Cost Containment Efforts Presented to the Board

Recently the Board of Education was presented with a cost containment report regarding the strategies the District has employed since the failed referendums in 2000 and 2001. The Board is closely examining spending as it makes very difficult decisions regarding finances.

The District estimates it has saved approximately $9 million since 2000–01, mainly through steadily increasing class size. While the District believes lower class sizes equate to better education for children, the decision to increase class size is based upon costs.

Prior to the failed tax rate increase referendums, the District had been targeting class size toward the lower end of the range. It now aims for the middle or high end of the class size policy. Current class size policy ranges are: 17–23 students in kindergarten, 20–26 students in 1st–3rd grade, and 22–28 students in 4th–8th grade.

Additional savings have been accomplished through several measures including increasing student fees and renegotiating contracts with outside vendors.

Despite these cost-containment measures, the District is facing financial issues. Without additional funding the financial issues will require significant cuts to programs and/or staffing, resulting in a substantial change in the educational program currently provided to District 34 children. Therefore, the District, Board, and community face a difficult decision to either increase revenues or dismantle the current program.

Community Input

One of the discussion points at the August Board meeting surrounded the creation of the Citizen’s Finance Advisory Committee. The committee was established following failed referendums to provide an outside perspective on finances. This past spring, the committee of community members reported that the District is running efficiently and is spending within the guidelines set by the committee several years ago. However, the committee also reported the District’s deficit spending (see box) is mainly being caused by unfunded and under-funded state and federal mandated programs.

Reserves Decreasing

Along with cost containment measures, one reason the District has been able to maintain its programming is the change in Board of Education policy regarding reserves. The prior policy required the District to maintain at least 50 percent of its yearly budget in fund balances. Since the District receives just two tax payments each year, the reserves are used to cover spending between payments. Under the new policy, the reserve amount required to start a new financial year was reduced to 30 percent. While this has allowed the District to delay the need for additional revenues, it is only a temporary solution.
Parenting Tips Part of
Free Seminar

Stedman Graham Keynote Speaker at Parents in Partnership

In an attempt to assist parents with what is considered the most difficult and important job, District 34 will offer a parenting seminar titled Parents in Partnership on Saturday, October 22.

Stedman Graham, the author of several books including “Teens Can Make It Happen: Nine Steps to Success,” is scheduled as the keynote speaker. He is actively involved in education and has shown a lifelong commitment to youth and community. In 1985, Graham founded a non-profit organization of athletes and other civic leaders committed to developing leadership in underserved youths.

The free conference, which is open to all Glenview residents, offers a series of educational seminars to help parents with parenting strategies and tips. Parents in Partnership will begin at 8:30 a.m. on October 22 at Attea Middle School, 2500 Chestnut Avenue, with a free continental breakfast.

The conference will feature more than 20 seminars offering practical assistance in a wide range of topics for parents of children ages birth through 8th grade. These sessions will be led by education and parenting experts from around the area on topics such as: Positive Parenting Skills, Openness in Parent/Child Relationships, Financing Your Child’s Education, The Joy of Preschool, and Looking Forward to High School.

Participants can attend up to three breakout sessions that are scheduled between 9:45 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Free childcare is available for children three years old and above. The childcare is provided through Wesley Child Care. Pre-registration is required and forms will be available at each school and the District 34 Administration building. The forms will also be posted on the District’s website at www.glenview34.org.

Glenview Education Foundation
Plans to Donate $130,000 this Year

The Glenview Education Foundation (GEF) is a non-profit fundraising organization formed by District 34 parents that supports innovation and quality projects initiated by teachers and staff in order to provide access to leading edge materials, equipment and practices.

The GEF plans this year to donate more than $130,000 to District 34 classrooms in several key areas:

- Curriculum enrichment across all subjects
- Software and technology integration
- Professional development

The GEF is hosting a benefit on Saturday, November 5 at the Kohl Children’s Museum in Glenview. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. You can find out more information about the benefit, how to donate, or how to volunteer by visiting www.gef34.org or e-mailing the foundation at gef34@glenview34.org.
Enrollment Update

The enrollment in District 34 continues to climb with the influx of students from the redevelopments in Glenview as new homes are built and older homes are refurbished across the District.

The District has approximately 4,200 students this year, an increase of 100 students from last year.

Over the past five years, enrollment has climbed by 325 students. In the past 10 years, enrollment has grown by 625 students. Projections call for the District to have 4,500 students by 2007.

The Facilities Committee, which convenes each fall, will be looking closely at the increasing enrollment and will provide a report with recommendations to the Board of Education in January regarding enrollment and facility needs. The committee is made up of administrators, community members and parents. The meetings are open to the public and begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Administration Building unless otherwise noted. The schedule of upcoming meetings is: October 11, October 26 (at Henking), November 15, November 29 and December 8 (if necessary).

Nominations Being Accepted for Citizen’s Finance Advisory Committee Membership

The Finance Advisory Committee, which is led by a group of residents with financial backgrounds, is preparing to continue its work this fall and is accepting applications for membership. The Board of Education provides the committee with initiatives. After research and study, the committee provides a report to the Board and community.

The committee plans to hold 4–5 meetings this fall to address the Board’s charge to investigate additional funding options in the coming years in light of the District’s financial challenges.

If you have a financial background and are interested in serving on the committee, please contact Superintendent Dr. Gerald Hill (847-998-5005 or ghill@glenview34.org).

School Finance Forum Set for October 20

The Glenview League of Women Voters and the District 34 PTA Council will host a forum on school finance from 7:00–9:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 20 in the Attea Middle School Cafeteria, 2500 Chestnut Avenue. Local, state and federal funding will be discussed by District 34 Superintendent Dr. Gerald Hill and District 225 Superintendent Dr. David Hales.

The public is invited to attend and there will be an opportunity for questions from the audience.

DePaul-Glenview Professional Development School Looking for Applicants

Professionals who are aspiring teachers can earn their master’s degree in education through the DePaul-Glenview Professional Development School, formerly titled the Clinical Model Program.

Applicants must have a bachelor’s degree and have worked in a profession outside of teaching. Candidates are put through a rigorous interview process before being accepted.

The three-year program provides a first-year internship where students observe and complete student teaching experiences. Additionally, students are enrolled in DePaul’s master’s degree program and take a full load of classes. After the first year, students function as full-time teachers with the same expectations and standards as all District teachers.

Contact Dr. Roxanne Owens, DePaul University, at rowens@depaul.edu or 773-325-4329 for more information or to apply.
Designing our Preferred Future 
for Students

District 34 has a history of high student performance through collaboration with parents and community, as well as intentionally designed programs and experiences beneficial to students. If we are to continue that quality, we must work together to design a school system equipped to meet the demands of the 21st century. A group of 50 teachers, administrators, School Board members, parents and community members will begin meeting this fall to start another cycle of long range planning that will result in a detailed description of what our preferred future will look like.

The design team will use the best thinking from across the country in developing our plan. One source is the American Association of School Administrators, which proposed the characteristics of schools and districts for the 21st Century that includes:

- All students, supported with adequate funding, have an opportunity for an outstanding education.
- Clear and challenging standards widely understood by students and adults drive high expectations for performance.
- School systems design programs that lead to constantly improving student achievement.
- School facilities provide a safe and secure learning environment.
- Students learn about other cultures, respect and honor diversity, and see the world as an extended neighborhood.
- Schools promote creativity and teamwork at all levels.

Our challenge is to use resources like this and the best thinking of our community to design a powerful vision of a preferred future everyone can embrace—a vision that results in learning for all.

Dr. Gerald Hill, 
Superintendent