

District 34: "Smart with Heart"

Focus on SEL Brings District Closer to Achieving Mission

Teachers and staff in Glenview District 34 continue to support the growth of the whole child through promoting instruction and experiences that can help students become "smart with heart." This coming school year, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in Glenview will move to center stage in a more comprehensive and targeted direction.

Throughout the district, at least two classrooms at every grade level, and two teams per middle school, will participate in the implementation of the Second Step Social Skills Program, which provides direct instruction to students in self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship skills. These are essential for academic and life success and the key components of SEL.

In addition, each building in the district is in the process of forming a Safe and Civil Schools Foundations Team. Those on the team help each building focus on positive behavior supports so that students learn expected behaviors and receive reinforcement for displaying what is expected as well as consequences when they don't, explained Terry Sofianos, executive director of student services.

A third component of the district's focus on SEL will be the Student Experience Survey, an anonymous survey for students in grades 4-8 which measures student perception in the areas of hope, engagement, belonging, and classroom management. It provides teachers with practical tools and resources for addressing student needs in these areas.

However, this is only the beginning to this exciting chapter for District 34. The entire SEL Curriculum will be rolled out over a period of 3-5 years. The curriculum was created by a collaborative committee of teachers and administrators, with feedback from parents, which examined research and



District 34 has adopted and is in the process of implementing its first social emotional curriculum. The Curriculum seeks to build self-awareness, social awareness and relationship skills.

best practices for SEL. Ongoing professional development for teachers as well as the formation of a Parent Advisory Committee will continue to provide sustainable support for the implementation of the curriculum.

"By directly addressing the state mandated learning standards for SEL, the D34 SEL curriculum will promote each child's ability to fulfill the district's mission which is, "To empower children to be self-directed learners and responsible decision makers." Sofianos said.

Work Underway on Recommendations from Community Engagement

Last fall, District 34 teamed up with a group of local residents to launch an extensive community engagement program – *34Next: Community Views on Glenview 34 Schools*. The purpose of the program was for District 34 to gain a deeper understanding of the community’s values and help further shape the district’s priorities for its future.

Following four engagement sessions and much community feedback, a set of five recommendations were presented to the Board of Education in December 2014 and finalized in February 2015. A review of these recommendations and information on how they are being addressed is listed below. As work continues, this will again be shared with the local community.

Recommendation #1

Develop an effective model of communication on potential program changes that clearly explains the educational and financial impacts. The Board must work to confirm the community’s understanding. This type of high-level communication should be proactive in nature, allowing time for the community to respond appropriately, and be translated into other languages. Examples of when this model of communication would be used include: explaining the financial impacts of lowering class size, highlighting changes in technology, or providing information on pending legislation that would have a significant impact on district finances.

Progress on Recommendation #1

A Communications Plan was presented to the Board of Education in August. This plan outlines several strategies meant to improve the effectiveness of all district communication. Meanwhile, two specific examples of program changes that followed the model above (i.e., educational and financial impact considerations) included the social

emotional curriculum and the Response to Intervention recommendations to the Board. As these programs launch and mature, ongoing efforts to gauge community understanding will be implemented (i.e., parent and community surveys, etc.). This school year, two other efforts will utilize the recommended communication model, as recommended changes are considered: Kindergarten Program Study and the System Supported Collaboration Time for Teacher Professional Growth. Finally, a third example of when this recommended communication model has been used was for the Strategic Plan Review Process, when the educational need/impact and financial impact were



District 34 is looking to develop a balanced Comprehensive Assessment System. Information about all district assessments is available at glenview34.org.

communicated, in relation to its proposed recommendations. Assuredly, more work lies ahead for fully implementing Recommendation #1, but its influence on district thinking and work has been immediate.

Recommendation #2

Strengthen the school community’s understanding of the district’s Strategic Plan, and how testing and assessment support that plan. This is especially important given that the landscape of testing and assessments is changing, and we need to ensure there is a balance with other measurements relating to Whole Child Education. There should also be an emphasis on providing information on when testing will take place, the purpose and value of each test, and how the test results will be utilized.

Progress on Recommendation #2

Presently, there is information available on the district website about the current use of district-wide assessments, when they take place, and for what purposes the resulting information is used. This is an initial effort to realize the desired outcomes expressed in Recommendation #2, with more work ahead. Also, for the current school year, the district has an assessment indicator that states, “By June 2016, a balanced comprehensive assessment system will be approved by EDCO.” The work for this indicator will lead to District 34 having a clearly defined system of assessments that includes a balance of the following types: Universal Screeners, Assessments that Inform Instruction, Student



District 34 is currently conducting a kindergarten program study which looks at whether there is an educational need to make changes to the program and the feasibility of those changes.

Accountability Measures, and Program Evaluation Measures. More information will be shared regarding the work and outcomes of this, as it becomes available.

Recommendation #3

Conduct an extensive study on the educational need/value and feasibility of full-day kindergarten. The study should look into the educational value of full-day kindergarten and facility constraints and include a comprehensive cost/benefit analysis.

Progress on Recommendation #3

The Kindergarten Program Study, which began last school year, has continued to meet throughout the summer and fall. The purpose of this study is to

identify gaps between the district's current kindergarten program and any outstanding, unmet school-community needs, and, if found, how to close that gap. The study is being conducted by a team of administrators and teachers and will include input/feedback from our parent community. The committee's preliminary results will be presented to the Board in November.

Recommendation #4

Share a comprehensive understanding of the district's philosophy regarding the use of technology in the educational process with the school community. Continue providing proper instructional technology support to the staff through professional development.

Progress on Recommendation #4

As a component to the 2015–16-DALFA Plan, the essence of this recommendation will be addressed by the district. DALFA, which is the technology advisory board to the district, will present this plan to the Board in the fall.

Recommendation #5

Continue celebrating the diversity of the D34 community through measures meant to reach, communicate with, and engage all populations.

Progress on Recommendation #5

A more comprehensive translation document program has been developed and will be implemented over the next two years that ensures all vital documents

are translated into the languages of the district's largest bilingual groups. By providing all critical documents in these home languages, it will contribute toward stronger communication and more possibilities for engagement. The district also modified its residency process to provide better support to homeless families. Moving forward, the administration is looking into developing a new partnership with Glenbrook Hospital to provide wellness services to low-income students. Additionally, a Korean bilingual program has started in the district this year. To be sure, more work will be done, but advances have been made already related to broadening and extending our reach to all populations.

Looking for more information about District 34?

Want to be better connected with news in District 34 schools?

The district looks forward to better connecting with all members in the community through electronic newsletters and social media accounts.

Each month, the district distributes a monthly e-newsletter that includes important news, reminders of upcoming events, highlights of exciting learning opportunities at its schools and more. Additionally, after every Board of Education meeting, the district now sends out a newsletter of important highlights of that meeting. The public is encouraged to please sign-up for these important pieces of communication by visiting glenview34.org and clicking "Subscribe to 34 E-News."

You can also visit us on Facebook by searching for Glenview School District 34 or on Twitter at [Glenview34](https://twitter.com/Glenview34).

Want to connect more directly? Please e-mail news@glenview34.org.

Board Approves 2015-16 Budget



The 2015-16 budget was approved by the Glenview District 34 Board of Education during its meeting on September 21 following a public hearing. The district is projecting \$67 million in operating expenditures and \$67.2 million in operating revenues.

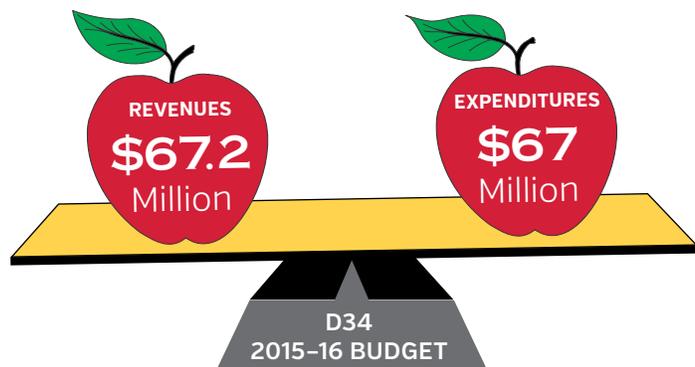
The budget was first presented to the Board in May. Since then, some refinements were made such as updates to state funding, health insurance costs, and special education transportation costs. Additionally, adjustments were made to both revenues and expenses to support the high needs facility projects that will be completed during summer of 2016.

The budget is a reflection of the district priorities, which are captured in its Strategic Plan – a roadmap that guides the district toward its mission, "To empower students to be self-directed learners and responsible decision-makers."

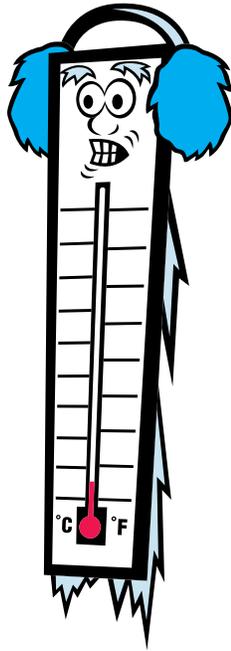
Operating expenditures were based on several factors such as staffing allocation amounts approved by the Board, the terms of existing union contracts, health benefit costs and planned capital projects. Operating revenues were based on factors such as the estimated 2015 tax levy extension, Board approved student fees, flat federal aid and a minimal increase in General State Aid.

A \$43.8 million fund balance in the operating fund, or roughly 65.4 percent of expenditures, is projected following the 2015-16 fiscal year. While District 34 Board policy stipulates maintaining at least a 30% fund balance, the uncertain outlook for educational funding in Illinois warrants additional measures for responsible stewardship of the community's resources. Having a reasonable fund balance also is important to support certain one-time expenditures, such as safety and security improvements.

With that said, the goal is to not to increase the fund balance, but maintain responsible reserves. Over the last two fiscal years, the district's fund balance as a percentage of expenditures has decreased and is projected to further decrease by the end of the current fiscal year.



New Plan in Place for Emergency Make-up Days



Beginning next school year, District 34 will follow a contingency plan that outlines how days will be made-up should an emergency school closing occur. This proactive approach is to provide D34 students and staff with an opportunity to plan in advance for how the days will be accounted for later in the school year.



Even that it is unknown how many school closing days could occur, the administration has developed the following response plan.

Two Emergency Days Built into Calendar

Two emergency days have been built into the calendar on January 15, 2016 and April 4, 2016. If no emergency day has occurred prior to either date, then there will be no school on these dates. However, if an emergency day has occurred prior to either date, then school will be in session. Parents are encouraged to plan accordingly for these days to be student attendance days.

If Additional Emergency Days Occur

The first step to make-up emergency days is to utilize the two built in emergency days (January 15 and April 4). However, if more than two emergency days occur, or if an emergency day(s) occurs after April 4, the district would forgive up to two student attendance days and add any additional day(s) beyond that to the end of the school year.

Seeing as though this is a new approach, the district will provide additional reminders as we get closer to when the winter weather season arrives. However, it is important to note that it is expected that the emergency days built into the calendar be considered days when school is in session. Parents are encouraged to plan accordingly for these days to be student attendance days.

Welcome New Administrators and Leaders

District 34 welcomes those new to our district as well as those new to their position!

Tommie Ahrens

Instructional Coach – Science

Jenny Bergeron

Instructional Coach – Math

Denise Hildebrand

Student Service Coordinator – Westbrook & Glen Grove

Patrick Hoeft

Acting Assistant Principal at Springman Middle School

Heather Hopkins

Acting Executive Director of Human Resources

Peggy McCarthy

Acting Student Services Coordinator – Hoffman

Eric Miller

Assistant Superintendent for Business Services /CSBO

Robin Paul

Acting Student Services Coordinator – Henking

Daniel Polonsky

Assistant Principal at Attea Middle School

Steve Ruelli

Director of Operations

Elena Ryan

Teacher on Assignment – Fine Arts & Physical Education

Mary Sue Smith

Acting Principal at Westbrook Elementary School

Allyson Thorne

Acting Principal at Springman Middle School

Maggie Wade

Student Service Coordinator – Lyon & Pleasant Ridge

From the Superintendent

It has long been a value of District 34 to engage in dialogue about how the district can continually serve the community better. For example, just within the last year, we have had several opportunities to engage parents and community members in discussions about topics specific and broad relating to the functioning of our schools.

We had the 34Next Community Engagement sessions last fall, which garnered important community feedback about the direction of our schools and resulted in the recommendations reviewed in this Schoolook. And, recently, we also had transportation forums and math nights to share and gather important information related to each of these more specific issues.

There will continue to be opportunities for community dialogue related to other specific issues such as kindergarten programming and time for teacher learning in the coming months and year. Outside of these specific issues, seeking community feedback is something that is ingrained in our district and exists in many forms such as public hearings at our Board meetings (e.g., annual budgets, school levies, bond sales, etc.), general correspondence to the district/board (board@glenview34.org), and two audience comment periods during each Board meeting.

Inquiry and feedback are critical for the growth and improvement of any individual and organization. We encourage you to take the time to learn about and provide feedback to any issue of interest about our schools and district. We are truly a learning community!

Stay well,



Mike Nicholson
Superintendent



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Chris Northwick	847-404-5703

Email the Board at board@glenview34.org

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*To empower children
to be self-directed learners
and responsible
decision makers.*

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