

# Board of Education Highlights

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October 10, 2007 – School Service Center

## **Superintendent's Report:**

Dr. Drury recognized two District 200 students for obtaining a perfect score of 36 on their ACT test. Greg Gauthier of Wheaton North High School and Kevin Shallcross of Wheaton Warrenville South High School both attained that tremendous accomplishment.

Greg is the son of Stephen and Barbara Gauthier of Wheaton and in addition to his perfect score, Greg is a National Merit Semifinalist. This past summer, he was named one of only six All American members of the Panasonic Academic Challenge Team Illinois. Greg is also on the U.S. Math Olympian Team, the Wheaton North Scholastic Bowl, and the Falcon Marching Band.

Kevin, the son of Kirk and Karen Shallcross, is a member of the Wheaton Warrenville South High School Student Council. He is a National Merit Semifinalist, plays in the Tiger Marching Band and is Captain of the Drum Line. This fall, he was a member of the Homecoming Court.

Longfellow Elementary School has been identified as a Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education for its high achievement on state tests and its incremental improvement over the last three years. As you may recall, Pleasant Hill Elementary School received a Blue Ribbon Award last year. Two schools, in two years, from the same District is quite an accomplishment and speaks to the quality of dedicated students, teachers, staff, and administrators we have here in District 200. The No Child Left Behind-Blue Ribbon Schools award is one of the most prestigious education awards in the country and distinguishes and honors schools for helping students achieve at very high levels and for making significant progress in closing the achievement gap. The award recognizes schools whose students achieve in the top 10 percent of their state.

Of the 413 nominated schools, only 287 schools were selected for the award nationwide. Of those 287 schools, only 19 are from Illinois.

The awards ceremony will take place in Washington D.C. on November 12 and 13. Ms. Thornburg and a representative of her staff will travel to Washington to receive the award on behalf of Longfellow and District 200. Paul McKinney, who was the principal at Longfellow when the Blue Ribbon application was submitted, will join them in receiving this recognition.

A representative from the U.S. Department of Education will visit Longfellow on Tuesday, October 16 at 1:30 to present the award during an all school assembly.

The Board will move the December 12 meeting to Longfellow to recognize staff and Ms. Thornburg for this exceptional accomplishment.

As a means of extending Board of Education communications, Dr. Drury introduced the practice of having high school students report to the Board at their regular meetings. Christine Ward, from Wheaton North High School and Ali Winberg and Nick Novosad from Wheaton Warrenville South High School reported to the Board about the activities and events

that are occurring at their respective schools. These student reports will be a regular agenda item starting with the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**The Board took the following action:**

The Board approved a three-year agreement with the NTI Group for the Connect-ED service. This automated calling system allows the district to send an unlimited number of phone and email messages to staff and families

The Board of Education approved the construction document plan phase for the new Hubble Middle School project. The construction document phase will allow the architects and construction managers to refine construction drawings and prepare bid documents for the proposed new school. Representatives from Legat Architects and Bovis Lend Lease shared the progress of the project and presented an initial cost estimate of approximately \$50 million for the construction of a new Hubble. This does not include the cost for the land or the anticipated savings from the sale of the current Hubble property.

The Board of Education approved posting of the 2007 levy. A public hearing will be held on November 14, 2007 at Edison Middle School. Although the proposed increase is 9.43%, a review of the last ten years indicates that the actual levy increase has consistently been significantly lower than proposed.

**Discussion:**

Bill Hepworth, from Robert W. Baird, presented the Board with four financing options for consideration for the Hubble project. The options included varying lengths of payback timelines, from 14 to 19 years, as well as different assumption as to the equalized assessed value of the District over the life of the bonds. There were two options that gained the most attention. One would hold the tax rate for debt service at the current 44 cents for the duration of the bonds. The other would raise the debt service rate by 13 or 14 cents for the first few years and then the rate would decline for the remaining years.

The Board will review these options over the next month. A final determination will be made at the November 14 meeting at which time the exact referendum question will be approved along with the exact amount of the project.

**Next Meeting:**

October 24, 2007 at Washington Elementary