

ITASCA SCHOOL DISTRICT #10

August 2009

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Marcia Tornatore, Ph.D.

With the 2009-2010 school year that begins on August 19th, the staff members are busy preparing for the returning students. While the summer seems short, I am hearing more and more students say they are eager to begin the new school year! To begin the year, please join us in greeting the newly employed principal (Mr. Jeff Murphy) for Franzen Intermediate School at the "Meet the Principal" event on Monday, August 17th from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the "Play For All Park" at the school.

Itasca School District personnel believe that effective schools are a result of the efforts of the entire community. Therefore, in an attempt to deliver information regarding our schools to each and every community member, this newsletter serves as our connection with District #10 residents.

The collaborative efforts and instructional delivery of our staff members have assisted greatly in our students attaining "Adequate Yearly Progress" (AYP) as measured by the Illinois State Board of Education for the 2008-2009 school year. While providing a safe and nurturing educational environment, our staff teams together to provide challenging and rewarding curriculum as a measure in our students meeting and exceeding the standards within Illinois. With this outstanding accomplishment, the district applauds the efforts of our families and students as they focus on the education of their children.

To maintain and improve upon District #10's curriculum, specific subject areas at designated grade levels are reviewed each year. Teams of teachers serve on Curriculum Committees as they share their expertise. Along with textbooks and support materials, software is also purchased during the adoption process.

The district provides a variety of methods in which to communicate with the public. We encourage the public to visit our district's award winning website (www.itasca.k12.il.us) for additional information about our schools and educational programs. New this year, our district personnel will be utilizing an automated telephone messaging system to inform our families of upcoming events and important emergency information, such as unscheduled school closings. Our intent is to keep the community informed of activities and events occurring within our schools, as well as our district's accomplishments.

NEWS FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER

As the United States faces economic turmoil that many of us have never encountered, the Itasca School District #10's administration has been working on a plan to withstand whatever financial hardships may come our way in the near future. Property taxes represent our number one revenue source. The Illinois State legislature imposed the tax cap on the metropolitan Chicago "collar counties" in 1991. This Law limits the increase in the total dollar extensions of all tax cap funds to 5% or the change in the consumer price index (CPI), whichever is lower. The Consumer Price Index for 2010-11 is limited to 0.1 percent (tax year 2009). This, together with very little new property growth, leaves our local revenues essentially flat.

In developing the 2009-2010 budget and beyond, the district is setting a realistic goal of reducing expenditures in expectation of the limited revenues generated for tax year 2009 and the future. In examining ways to best address these concerns, the administration will use three principles as our directives: protect academic quality, ensure student access to the courses and programs they need, and focus on the district's mission. The Board and administration will be proactively involving the district stakeholders through meetings and information focus groups as we move forward through these uncertain economic times. As always, excellence in education for Itasca School District 10 students will be the foremost objective.

Buildings and Grounds directly supports the mission of the district. Custodial and maintenance services are provided for all schools and the district office. Building custodians and maintenance staff assist school district staff on a daily basis in preparing for student programs or other scheduled/unscheduled events. Our department ensures that environments within these buildings are properly maintained so that learning and working activities can be efficiently performed. In addition, we are directly involved with facility planning and construction projects.

Two mobile classroom facilities are being readied for occupancy at the Franzen Intermediate School. This makes available four much-needed classrooms using an extremely economical approach. The classrooms are connected to the school with an enclosed linking hallway thereby offering student safety and security while also providing protection from the weather.

Technology remains as a prominent focus within District #10 schools. To provide students with accessibility to instructional materials on-line, the district has established fiber links for each school. This commitment will ensure ease in access for all student computer programs. On a rotating basis, technology hardware is updated for the purpose of establishing a life span in which computers work effectively for students. Technology is an integral component of each student's instructional day.

RAYMOND BENSON PRIMARY SCHOOL

The start of the 2009-10 school year is upon us and with it come some exciting changes and additions to the primary building. Over the summer months Benson Primary School received much attention. The grounds were manicured, the gymnasium floor was refinished and all of the classrooms received a deep cleaning. Staff changes have also taken place including the hiring of Eric Whitney as the first through fifth grade art teacher. Welcome Eric!

Students in early childhood, k-prep and kindergarten are invited to attend a "Meet and Greet" at the primary building on Tuesday, August 18th. This event allows students the opportunity to meet fellow classmates as well as their classroom teacher and staff members who will be working with them throughout the school year. The times are as follows: a.m. early childhood and k-prep students are invited to attend from 1:00-1:45 p.m. while p.m. students are invited to attend from 2:00-2:45 p.m. "Morning" registered kindergarten students should plan on attending from 10:00-10:30 a.m. while "afternoon" registered kindergarten students are invited to attend from 10:45-11:15 a.m.

The 2009-10 school year begins for all students on Wednesday, August 19th with a full day of classes. As a reminder for our early childhood, k-prep and kindergarten students and parents, morning class times are 9:05-11:45 and afternoon class times are 12:32-3:20 p.m. Dismissal time on Thursdays throughout the school year is 2:40 p.m. for all students.

Parents are invited to attend the IEPTO "Meet and Greet" in the Benson Primary gymnasium at 9:05 a.m. on the 19th of August. This is a terrific way for parents to make new acquaintances and also to find out more about the services that the Itasca Elementary Parent Teacher Organization offers to Benson Primary School. We hope to see you at this meeting. Lastly, please mark your calendars! On September 10, 2009, Benson Primary School will host a "Curriculum Night" from 6:30-8:00 p.m. This event allows parents and adults the opportunity to learn about the curriculum offered at each grade level.

ELMER H. FRANZEN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

We are extremely excited to start the 2009-2010 school year at Franzen School! Under the leadership of our new principal, Mr. Jeff Murphy, the Franzen staff is ready and eager to begin what is sure to be an outstanding school year. In addition to Mr. Murphy, we have three new teachers. Mr. Eric Whitney has joined us as our new 1st-5th grade art teacher and Ms. Beth Schacher is our new 3rd-8th grade ESL teacher. Also, Mrs. Amy Eich is joining us as a 4th grade teacher. You will recognize her as Miss Amy Prince (from Benson Primary School). We are delighted to have all three join our staff!

Franzen School has been a busy place this summer. With the addition of four additional classrooms in our mobile units, we are able to have classrooms for each of our grade levels and our specialist areas. The gym floor has been resurfaced, each classroom has had a thorough cleaning, and completing paint touchups are just a few of the projects that have been completed.

The 2009-10 school year begins for all students on Wednesday, August 19th with a full day of classes. As a reminder class times are 8:17-2:30. The dismissal time on Thursdays throughout the school year is 2:10 p.m. for all students.

Please stop by to visit our Franzen School Book Fair, sponsored by the IEPTO, during the week of August 24 – 27. This is a great place to encourage the love of reading, and to help out our local teachers and schools at the same time.

Finally, on August 27, 2009, Franzen School will host a "Curriculum Night" from 6:30-8:00 p.m. We hope to see all parents at this event as it helps to bridge the learning between home and school, as well as introduce parents to what their children will be learning this school year.

F.E. PEACOCK MIDDLE SCHOOL

The staff at Peacock Middle School is very pleased and excited to welcome the start of the 2009-2010 school year and promise to provide the children of Itasca with a quality 21st Century educational experience.

The new school year will present a number of very important programs for our families beginning almost right after students return to classes. The first program of significance will take place of Thursday, August 20th from 7:00-8:00 p.m. and is directed at our incoming students' parents/guardians. This 6th grade parent/guardian orientation will provide participants with a broad overview of 6th grade curriculum, class expectations, communication options, and will generally be a family's guide to navigating through the first year of middle school.

Another program of note will be our curriculum night to be held on Thursday, September 3rd from 6:00-8:35 p.m. The evening begins at 6:00 p.m. with a meeting of all parents/guardians of students in District 10's ESL program. That program is followed at 6:30 p.m. with a gathering for parents/guardians of students in the district's Talented and Gifted program. At 7:00 p.m. the focus for the evening will begin with grade level meetings taking place throughout the building until 8:35 p.m.

Additionally, this year's 6th-8th grade students will have available to them a new math textbook series that addresses the many academic levels that typify our student body. Teachers will have a rich pool of resources from which to select and provide students with a world class curriculum. The new series comes not only in the traditional textbook format (one for the classroom and one for the student's home) but also has online support where students and teachers may access from a computer the textbook, workbook, practice tests and other resources in support of classroom instruction. The math adoption comes on the heels of both our science and social studies adoptions that had taken place over the past two years.

For many of our families familiar with Peacock the west side of our building contains an open space that runs parallel and directly adjacent to the school. While original architectural plans called for low growing plants and vines to be grown the reality was that the area became an unsightly "pasture" for weeds requiring significant time and effort from our custodial staff to keep the space from overgrowing. For this fall and with the cooperation of Itasca's Naturalist, Fred Maier plans are being constructed to plant low-level native Illinois grasses and wild flowers. The creation of this environment is in support of our 6th grade study of native plant life that extends into Itasca's Nature Center during the school year. The funding for the project is expected to come from available state grants.

A WORD FROM THE ITASCA SCHOOL DISTRICT #10 BOARD

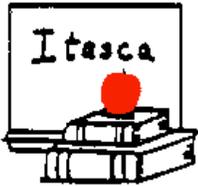
Our fine tradition of academic strength in District 10 continues as we begin our 2009-2010 school year. We have once again received the Bright Red Apple Award as we have for more than 10 years for academic and overall excellence.

A variety of accomplishments and awards display the excellent educational opportunities provided in District #10. Recognition includes the schools and district exceeding state academic standards, athletic championships, 1st place in the Lake Park Math Contest, recognition for musical and band performances, and student humanitarian projects.

Financially, while we will face several challenges in this economic climate, we remain steadfast in our dedication to fiscally sound principles while maintaining the highest standards in educational excellence. The district received the DuPage County Certificate of Recognition distinction for compliance with the Illinois School Code and Administrative Code in March.

Recently the district has addressed space problems at Franzen Intermediate School. After careful study of the best and most fiscally responsible way to address the matter, mobile classrooms were added so as to expand classroom space at the school. For student safety and ease of access, the mobile classrooms are attached to the school with a newly constructed hallway. Students will receive instruction in a more quiet and spacious area beginning this fall when the units are fully up and running. To assist in the costs associated with the project, funding from a state grant has been dedicated to our district. Please join us at the hallway's entrance on Monday, August 17th at 4:30 p.m. for a ribbon cutting ceremony!

We would like to thank our involved parents and faithful taxpayers for making our efforts worthwhile. We have the very best students, thanks to the efforts of all. The Board extends a great start to our 2009-2010 school year as we all roll up our sleeves for a start for another fantastic year!



ITASCA SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

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