

Board of Education Highlights

March 12, 2008 - Pleasant Hill Elementary School

Recognitions & Achievements

Franklin Middle School 7th grade student Greg Becker has been notified by National Geographic Society that he is one of the 100 semifinalists eligible to compete in the 2008 Illinois Geographic Bee. The event will be held on April 4, 2008 at The Field Museum in Chicago. The state winner will receive \$100, a globe, and a trip to Washington, D.C., to represent Illinois in the national finals in May. The national winner will receive a \$25,000 college scholarship. Congratulations and good luck to Greg.

Congratulations to the Wheaton Warrenville South High School show choir, "The Classics." They capped a highly successful season on Saturday, March 1 by being named Grand Champions at the Chicagoland Showcase competition held at Hersey High School in Arlington Heights. The competition included 19 show choirs from throughout the Midwest. In addition to receiving awards for Best Choral Sound and Best Choreography, Lauren Roesner won the Best Soloist award. Earlier in the season "The Classics" were the Grand Champion of the Onalaska Classic in Onalaska, WI; 2nd in the Mt. Zion Invitational in Mt. Zion, IL; and, 3rd in the Waconia, MN, competition. In each of these competitions they competed against show choirs from across the country.

On Thursday, March 6, 2008, Mark Schmidt, a senior at Wheaton Warrenville South High School, won the State Finals of *Poetry Out Loud*, the national recitation contest sponsored by The National Endowment of the Arts and The Poetry Foundation. Mark won an all-expenses paid trip to Washington DC this April as well as a \$500 gift to his school's library to purchase poetry books in his name. In Washington, he will compete against winners from each of the other 49 states for a \$20,000 scholarship [There will be \$100,000 in total prizes].

The contest structure for *Poetry Out Loud* (www.poetryoutloud.org) is much like a spelling bee; the contest starts at the school level and then goes to a regional, state, and national level. Students select three poems and memorize them; they are judged on qualities such as physical presence, voice & articulation, and accuracy. One of Mark's teachers said this, "Mark is a brilliant student that has continuously represented our district at the highest levels".

District 200 has received the SchoolSearch 2008 Bight Red Apple award for educational excellence. District 200 is one of only 91 districts in the State of Illinois (out of 871 school districts) to receive this honor. The award is based on five key factors: academic performance, pupil/teacher ratio, expenditure per student, educational level of teachers, and average teacher salary. District 200 was rated strong in all five family-favored areas. SchoolSearch is an educational research and consulting firm that publishes online rankings of school systems and works with major companies by providing their

relocating families school information. The award is based on the primary areas of concern for most relocating families.

Superintendent Report

Dr. Drury addressed the issue of the DARE program that has been mentioned in the press over the past couple of weeks. The DARE program is offered at fifth grade by a Wheaton police officer in ten of our thirteen elementary schools. This program is fully funded by the City of Wheaton. The program is presented at Pleasant Hill Elementary School by a Winfield officer and Winfield also funds this officer. An officer does not deliver the program at Johnson or Bower Elementary Schools. The State Code does require schools to provide tobacco and drug resistance instruction which is occurring at all District 200 schools. The District is very appreciative of the support and cooperation received from Wheaton and Winfield in funding DARE. The District is also very supportive of the program and contrary to published reports, is not considering dropping DARE.

There have been conversations held with representatives of the City of Wheaton and the Wheaton Police Department to find ways to make the delivery of the program more consistent across the District. One option under consideration is to move DARE to sixth grade where it could be delivered by a DARE officer at all four of the District 200 middle schools. Warrenville has indicated a willingness to provide a resource officer when the new Hubble Middle School opens.

Dr. Drury shared with the Board information about enrollment issues facing Longfellow Elementary School. Former principal, Paul McKinney, raised the issue of increasing enrollment with Dr. Drury last spring. Ms. Thornburg, current principal, revisited the issue this fall. Longfellow's student population has steadily continued to grow over the past several years to where they are using the art and music rooms, as well as the staff planning room, as regular classrooms. Enrollment projections indicate that an additional classroom will need to be opened for third grade next fall; there is no space available.

The District has examined a variety of options to locate or create another classroom for next fall. A mobile unit was considered. However, because of limited space available on the site, that was not determined to be a viable option. Revising boundary lines was also considered, however, the southern boundary of the Longfellow is the railroad tracks and the vast majority of Longfellow students walk to school. Therefore, changing boundaries within the immediate proximity of Longfellow would necessitate placing students who currently walk to school on a bus.

There are two apartment complexes (French Quarters) whose students are already bussed to Longfellow. These apartments are located north of Geneva Road and total approximately 50 students. In that these students are already being bused to their school, passing several other elementary schools on route to Longfellow, this presented another option to consider. Dr. Drury and several of his staff held a listening session with parents from these apartments at the Carol Stream Community Center to discuss with them the possibility of attending a different elementary school, listen to their concerns, and answer any questions they may have. The parents offered several suggestions that have been considered. The most viable option is to only transfer current kindergarten students who live in the French Quarter apartments to another school, most probably Pleasant Hill Elementary School, which would reduce one section of classes at first grade and make

that classroom available for the additional third grade class at Longfellow for next fall. All remaining French Quarter students would remain at Longfellow. Any new students moving into the French Quarter would attend Pleasant Hill, which has space available. Dr. Drury and his staff will again meet with the parents from the French Quarter apartments on March 24 or 25 to discuss this option. A recommendation will be presented to the Board of Education at a subsequent meeting.

The Board took the following action:

Approved to post the following policy revisions:

- Policy 2.200, Types of Board Meetings
- Policy 2.220, Board of Education Meetings
- Policy 2.230, Public Participation at Board Meetings
- Policy 7.360, Student Directory Data

Approved to post for review High School textbooks for Algebra 2 and Trigonometry, AP Calculus, and Statistics.

Approved the yearly licensing agreement with Novell NetWare for our network operating system.

Approved two resolutions in conjunction with the issuance of the bonds for the new Hubble Middle School. This includes a restructuring of a portion of our current bonds in order to achieve the districts tax rate goals. Mr. Bill Hepworth from Robert W. Baird and Associates, the Districts bond advisor, reported to the Board about the sale of bonds for the Hubble Middle School project. Even with the current volatile financial market, the District was able to secure a very favorable bond interest rate, well below what was predicted prior to the referendum. Because of the District's sound financial standing, Moody's Investor's Service continued the District's As3 rating. As a result of conscientious planning and prudent financial advice, the District will be able to pay off the Hubble bonds in 13 rather than the original 14 years at a savings to the taxpayers of approximately \$13 million, while keeping the tax rate at 44 cents as promised. In addition, the District, in conjunction with this transaction, will refinance some existing bonds at a lower rate that will save the taxpayers an additional \$1 million.

Written Reports

The Board received for review a written report about the District's 2008 Summer School Program. This recommendation includes high school courses, Drivers Education, Mini courses, Middle School replacement courses and Band for grades 5-8. The proposal will go to the Board for approval at the March 26 meeting.

Next Meeting:

March 26, 2008 at Franklin Middle School