

SUNSET RIDGE

School District 29 Board Newsletter

www.sunsetridge29.net

July 2013

Middlefork School 405 Wagner Road 847 881 9500 Sunset Ridge Road 525 Sunset Ridge Road 847 881 9400



Congratulations to the Class of 2013!



Eighty students comprising the class of 2013 received their diplomas in an evening ceremony on Thursday, June 6. Dr. Shelley Carey, Sunset Ridge Principal, welcomed the audience of family and friends and the processional began. Chief of Police Bill Lustig led students and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Student speakers Madeleine Hines and Genevieve Spencer welcomed the audience of families, friends and faculty members. Charles Hines and Mary Frances O'Grady presented the Class History, sharing memories of each grade before introducing the students who joined the class that year. Catherine Dohrer announced the class gifts: three filtered water spigots for Sunset Ridge drinking fountains, outdoor benches for Middlefork and Sunset Ridge Schools, a television monitor for the Sunset Ridge cafeteria, and a donation to Haven Youth Services. Gabrielle Osher bid farewell to the Sunset

Ridge community on behalf of her class. A vocal selection performed by eighth grade members of the school choir enhanced the celebratory tenor of the evening.

Dr. Linda Vieth, Superintendent, and Mr. Sean O'Grady, Board of Education President, offered congratulations before awarding diplomas to the graduates as they were called to the podium by Dr. Carey. Eleven students received their diplomas from a parent or grandparent who is a past or present member of the District 29 School Board.

Following the ceremony, guests offered congratulations to the graduates at a reception hosted by the seventh grade parents in the school learning center. Students then adjourned to a wondrously transformed gymnasium for their graduation party.



Photos from top: the class of 2013; students approach the stage during the processional; a former School Board member congratulates one of three grandchildren to whom he presented diplomas.

Graduation photos by Lois Bernstein Photography



Hats Off

Congratulations upon the granting of tenure to:

Susan George, School Counselor,
Mindy Golub, Sixth Grade,
Claire Guinsburg, Sixth Grade Student Services,
Jennifer Kahlenberg, Fifth Grade,
Kellie Rouse, Second Grade.

*The following teachers were recently honored with
Teacher Tributes to*

The Alliance for Early Childhood:

Robin Bell, Grade Two
Rachel Berkhof, Grade One

Shelby Cavnar, Spanish, Grades Seven and Eight

Mindy Golub, Grade Six

Lynn Horne, Art, Sunset Ridge

Bonnie Muran, Grade Three

Linda Polak, Librarian, Sunset Ridge

Barbara Rosenberg, Grade One

Susan Stonequist, Math, Grade Eight

JoAnn Tennenbaum, Grade Four

Steve Timko, Physical Education, Sunset Ridge

Andrew Toniolo, Music, Sunset Ridge

Melinda Zibart, Resource, Grade Eight

Robin Zogby, Grade Four

*The Board of Education expresses its deep
appreciation to the PTO and each of our
parent and community volunteers
for all you do to support and enhance
the education of our students.*

*Whether participating in the classrooms,
lunchrooms, or libraries, helping with projects,
funding new programs, sharing a special
talent, or serving on a committee, we value
all you do on behalf of our schools.*

Congratulations to Padraic Donahue Recipient of the 2013 Dr. B. Scholarship

The scholarship is awarded to a high school senior who exemplifies the qualities of academic excellence, character, and service to others that honor his or her education at Sunset Ridge School.

Scout Troops Serve in Order to Preserve



Wooden benches and bridges add charm and function to the outdoor areas at Middlefork and Sunset Ridge, but the elements take a toll. Fortunately, members of the sixth grade Girl Scout Troop and several Boy Scouts took note of the weathered condition of some of our outdoor furnishings and volunteered to refurbish them.

Girl Scouts spent after school hours cleaning and refinishing the benches at the entrance to Sunset Ridge School (shown at left.)

Two Eagle Scouts installed a new bridge and moved and restored a smaller bridge across "Cruddy Creek" for access to the playing fields behind the school. Boys Scouts also helped install a new garden by the parking lot entrance to Sunset Ridge School.

Awards Recognize Outstanding Student Efforts and Achievements

The Academic, Athletic and Fine Arts awards assemblies recognize 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students for their talents, accomplishments, efforts, character and service. Honors for the 2012-13 school year were awarded to:

Presidential Award for Academic Excellence

8th Grade: Hannah Coffey, Jack Hamill,
Steven Kochvar, Amanda Shane, Evan Suk,
Connor Warshauer

7th Grade: Elena Karahalios, Matthew Mirkovic,
John Papas Dennerline

6th Grade: Ann Elfman, Owen Engling, Molly George,
Julia Hamill, Jenna Katlin, Nathan Khomutov, Annie Lee,
Macallister Rescorl, Claire Scott, Ryan Toth, Jane Walker

Presidential Award for Academic Achievement

8th Grade: Jimin Cheon, Jacqueline Jordan, Daniel Ladik,
Mary Frances O'Grady, Anna O'Leary, Caroline Pecard,
Emilie Petterson, Elizabeth Rekett, Mary Faith Reynolds,
Christian Scott, Alexis Vaselopulos

7th Grade: Jude Al-Abossy, Reed Bianucci,
Matthew Cacioppo, Jared Glasser, Ayanna Guillen,
Jacob Hagist, Carson Koy, Sally Kozminski,
Isabelle Warga

6th Grade: Walker Bigelow, Berelin Diaz, Maddie Geiger,
Dennis Joyce, Audrey Khan, Lily Mosele, Joe Murnane,
Patrick Tolan, Fallon Warshauer

Outstanding Achievement

for scholarship, leadership and citizenship

Emma Hoholik—8th Grade
Steven Kochvar—8th Grade
Ayanna Guillen—7th Grade

Jim Clarkson Award

for outstanding effort

Maryam Javed—8th Grade

Marty Kravitt Award

for exceptional service to the community

Grace Bickford—8th Grade

Terry Pfaelzer Award

for exceptional service to the school

Charles Hines—8th Grade
Joshua Lambert—8th Grade

Ethan Kang—7th Grade
Ella Knight—7th Grade

Outstanding Athletic Achievement

Joshua Lambert—8th Grade

Sportsmanship

for exemplary conduct on and off the field

Emma Hoholik—8th Grade

Ella Knight—7th Grade

Charles Hoholik—6th Grade

Claire Sullivan—6th Grade

Director's Award

Jack Hamill—8th Grade, Band

Jimin Cheon—8th Grade, Orchestra

Julia Matyjas—8th Grade, Orchestra

Excellence in Musical Theatre Award

Joshua Bretthauer—8th Grade

Nicholas Link—8th Grade

Annika Magnusson—8th Grade

Outstanding Musician Award for Band

John Papas Dennerline—7th Grade

Outstanding Musician Award for Orchestra

8th Grade: Jimin Cheon, Hannah Coffey, Olivia Engling,
Julia Matyjas, Anna O'Leary, Evan Suk,
Alexis Vaselopulos

7th Grade: Ayanna Guillen, Elena Karahalios

Most Improved Orchestra Player

Sean Cacioppo—6th Grade

Renaissance Award

8th Grade: Joshua Bretthauer, Alyssa Coffey,
Hannah Coffey, Rachel Coffey, Alexander Colitte,
Olivia Engling, Jacqueline Jordan, Donna Kang,
Joshua Lambert, Nicholas Link, Julia Matyjas

Excellence in Technical Production

Charles Hines—8th Grade

Principal's Advisory Council

8th Grade: Eddie Bigelow, Alyssa Coffey, Olivia Engling,
Charles Hines, Emma Hoholik

Board Briefs: April Through June A synopsis of highlights from recent meetings

Board Members: Retired Board members Dr. Shaun O’Leary and Phoebe Raymond were honored with resolutions thanking them for their contributions to District 29 at the May Board meeting. The Board welcomed new members Erin Charchut and Tim Engling. Sean O’Grady and Debbie Papas were elected as President and Vice President, respectively.

Technology Update: Administrators presented Board members with a Technology Plan which has the District moving from laptops to a tablet format. (See article on page 6.)

Staffing: The Board accepted the resignation of Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance, Terrie Simmons. Mrs. Simmons has been a true leader in the District. Her work expands beyond that of the Business Office; she took our mission statement to heart and approached each decision with the students in mind. We are so appreciative of all she has done for the District and wish her the best!

The Board also accepted the resignations of Jesse Nolan, Orchestra, and Becky Ingratta, Spanish. We thank them for their services to District 29 and wish them well in their future endeavors.

The Board approved awarding tenure to Susan George, Mindy Golub, Claire Guinsburg, Jennifer Kahlenberg and Kellie Rouse upon completing their fourth year.

The Board approved the granting of second, third and fourth year contracts to Maureen O’Looney, Tiffany Neuhausel, Sheila Lusk, Andrew Toniolo, Misty Bell, Linda Curry, and Pilar Westfall.

The Board also approved the hiring of Thomas Beerheide, Director of Business Services; Sarah Christofferson, Spanish; Paige Dempsey, Kindergarten; Eric Linnes-Bagley, Orchestra; and Adelaide Allen, psychology intern. We welcome them and wish them much success!

The Board approved the rehiring of part-time staff members Shawna Kaplan Rosen, Lauren

Marcus, Robin Nagy, Kate Robinson, Diane Sigman and David Sislow.

Before and After School Programing: Based on the results of a survey conducted in the spring, District 29 has begun exploring before and after school program options with hopes to have some programs ready for the 2013-14 school year.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- August 20, 2013: Regular Board of Education
- September 10, 2013: Regular Board of Education
- October 1, 2013: Education Committee
- October 8, 2013: 6:00 Finance/Facilities
7:00 Regular Board of Education

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. in the Sunset Ridge School Learning Center.

Notes and official meeting minutes are posted on the District website at: www.sunsetridge29.net

Willow Road Construction Update

An intervillage committee comprising representatives of the Village of Northfield, Northfield Police Department and School District 29 meets regularly to discuss construction along Willow Road as it impacts student safety and traffic flow around Middlefork and Sunset Ridge Schools, particularly at drop-off and pickup times.

Over the course of the summer, you may see concrete barriers placed along the construction route on the north side of Willow Road. In addition to this measure taken as part of the IDOT project, the Board of Education has approved the installation of a temporary sidewalk along the southeast perimeter of the property at Sunset Ridge School to further protect pedestrians from vehicle and construction traffic.

The District will also hire off duty police officers to assist with traffic control at dismissal time at Middlefork and Sunset Ridge Schools.

Introducing New Board Members Erin Charchut and Tim Engling

“I have a passion for education and have served in various leadership positions with the schools. As a former teacher, current volunteer, Northfield resident, and mother of three children in the school district, I want our schools to be the best they can possibly be.” **Erin**

Charchut’s explanation of why she decided to become a member of the School Board is a concise summary of her background and qualifications. Her passion for education is infused throughout conversation about this new leadership role.

Mrs. Charchut identified four priorities as a board member: working with and supporting Dr. Stange as the new superintendent; supporting teachers, especially as they incorporate Common Core standards into the curriculum; assuring that the budget supports the mission of developing global citizens while being fiscally responsible; and making sure every decision aligns with the commitment to focus on one child at a time.

As a representative of the community, Mrs. Charchut noted, she has a responsibility to help insure that the school system continues to be strong.

Mrs. Charchut looks forward to serving on the Education Committee, as liaison to the PTO and Foundation Fund and as coordinator of annual events. “All of these positions are well aligned to different areas of my educational, voluntary, and leadership background,” she added.

“My four children span the spectrum of our District schools. My oldest just graduated and my youngest is entering second grade. Our children have all thrived in our schools and benefitted from the extraordinary programs,” **Tim Engling** stated. “I believe I know enough about our schools to be helpful, and have good reason to care about them and want to contribute. I am committed to keeping them among the best in the state.”

A patent attorney by profession, Mr. Engling noted that he brings discernment, analytical and decision

making skills to the board. “I also have an understanding of finance, having served as treasurer of the West Point Society of Chicago and as a trustee of my church.” He will serve on the Finance/Facilities Committee of the School Board.

Mr. Engling identified fluctuating enrollment, maintaining relevant technology, changing trends in education, maintaining student safety and transitioning of administration and teachers as among the issues the board will face. “Our role, as a board is to work with administration to set policy and to provide oversight,” he added. “Dr. Vieth has done a wonderful job of managing the operations of the District, and I anticipate a smooth transition with another outstanding superintendent in Dr. Stange.”

“Quality schools contribute to the well-being of our entire community. I stand in trust to represent and achieve this community’s values and aspirations for our educational programs,” Mr. Engling concluded.

First Student Attendance Day Is August 28

School resumes for the 2013-2014 school year on Wednesday, August 28. *This will be a full day of classes for students.*

Public Act 97-0742, which was passed and signed into law one year ago, removed language from the school code which permitted the first and last student attendance days of the school year to be counted as full days even if they were shorter than the required minimum of five hours. The change took effect on June 30, 2013.

The statute does permit school districts the option to schedule a half day for students on the

first or last attendance day for purposes of parent-teacher conferences, staff in-service or school improvement meetings during the remainder of the day. The half day must include a minimum of three hours instructional time for students.

District 29 will exercise this option on the last day of classes, Thursday, June 12, 2014 (unless the school year is extended due to emergency closings.)

The summer mailing to parents in early August will include specific hours and information regarding the beginning of school.

District Transitions to iPad (Tablet) Format

Once upon a time the word tablet described a bound pad of paper. In technology parlance it refers to a small, portable, multi-dimensional device capable of word processing, taking photos and movies, and connecting users to a wealth of information and applications via the Internet. Following a three-year pilot study, District 29 is transitioning to iPad tablets as the primary technology device for students.

“Tablets offer so many ways for students to be creative and demonstrate what they are learning,” explained Charlene Entman, Teacher Facilitator for Technology. “They combine the functions of a computer, camera, video recorder, audio recorder and more, all in one easily transportable device. Plus, we are continually identifying software applications that facilitate obtaining and practicing skills. All told, tablets provide myriad opportunities for engaging students in learning.”

Increasingly, textbooks, novels and non-fiction are offered in digital format. For students with tablet take-home privileges, this can mean fewer books to transport and lighter backpacks!

Students at Sunset Ridge will enjoy the use of 1:1 iPads. Middlefork will replace computer centers with iPads in Kindergarten and first grade. Second grade will employ 1:1 iPads. Third grade, which currently employs 1:1 laptops for students,



Kindergartners display their iPad creations which read, “We like iPads.” Charlene Entman, left, assists during classroom instruction on using the devices.

will share a cart of iPads this year before transitioning to 1:1 tablets in 2014-15.

Computers remain the device of choice for various activities and will continue to be available to all students and classrooms as needed. “One of our secondary goals is for students to be knowledgeable about the pros and cons of various types of technology,” Mrs. Entman explained.

Teachers and students will receive training about iPads and various applications at the beginning of the school year. As with any District technology, agreement and compliance with an acceptable use policy will be mandatory for all.



Left: Seventh graders learned about invasive species on a field trip to the Forest Preserves. Right: Sixth graders extended their wildlife and ecology studies during Outdoor Education at Lorado Taft. (See article at right.)



Focus on the Fine Arts

Fine arts are an integral part of education in District 29. Students in all grade levels develop knowledge and skill in many genres of music, art, drama and dance. Performances and displays throughout the school year provide opportunities for students to showcase their talents and share them with others.

The month of May is filled with fine arts festivities. The Middlefork Spring Sing, Sunset Ridge Spring Concerts, Sunset Ridge Musical, Fourth and Fifth Grade plays, Jazz Night at Evening with

the Eagles, Fourth Grade Transition Day Concert and performances at school assemblies entertain families, friends and fellow students. Ever changing displays of student works of art fill the halls of Middlefork and Sunset Ridge Schools each day. We thank music teachers Shawna Kaplan Rosen, Don Golden, Jesse Nolan and Andrew Toniolo and art teachers Robin Nagy and Lynn Horne for all they do for our children.

*Top: The cast and crew of **Fame**, the Sunset Ridge musical. (Photo by Lois Bernstein Photography.) Bottom: The Middlefork Spring Sing includes performances by each grade and the entire school.*



Field Trips Extend Learning Beyond the Classroom

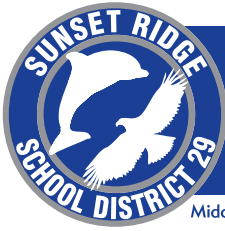
"I hear and I know. I see and I remember. I do and I understand." Confucius

Field trips connect directly to curriculum and extend learning through hands-on experience. Often scheduled at the culmination of a curriculum unit, they are a valuable tool for retention and understanding. For example, third graders learned how pioneer families provided for basic necessities during a day-long experience at The Grove (photo at right).

Seventh graders extended their ecology studies during a daylong work/study experience in the Cook County Forest Preserve. Visits to ethnic neighborhoods in Chicago enhanced understanding of their multicultural and diversity units in Social Studies and Language Arts.



Third graders wash and dry clothes without electricity on Pioneer Day. Dressed in pioneer garb, the students experience what it was like to be a child during the Westward expansion.



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District 29 website
www.sunsetridge29.net

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Students dressed as one of their favorite words for the annual vocabulary parade. The parade culminates a school-wide emphasis on learning, practicing and mastering the meaning of new words to develop a rich and robust vocabulary. The theme of this year's vocabulary studies was "Vocabulympics: Win the gold with words!"