



Parents = Partners

Education Notes from Dr. Laurie Heinz

March 2016

Springing into third trimester!

Our third trimester is already underway and we are heading to Daylight Saving Time on the 13th -- spring must be near! This month, I want to update you on the first projects coming forward from the Health/Life Safety survey and new [Master Facilities Plan](#) completed in late spring 2015. Providing safe, secure learning spaces that support 21st century learners is one of the six objectives within our new [2020 Vision Strategic Plan](#), and has been a major focus of our Board of Education agendas since August.

► **First facilities projects OK'd** - The Board approved contracts on March 3 for \$2.2 million in roofing work to be completed at six schools and the District office this summer. Roofs at Field and Emerson are not in need of immediate repair, allowing the schools to host our Worlds of Wonder summer program. In addition, the Board rejected bids to replace windows at Lincoln Middle School, as recommended by our construction managers. The bids were judged not a good value at this time, as window manufacturers are backlogged and demand for summer projects drives prices up making the bid environment less competitive. We are working with our construction managers/architect team to determine how soon the project can be rebid; window replacement could begin in the fall.

► **More facilities decisions on March 21** - The Board also thoroughly reviewed construction bids for other summer work, including creating secured vestibules at all buildings and completing critical infrastructure repairs. The Board will further discuss and take action on the recommended projects at the regular Monday, March 21 Board meeting (7:00 p.m., Lincoln gym). Base bids were organized by school, which will give the Board flexibility in its decision-making to consider approving work at one or more buildings in 2016 or in future years. This approach also allows the District to select the combination of low bidders for each base bid to yield the lowest possible project cost and best value. The Board has discussed a wide range of options that it could approve, such as: moving forward with secured vestibules and infrastructure work at all schools in summer 2016 or in stages; doing vestibules at some schools and only infrastructure work at others this summer; or doing only critical infrastructure work in 2016. The total project cost to complete all work in 2016 would be \$12.9 million, which includes the \$2.2 million of approved roofing.

For Your Children,

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Our mission of inspiring every child to discover, learn, achieve, and care was transformed into window art by Field students.



Do make time for our special Tuesday, March 8 Parent University

Parents face a host of challenges raising their children in a world of non-stop digital connectedness. That's why District 64 has invited noted expert Dr. Devorah Heitner to share her tips on how parents can help their children navigate and thrive in this environment. Don't miss this special Parent University on **Tuesday, March 8 from 6:30-8:00 p.m., at Emerson Middle School** (Multipurpose Room), 8101 N. Cumberland, Niles. Dr. Heitner is the founder of online resource [Raising Digital Natives](#) and presenter of [TEDx talk "Empathy is the App."](#) A panel of District 64 staff will join Dr. Heitner in a lively Q&A following the program, which is free and open to all adults **This is a rare opportunity to hear from one of the leading advocates in the field, right here in District 64.**



Parent University: Expand your learning

We believe that when parents and schools learn together -- everyone learns more! Back by popular demand, [District 64 Parent University](#) returns for a second year offering a series of free evening events tailor-made for parents and adult community members to extend their own learning. Bookmark this page and find out more! Come and bring a friend or neighbor!

Thursday, May 12: Preventing the “Summer Slide”

“Summer slide” is real! After all of their hard work all year long, students regress over the summer if they don’t practice their reading and math skills. The good news is that there are many exciting and challenging activities to combat summer slide. Join us to discuss summer-friendly strategies utilizing District 64 and outside resources [at this Parent University event](#), Thursday, May 12 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Roosevelt School (Learning Resource Center), 1001 S. Fairview, Park Ridge. The session will be led by Roosevelt’s Taryn Handlon, Library Information Specialist, and Linda Diekman, Instructional Technology Coach. The evening is free and open to all adult members of the community.

**In case you missed earlier Parent University topics. . .
[find them here on our website!](#)**

Meetings this spring for EL families

District 64’s English Language Learner Team is presenting a [series of informational meetings this spring](#) for families of students who qualify for English Language services. Each meeting will focus on a different topic and will be offered at different times. The first meeting was held on March 2 and focused on understanding English Language identification, services and graduation. The dates and times for future meetings are:

- ◆ Monday, March 21, 6:00-7:00 p.m., Lincoln Middle School, 200 S. Lincoln Ave., Park Ridge
- ◆ Monday, April 25, 6:00-7:00 p.m., Carpenter School, 300 N. Hamlin, Park Ridge
- ◆ Thursday, May 19, 9:00-10:00 a.m., Jefferson School, 8200 Greendale, Niles

Contact the Student Services department for information at 847-318-4300.



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Out & About in Our Schools

Lincoln Middle School on track to surpass **\$200,000** with 3rd event

Students at Lincoln are in the midst of their third, record-setting drive to help the St. Baldrick's Foundation end childhood cancers. Lincoln's previous drives raised a combined \$135,000, and students are already over \$61,000 in pledges toward their \$75,000 goal for 2016 -- pushing them close to the \$200,000 mark! The school schedules the event on a three-year cycle, so every Lincoln student can experience it once. Their efforts will culminate in a "head-shaving frenzy" on Friday, March 18! [Follow their amazing effort here!](#)



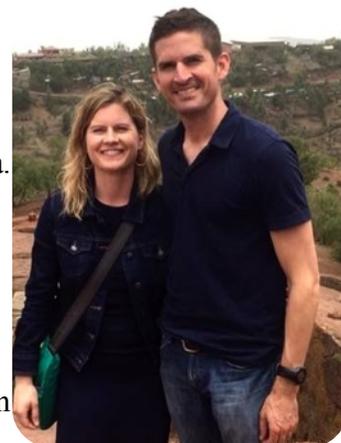
POWER energizes 8th graders

More than 500 Lincoln and Emerson students came together on a cold Friday evening at Emerson for this year's intensive, engaging POWER workshop, which develops leadership skills and promotes healthy choices for 8th graders as they prepare to head into high school. Bringing together middle school youth, community members, middle school staff, and high school student leaders, students develop trusting relationships and develop a framework to understand themselves and others. POWER also promotes responsible decision-making by helping students develop skills to build healthy peer relationships and resist negative peer pressure. As their T-shirts proclaim, POWER is a "high voltage" experience!



Carpenter School's "dig-a-well" fundraiser springs from unique sibling link

Coinciding with *Read Across America* Week, Carpenter students gathered pledges for their at home read-a-thon with a goal of raising \$15,000 to dig a well in Ethiopia. The project was inspired by 5th grade teacher Becky Keenan and her brother, Dr. Jeremy Keenan, who is the lead researcher in a study of the eyesight disease, trachoma, in Ethiopia. Carpenter students learned that clean water is one of the simplest ways to save the eyesight of children in developing countries. [Carpenter's 5th graders prepared a video](#) to share their findings with the school. Donations are still being accepted toward their ambitious goal! ▶ Providing clean water to children and families in Africa is also the focus of in-depth service learning units at our two middle schools each spring, helping expand their understanding as global citizens.



Carpenter teacher Becky Keenan and her brother, Dr. Jeremy Keenan, on her visit to Ethiopia last summer.



Fun and learning at 2016 Science Olympiad

Congratulations to the Gold, Silver and Bronze [winners of this year's competition](#), which included teams from all five schools taking the top awards! Almost 300 students in grades 3-5 took on one of five science and engineering challenges. *(left) Dr. Tony Clishem, Olympiad coordinator, congratulates Roosevelt's Gold Medal winning egg-drop team of 5th graders.*

MUSICAL NOTES: Opportunities to shine!

More than 300 band and orchestra students from throughout the District performed in our annual Solo and Ensemble Recitals on two recent evenings. These recitals give an opportunity to our finest musicians to perform solos with piano accompaniment. It helps students gain confidence in their skills and musicianship, which contributes significantly to our ensembles. Students play for family, friends, and a judge who offers suggestions for improvement. **(right)** Students rehearse before their recitals. ▶ All our Band and Orchestra students performed joint concerts with Maine South recently that featured beginners through high schoolers. ▶ Lincoln Jazz Band won a Division I Rating at the Rolling Meadows Jazz Festival. Our Percussion Ensemble also performed at the VanderCook College of Music Day of Percussion, too.



Carpenter's "Battle of the Books" team is tops for 2016

Congratulations to Carpenter School's "Battle of the Books" team for garnering 1st place among the teams from seven local schools competing in the Park Ridge Library's annual event for students in grades 4 and 5. During the recent "battles" held after school over several weeks at the library, the teams earned points by knowing the book title and author for questions about each of the 60 books on the reading list.



"Walk & Talk" visits show students are thriving

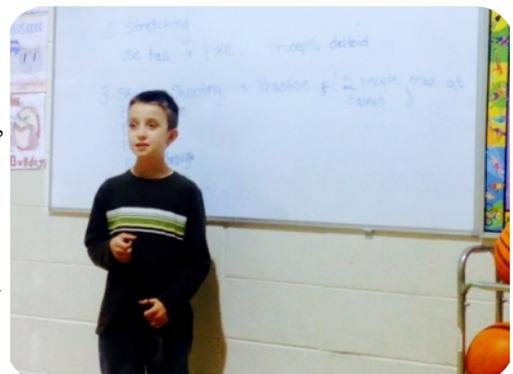
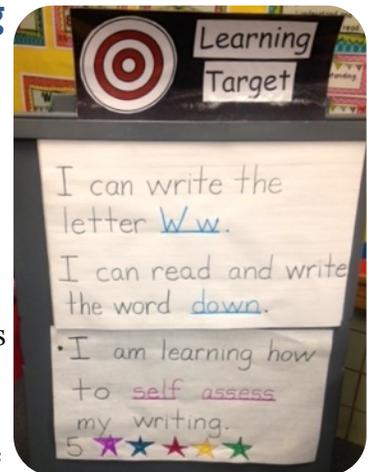
My Walk & Talks during this short month of February and early days of March show that students are undertaking new challenges during these intensive winter months. Here are my notes and reports from our principals:

▶ **Carpenter** - *(right)* Students were learning to identify their learning targets!

▶ **Field** - Books, books, books were on the minds of students! *(lower left)* A first grader practices her reading with one of our senior program members. Students collected more than 4,000 new or gently used children's books (more than 1,000 above their goal!) in a PTO-sponsored drive for Bernie's Book Bank in February. Students are looking forward to a PTO-sponsored visit with author Kate Klise before Spring Break, too.



▶ **Franklin** - *(right)* A teacher in the making! A 5th grader became a PE teacher for his class recently, and learned to plan and lead his very own lesson. He made sure to include a learning target and warm up! This special day was an auction item won through a PTA event.





► **Jefferson** - (*right*) Students are enjoying a new carpet area and block play, which inspires creativity and teamwork.

► **Roosevelt** - (*left*) Did you know that Dr. Seuss turned 112 this year? To honor his fun-loving children's literature, I read in classrooms across the District last week, including in Ms. Breen's first grade class.

► **Washington** - Students also celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday and Read Across America Day by reading many favorites and

participating in a wide range of literacy activities inspired by his works! (*right*) Ms. Mathe's kindergartners made special hats!



► **Emerson** - (*left*) Students delivered a spirited performance of the musical, *Bye Bye Birdie*, on March 4-5. The entire production -- from students onstage as well as the myriad who served on crew, costume, and so on were amazing! Congratulations also to so many other students who performed this year in various variety shows at our elementary schools -- what talented students (and future STARS!) we have in District 64!

► **Lincoln** - Team 8-2 did a terrific job with their World War II Museum, with students offering short presentations about their research and displays. Students also began this week using new stainless steel flatware in their lunchroom. Lincoln's "Don't Pitch It - Wash It" green initiative will reduce waste by replacing disposable utensils. The school's student Green Team is masterminding the effort, which is funded by a \$2,500 competitive grant awarded by the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC).

District Happenings

PARCC testing will be conducted April 11-22

District 64 students in grades 3-8 will take the PARCC tests in April in English Language Arts and Math. The state assessments have been revised, and total time for most students will be reduced by 90 minutes. In preparation, students are being given an opportunity to learn how to navigate the tools within the computer-based test environment. They also will be taking at least one practice ELA assessment and one practice Math assessment, so they feel comfortable with the test procedure and timing. As always, the best preparation for the PARCC has been the quality instruction our teachers have provided this school year. However, there are things you can also do to promote your child's success, such as making sure your child gets a good night's sleep and eats a healthy breakfast before each day of testing, and that your child comes to school with a fully charged Chromebook.



Elementary school survey on hot lunch program coming soon!

District 64 has been working with the elementary school PTO/As to consider a proposal to bring a daily hot lunch program to all five schools beginning with the 2016-17 school year. A link to a survey about your interest in purchasing hot lunch for your student will be emailed to elementary families shortly. Please let us know your thoughts on whether this service would be valuable to your family. Currently, only District 64 middle school students have a daily hot lunch program.



Resident priority registration for summer program ends April 15

Resident priority registration for the 2016 Worlds of Wonder summer program will extend through Friday, April 15. Tuition of \$125 per class per session will increase after that date. Register via the [summer school page of the District 64 website](#). Our popular summer program offers students a unique opportunity for summer learning and fun. Worlds of Wonder classes emphasize creativity and critical thinking in a challenging and rewarding environment. Students in grades K-3 will attend at Field School, while students in grades 4-7 will be at Emerson Middle School. The program will include two, 14-day sessions: Tuesday, June 7 - Friday, June 24 and Monday, June 27 - Friday, July 15 (no school July 4).

Consider leaving “smart” watches at home

District 64 policy requires students to keep cell phones and other electronic devices powered off and put away in their lockers during the school day. This is a reminder that “smart” watches, such as the Apple watch, are included within this Policy 7:190, and therefore, students will be asked to remove and store the watch in their locker during the school day. Please consider having your child leave this expensive valuable at home, rather than keeping it in their locker during school hours. Also keep in mind that elementary lockers are never locked.

On the Horizon . . .

2016-17 REGISTRATION NEWS:

► **Kindergarten/new students now underway** - Registration for new kindergarten and transfer students entering in August 2016 is now underway, with pre-enrollment through the District 64 website [Registration page](#). ► **New Kindergarten “Roundup” nights added** - New this year, all five elementary schools are planning special [Kindergarten Roundup evenings](#) in mid-April for parents and incoming kindergarten students to visit the school and bring in remaining required documents. Roosevelt and Washington will be on Monday, April 18; Carpenter on Tuesday, April 19; and Field and Franklin on Thursday, April 21. The office will be open from 5:30-6 p.m. for parents with questions or who need assistance with the registration process, or to drop off a birth certificate and complete the Home Language Survey. The roundup will be from 6:00-7:00 p.m. for parents and students, and will include an orientation with the principal and teachers and a kindergarten classroom visit. Franklin’s evening will begin and end a half-hour earlier. Parents are strongly encouraged to complete the pre-enrollment process before attending a Roundup. ► **Returning student registration begins April 25** - All returning students will again be required to provide proof of residency within District 64. New this year, families will be able to upload scans of their residency documents (in PDF form) during the annual Infosnap registration process, which will get underway on April 25. More information will be provided in coming weeks.

Bike helmet sale returns April 7 during Healthy Living Month

Based on the phenomenal demand last year, the helmet sale is returning in 2016! This is a convenient opportunity to outfit everyone in your family for safe biking at a super-low cost. Drop by on Thursday, April 7 from 4:00–6:30 p.m. to select a high quality helmet for everyone in your family! Toddler, youth and adult sizes are \$11 per helmet, first come-first served. Held during Health & Nutrition Week as part of Healthy Living Month in Park Ridge, the sale will be at Carpenter School (south gym), 300 N. Hamlin Ave., Park Ridge. District 64's Traffic Safety Committee, the Park Ridge Police Department, and Advocate Lutheran General Hospital Trauma Services are co-sponsors this year. Trauma Services staff will custom-fit your new helmet to each child or adult. Helmets are certified by the Consumer Product Safety Commission and designed to meet or exceed safety standards. Remember, District 64 policy requires students to wear helmets while riding and/or using bicycles, roller blades, scooters, skate boards and similar devices while going from home to school, while on school property, and while going from school back home/their destination. Get set for fun -- and safe -- biking adventures this spring!



*Have a safe and pleasant
Spring Break!*

*For Your Children,
Dr. Laurie Heinz, Superintendent*

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- ▶ Emerson Middle School, Park Ridge-Niles
- ▶ Lincoln Middle School, Park Ridge-Niles ▶ Jefferson School, Park Ridge-Niles

