positions," Dr. Cieply says. "The reason people stay in District 21 is because of the incredible staff development available here. Working with committees on curriculum design gives staff a voice in our work and an incredible opportunity to learn at all times. We are always on the cutting edge. I've been blessed to work in this district with knowledgeable people, good-hearted people – people with integrity."

Kris Knudsen, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources

"My first teaching assignment was on the primary team at Hawthorne Elementary School," says Knudsen. "From my first day at Hawthorne, I have lived a dream come true. I have met wonderful children, dedicated parents, and generous colleagues who have all played a major role in my professional and personal development. I have been a classroom teacher, a reading specialist, a principal and more recently a central office administrator. In each role, I relished the opportunity to keep learning and to witness the district's mission to not leave anyone behind. I can't thank the District 21 Community enough for the opportunity to serve."

Lavonne Ellis, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services

"One thing that always impressed me about District 21 is the longevity of the staff," Ellis says. "It's been a great place to make friends and to grow professionally. We have always been ahead of the curve in terms of new initiatives, instructional strategies and research-based practices. Madeline Hunter's principles on classroom instruction and management, Brain Research, Special Education Inclusion, the Professional Learning Community and the increased emphasis on School Safety have all driven our choices over the past several decades. However,

through all the challenges and changes, District 21 truly has put children first, and I have been proud to be a member of this outstanding school community".

John Patti, Principal of Tarkington Elementary School

Patti began as a fourth-grade teacher at Mark Twain School in 1975. He transferred to Eugene Field in 1980 where he was assistant to the principal, and in 2000 he became principal at Tarkington. "I've been very fortunate to spend 32 years in this district," he says. "I can't say enough about the tremendous administrators and teachers here. I've seen a lot of changes. We are more informed today. We know more about how kids learn, and how teachers can teach best to reach all kids. We differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the individual child. I've watched teachers become better prepared, particularly through our internship program."

Larry Cline, Director of Technology

Cline has been Director of Technology since 1995 after serving as a principal and a teacher in the district. "You always keep the kids first," says Cline. "District 21 educators have their heart and soul in doing what's best for their students. Educationally, the internet has been huge, with all the good and bad that goes along with that. I'm proud of implementing the building-wide networks in each school. We've seen the advent of computer student file servers where students and staff can store their work. Seeing the teachers take this technology and use it for the benefit of the students has been really gratifying."

Retirees for 2006/07 include:

Administration Center: Char Cieply, Larry Cline, Lavonne Ellis, Kris Knudsen, Jan Schultz, Judy Sprehe, and Don Werneske; Cooper Middle School: Hugh Brady, Mary Kay Gabrielsen, and Leslie Spencer; Field School: Joan Weber; Hawthorne/Discovery Center: Karen Greenfield; Holmes Middle School: Paul Wagner and Barb White; London Middle School: Jan Robinson; Longfellow School: Carol Crane; Poe School: Pat Gradt, Carl Ripley, and Shay Storm; Riley School: Susie Layton; Tarkington School: Steve Fisher, Pat Jagielo, and John Patti; and Twain School: Phyllis Schneider.

We wish all our retirees best wishes.