

Round Lake Area Schools DISTRICT 116

School • Community • Family
A Partnership for Education

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A Message from the Chief Executive Officer Dr. Ben Martindale

As we enter the half way point of the 2008-09 school year, I would like to share some observations I have experienced that illustrate the outstanding partnerships and community service offered by our students, staff and parents of the RLAS-116 community. Earlier last month the annual Chili Supper that was held at the Round Lake Beach Cultural & Civic Center involved student and parent volunteers of all ages, community agencies including the Round Lake Exchange Club and BEST. The funds that were generated from this event will remain in the communities and schools to help support other programs and initiatives. This type of interagency and intergenerational cooperation is a fantastic example of the positive quality of life in the communities of Round Lake, Round Lake Beach, Round Lake Heights, Round Lake Park and Hainesville.

A second example of exemplary cooperation was the recent George Watson Memorial Rotary Children's Holiday program. Whether it was the donation of materials and goods from local businesses or the donation of money and resources from students, parent-teacher organizations, individuals or outside companies, the magnitude and immediacy of the response to help sustain this valuable holiday program was unbelievable. The children of not only the Round

Lake communities but also the surrounding communities had the benefit of these efforts. Volunteers cooperated to provide the children with a most memorable, happy and positive holiday experience.

To be effective, schools need the support of parents and community. These two examples illustrate the success for RLAS-116 and the Round Lake Area communities and interagency cooperation.

I encourage parents and community members to continue to look for opportunities to participate in school events and for specific ways to support our children's schools. I encourage parents and community members to look to volunteer to help in the classroom. Consider offering to speak in a child's class about a special hobby or special area of expertise. Parents, families and other community members should try to become as involved as possible in the education of children in this community. Whatever the level of involvement, if we are able to accomplish a higher level of participation, we will make a difference in our children's lives. One of the formulas that has proven successful in many high achieving school system communities is:

SCHOOLS + COMMUNITIES = SUCCESS.



Round Lake Area Schools Community Unit District 116
316 South Rosedale Court
Round Lake, Illinois 60073
847-270-9000

Dr. Janet Elenbogen, Chief Educational Officer

Winter is upon us and the Round Lake Area Schools staff and students are busy at work as we approach the end of the first semester. It is a time for celebrations and reflection as we complete the first part of the year and gear up for the work that lies ahead of us.

The accomplishments of students and staff are a source of pride to us all. Two of our schools, Murphy and Round Lake Senior High school, were among the top schools in the Regional attendance competition. The Fall included the varsity soccer team winning the regional competition. Round Lake Choral students auditioned for the IMEA District 7 Festival. Karina DeAnda, Lindon Warren, Jon Stiverson and James Neigel from Round Lake Senior High School were accepted into the IMEA Festival. James Neigel and Jon Stiverson had the opportunity to re-audition for the Illinois All-State Chorus. James Neigel was accepted into the All-State Honors Chorus, which is the highest ranking chorus at the state level!

Mrs. Lisa Steffen, lead teacher from our Foreign Language department at Round Lake Senior High school has received National Board certification. Our staff continues to pursue advanced degrees. A strong cohort of our administrators has been accepted into doctoral programs.

The District, Board of Education and School Finance Authority presented at the Triple I conference (Illinois Association of School Administrators, Illinois Association of School Boards, and Illinois Association of School Business Officials). The presentation was entitled, The Road from Financial Watch to Financial Recognition: the Journey, the Partnership, the Lessons Learned. This presentation chronicled the events in Round Lake Area schools and celebrated the great strides the District has made financially and in the area of student outcomes that have been made due to the hard work of the District, the community, the Board of Education, and the State working together. Districts in attendance were very excited to learn about the strategies we have used to achieve these gains.

Staff and administration across the District have been working on the Response to Intervention (Rtl) plan. Response to Intervention (Rtl) is "the practice of: 1) providing high quality instruction/intervention matched to student needs and 2) using learning rate over time and level of performance to 3) make important educational

decisions." (Batsche, et. al., 2005). Rtl has three components: 1) using a three-tier model of school supports, 2) utilizing a problem-solving method for decision-making, and 3) having an integrated data system that informs instruction. (The Illinois State Response to Intervention (Rtl) Plan, January 1, 2008). Our District has been working with a consultant on the Rtl process. Our consultant is a leader in the development of the State plan. Together with our Curriculum and Instruction and Pupil Support Services staff, schools have identified the critical components for the Rtl plans.

The December professional development continued our emphasis on reading, Rtl, technology, and assessment. Academic vocabulary, guided reading strategies, use of technology for assessment and instruction led the SIP day events. We are very excited about expanded technology in the District. Professional development on the use of this important tool promises to be up to date, differentiated, and engaging.

Among the celebrations at Round Lake Area schools were the Madrigal Dinner December 6th and 7th sponsored by Kristin Moroni and the choir, the neediest children's Christmas party at Camp Duncan sponsored by the Rotary with contributions from our PTOs, the Chamber of Commerce Santa Breakfast, December 14th and the Great Lakes Sailor Dinner on December 20th, sponsored by the National Honor Society.

It has been an exciting and eventful first semester. Best wishes for a happy holiday season filled with the warmth of family, friends, and happy memories in the making. The best is yet to come.



Counselor's Corner—The Effects of Stress on the Ability to Learn

Because we are in the holiday season, everyone is talking about being stressed out! The end of the semester is December 19 and students and teachers are busy trying to wrap up everything before the winter break. This puts an incredible amount of pressure on everyone. Especially this time of year, it is more important than ever to take whatever steps are necessary to reduce stress and anxiety.

On November 6, 12 middle school students from John T. Magee Middle School and Round Lake Middle School attended the Be the Change Summit sponsored by the Lake County After School Coalition. At the summit, the guest speaker was Annie Fox, author of Too Stressed Out To Think. Although there are good kinds of stress, Ms. Fox focused on handling the negative effects of stress on the body and our emotions.

So, how do we know we are stressed? The symptoms can include a rapid heartbeat, sweating, stomachaches, loss of sleep, loss of appetite or overeating, low energy levels, etc. When we're that

stressed, it cuts off our ability to think rationally and process information. If we're stressed, Annie Fox recommends that we just STOP! Admit that you are stressed and take a few minutes to breathe. After taking some time to breathe, ask yourself, "What is my goal here and what can I control?" Then, take a few minutes to think through and write down all of your options. Predict the outcomes of each of those options, and then choose the right option for you in that situation.

By taking the time to slow down and breathe, you will be able to do a better job of thinking things through before you act. It will also allow you to be able to learn and process new information efficiently. When stressful things happen, and they always do, when you think things through and review your options, you can make a rational calm decision about how to handle any situation.

For further information about stress management for students, please go to www.anniefox.com.

Dr. James Tenbusch, Chief Financial Officer Major Refresh Underway

District 116 is about to get a major shot in the arm for its technology program as it begins a rollout of close to 1000 new laptops, desktops, and thin-client (dumb terminals) units. This equipment will replace all computers throughout the district that are three years old or greater. Additionally, more than 100 new high-speed network laser printers will be installed as part of the tech refresh program. "This is a very ambitious undertaking," stated Dr. James Tenbusch, CFO "and it is the culmination of many months of planning. First we had to take stock in our inventory, and then target our critical need areas to get maximum bang for our buck. At the end of the day, we were very resourceful in obtaining major equipment discounts on both PC and Mac equipment, financed all major acquisitions through a 3 year lease agreement, and then developed a means to leverage our existing technology through upgrades and redeployment. "Overall," Tenbusch said, "once we get all of the equipment installed, the district should be in good shape computer-wise for the next three years."

In addition to replacing all of the old and slow computers currently used in District 116 classrooms and labs, each teacher in the district is being issued a laptop (either a PC or MacBook) for their professional use. Before a teacher is issued their laptop, he or she is provided training on the new operating system and Office Suite products appropriate to their machine and their computer literacy level. When asked what the future might hold, Tenbusch was quick to respond. "Our

next step will be to model all of our classrooms on the Magee standard. Each classroom in this building has an LCD projector and a document camera which significantly broadens the capability of using multi-media applications and the Internet for instruction on a daily basis. I would also like to see a major increase in Internet bandwidth. Currently we only have about 5 megabits per second of connection speed to each building; it would be nice to boost this to over 100. Unfortunately, due to budgetary constraints, we need to take our technology program improvements one step at a time."



Board of Education News

Another school year is already in full swing in Round Lake Area Schools and the Board of Education is excited about the number of new programs and restructuring of current programs we are offering for your children this year. The centerpiece of these changes has been the re-opening of Magee Middle School thanks to the support of you, the Round Lake Area taxpayers. With careful use of your referendum dollars we have rebuilt a building we believe the community can be proud of -- a beacon in the middle of Round Lake, bearing a proud name, rising like a phoenix out of the ashes to signify to those within and outside our community that Round Lake Area Schools is back.

Now with two middle schools we were able to create true middle school programs of 6th, 7th and 8th grades thus relieving some of the overcrowding at our elementary schools. This opened a door to our next opportunity, full-day kindergarten. The earliest years of a student's life are some of the most important ones where many of the basic concepts they will carry forward with them are formed. Studies have shown that quality and quantity of instruction during these years provides for better results down the road. We're proud to be one of the first schools in the area to provide full-day kindergarten to the families of Round Lake thus giving them an early leg up on learning.

With these important projects now completed the board is still keeping its eyes on the future and isn't done yet. Last month the

Board of Education and School Finance Authority met to put together a transition plan. This plan will see Round Lake Area Schools become the first district to have local control by the school board returned to it after state intervention -- hopefully for the 2010-2011 school year. We are very excited at this opportunity to return our district to normalcy the way the Illinois State Constitution intended for it to be -- local residents, elected by the community to represent them, in full control of the school district and the education of the community's children. This simply hasn't been done before and Round Lake is setting the example for other school districts to follow thanks to your support during a very difficult period of our existence. It says to the whole state that in Round Lake, yes we can do better, yes we can do it ourselves, and yes we will set the standard for others to follow.

Again, we cannot thank the community enough for its support and its interest in the present and future of Round Lake Area Schools. Each day you show to us all and remind us why we are here -- to build the foundation for the future of our children and our community. We continue to work hard to exceed your expectations and realize there is much work yet to be done. With your support we are able to do so and are able to prove day after day that yes, we can!

Best regards,
W. Guy Finley





Discover Something New @ your library®

Elena Lara, Public Relations Coordinator, Round Lake Area Public Library

Chill Out With a Good Book - Youth Winter Reading club for ages birth to 14 years begins January 26, 2009. It is a 6-week program where children read on their own, write the names of their books, magazines or audio books in their reading logs (given to them when they register), and receive a book of their choosing when completed. There will also be some grand prizes for those who finish. Those who finish will have their names submitted into a raffle and chosen at random.

Performing Arts Series – Sunday Sampler presents a free family concert on Sunday, January 25th at 2:00 p.m. Four women who make up the musical group, *Hurricane Saxophone Quartet*, will cover everything from Bach to Beatles and beyond. All ages welcome to drop-in! [Meeting Room](#)

Book Discussion Groups - Books are available approximately 4 weeks before the discussion group meets.

Romance Group – Wednesday, January 7th at 10:00 a.m.; **BOOK IT Group**– Tuesday, January 13th at 3:00 p.m. ;

Morning Book Group – Saturday, January 31st at 10:00 a.m.; Call the library for book title information.

Teens - Animé Club meets Saturday, January 3rd at 1:00 p.m. - **Gaming Club** meets Saturday, January 17th at 1:00 p.m. Contact Israel Mateos, ext. 114.

Free Movies @ your library® - Visit www.rlalibrary.org and click on the newsletter link to view titles, dates, and times. You may bring your own beverages and snacks. We'll provide the popcorn!

Winter/Spring 2009 Programs

The Winter/Spring edition of the library's newsletter *Page-Turner*, is scheduled to deliver to residents mid-December. Visit the library and pick up a copy at any of the public desks,

or information centers after December 12th. Registration for youth programs begins Saturday, January 10, 2009.

Blood Drive – Tuesday, January 13, 2009 from 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. [Meeting Room](#)

Your donation can make the difference between life and death. Visit www.givelife.org for donor eligibility guidelines. To make an appointment, call (847) 546-7060, prompt 4. Sponsored by the library and the American Red Cross.

Get Carded @ your library® - For more information about how you can get your free library card, call the Circulation Desk at (847) 546-7060, prompt 3. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Round Lake Area Public Library
906 Hart Road, Round Lake, IL
(847) 546-7060 (847) 546-7064 TDD
www.rlalibrary.org

Musical Notes



Congratulations to Karina DeAnda, Jon Stiverson, James Neigel and Lindon Warren for being selected to participate in the 2008 Illinois Music Education Association District 7 Music Festival. Karina represented RLHS as a member of the flute section in the band. Jon, James and Lindon were selected to the Choir. The IMEA Festival features top

music students from 55 area high schools in Lake and McHenry counties. Round Lake High School has had members accepted into the IMEA District 7 Choir for the past 7 years and to the band for the past 4 years. Jon Stiverson and James Neigel scored so well that they were selected to audition for the All-State Choir. If selected, they will travel to Peoria in January to participate in and perform at the IMEA State Festival. Congratulations to these students for their hard work and success!

- Krista Millard

Round Lake Middle School's Walk to Fight Breast Cancer

There are many reasons we as individuals chose to walk for the fight against breast cancer. Some are survivors, some have relatives and loved ones who are survivors or lost the battle, and others just walked to make a difference in the lives of women around the world. The reasons behind why we as individuals walked are not what matters. What matters is that at Round Lake Middle School we came together as a team, a family to help in the fight against breast cancer.

The faculty, staff, and students at Round Lake Middle School joined together in raising over \$600.00 for the fight against breast cancer. Even though the event has passed, donations can still be made. The link to make donations as part of Round Lake Middle School's team is: <http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR/MakingStridesAgainstBreastCancer/MSABCFY09Illinois?>





Social Studies Fair at Magee Middle School

On Wednesday November 19, 2008, John T. Magee Middle School had its Social Studies Fair from 6:30 to 7:30pm. This year John T. Magee piloted curriculum based projects with topics in Ancient Civilizations in 6th grade, from Explorers to about 1820 in seventh grade, and from about 1820 to the present in 8th grade.

During the six week long project the students worked hard researching, utilizing the new IMac computer lab, the library, and the Round Lake Area Public Library. Several teachers volunteered their time on a Saturday to be at the Round Lake Area Public Library to help students research and find information. We even invited the Director of Youth Services to John T. Magee to let our students know what is available at the Public Library.

The expectations for the projects were generally the same for all three grade levels. Students were expected to have a tri-fold poster board that included graphics (pictures,

maps, diagrams, charts, and/or tables) along with captions, a graph (line graph, bar graph or pie chart), and a researched five-paragraph essay and bibliography. Also, if the students wanted, they could include a diorama, model, or 3-dimensional exhibit to go along with their poster.

Students who received high marks on their projects and fulfilled most or all of the expectations of the projects were recommended by their Social Studies teacher into the Fair. There were close to 200 projects entered into the Fair, and all of the students received a reward. Each grade level had a first, second, and third place trophy winner, there were also first, second, and third place ribbon winners, and the remaining students received honorable mention certificates. Overall the Fair was a huge success and we would like to thank all of the teachers, staff, parents and students who helped make it possible! Everyone at John T. Magee really made the Social Studies Fair of 2008 a true success!

Indian Hill News

The 2008-2009 school year began under the new leadership of Dr. Ken Rose, Principal, and Mrs. Sandy Kennedy, Assistant Principal; as well as with the addition of several new staff members. Through the efforts of dedicated and determined teams working together at a rigorous pace, numerous building initiatives are up and running.

Achieving Excellence for All Students is a top priority at Indian Hill, and serves as the mission statement guiding all decisions. To that end, the School Improvement Plan (SIP) is slated for completion by the end of December. The SIP Committee is working diligently to identify areas of need and formulate a best course of action, but it is evident improving literacy remains an area of focus.

Due in large part to the relentless efforts of our Operations Service Center staff and generous donations from the PTO, the computer lab in our school library is a point of pride. New carpeting, wiring, tables and student task chairs paved the way for twenty student workstations. This greatly enhances MAP testing and intervention delivery capabilities.

PBIS debuted at Indian Hill as well. PBIS – or Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports – is a research-based program that focuses on teaching appropriate behaviors and rewarding students for exhibiting such behaviors. Behavior Maps posted throughout the school serve as a quick-reference guide for students and staff alike. Though still in its infancy, PBIS is off to a great start!

In conjunction with the Character Counts program, monthly themes are highlighted reflecting the Six Pillars of Character: Trustworthiness, Citizenship, Caring, Respect, Fairness and Responsibility. On a daily basis, students who exhibit the themed character trait receive "Gotcha" tickets that are placed in grade-level bins for weekly drawings. In addition, one student from every classroom is honored during a monthly school-wide assembly for demonstrating positive behaviors on a regular basis.

With the first semester coming to a close, the Indian Hill community anxiously awaits the future. Student recognition programs for academic achievement and attendance are slated for implementation in the second semester. Plans for enhanced communication and increased parent and community involvement are paramount to success. Working together, Achieving Excellence for All Students becomes a reality!

Round Lake Park School Gets One-Day Makeover

(Reprinted from the Lake County Journal - Stephanie Lehman)

W.J. Murphy Elementary School in Round Lake Park had many hands involved in a school beautification project that took place Oct. 11. The school was chosen from a list of four nearby education centers that were in need of work by Chicago Cares - a nonprofit volunteer organization that matches local businesses with volunteer projects through its Business Shares Program. Nearly 1,000 volunteers from Medline Industries Inc. came and completely overhauled the school - something Principal Jeffrey Prickett said was much needed.

Anne Kellogg Reed, service events coordinator from Chicago Cares, said Murphy's teachers and staff completely embraced the project, claiming the school was one of the best community partners the company has ever worked with.

"We selected Murphy not only on the opportunity for improvement and some of the financial difficulties the school has faced in the past, but there is so much opportunity to do work not only on the inside, but also on the outside," Reed said. "But also because Murphy exuded such a warm community feel and really came together and worked on this project."

Medline volunteers landscaped the entire perimeter of the school grounds, painted two plywood murals, added mulch to the playground, built a stadium-style outdoor classroom, planted three garden beds that will be maintained by Murphy students, and constructed five picnic tables, five benches and four planters outside the main entrance.

Inside, 12 canvas murals - designed by Murphy first-grade teacher Eduardo Tamayo - were painted, the school library was reorganized by reading level, and all 29 classrooms were painted, a project that, though much needed, had been skipped over during the summer months because time and money were simply not available.

Jim Gill Returns to the EEC!

Internationally known early childhood entertainer, Jim Gill, visited the Early Education Center on November 12, 2008. His songs not only entertain children, but bring learning opportunities to all young audiences as well. Jim Gill transcends language barriers with his visual and vocal activities that delight all children. Jack Melfi, the EEC principal, joined in on the fun to help students sing and dance to "Alabama Mississippi," a song that encourages all who are listening to "shake it on down to New Orleans."

