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EXPRESS

1:1 LEARNING EXPANDS IN D39

During the 2013-14 school year, D39 embarked on a pilot program to determine the benefits of 1:1 learning for students; 1:1 means a technology device for each student. As new devices are developed, the implementation of 1:1 learning becomes cost effective. The idea grew from the Community Review Committee's work in 2012-13 and mirrors what many other districts are doing, including all those in NT Township. A 1:1 learning program directly supports the learning goals of the District's CONNECTED Strategic Plan to create a community of learners who can master the multidimensional abilities required of them in the 21st century.

In D39, the pilot program was initiated at the start of the school year with one 6th grade "house" of 108 students each receiving an iPad for use in school and at home. Staff included in the pilot were four teachers and a learning behavior specialist, as well as teachers of world languages, PE/health, and related arts. Students have used iPads in D39 schools through shared carts since 2011-12, so they had experience with this technology. Additionally, iPads were first used in D39 in 2010-11 with some students who receive special services. The pilot was designed with specific goals and measures and included several opportunities for student, parent, teacher, and administrator feedback. The five specific program goals are: transformation of students from consumers of information to creators of content; access to anytime, anywhere learning; increased student engagement and ownership in learning; support for the information literacy requirements of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the National Education Technology Standards; and promotion of the D39 CONNECTED Strategic Plan.



The 1:1 pilot has had a positive impact on the educational experience of the participating students and staff. Lessons have been learned, areas for improvement have been identified, and course corrections have been made. The iPads have extended and transformed learning opportunities in all classes including the core academic, related arts, world languages, health, and physical education classes. The iPads have also been used to modify lessons and differentiate instruction for all student learners. They have been used to conduct research, collaborate and communicate with teachers and peers, participate in online discussions, create and lead presentations, take assessments, document activities, and design creative projects to demonstrate student learning. Teachers and students participating in the pilot report there are even more benefits yet to be realized.

Two students and three teachers, all who are part of the pilot, spoke at the February Board meeting to share their personal experiences. The Board deliberated the next steps and, at the March meeting, approved extending the 1:1 program for 2014-15 to all 6th and 7th graders, with 8th graders to be added in 2015-16. A fee structure was approved that allows parents options for renting, paying toward purchase, or providing a device for their child. Details are available online. Savings are realized through reductions in fees for learning materials. In addition, 8th grade students will no longer be required to purchase a calculator for \$150, since the iPad includes an app with this capability.

There is much more information on the District's 1:1 learning program online - find the link on the home page.

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WILMETTE
Public Schools
DISTRICT 39

Mandarin Update

With the start of the 2012-13 school year, D39 5th graders had a new option for which World Language to study for the next four years. Adding to the choices of French, German, Latin, or continuing Spanish, students were also able to choose Mandarin Chinese. The idea for adding Mandarin goes back to the Community Review Committee's recommendation in 2009. The Mandarin programs in other districts were reviewed and joint planning with New Trier High School took place.

District 39 is currently the only New Trier sender district to offer Mandarin.



Teaching Mandarin poses unique challenges. It is a character-based language, without the familiar alphabet found in the others that are taught. In Mandarin, the characters represent objects or ideas, so understanding the Chinese culture is especially important. Students learn character recognition and writing, as well as phonetic translation, which includes correct use of four specific tones.

D39 was fortunate to hire an excellent Mandarin teacher - Yiyi Xu - who has worked closely with D39 curriculum coordinator Katie Lee to develop the new curriculum. In 2012-13, there were two sections of 5th graders studying Mandarin. In 2013-14, two sections of 6th grade were added, along with the two 5th grade sections to accommodate the incoming class. In 2014-15, two 7th grade sections will be added, and by 2015-16,

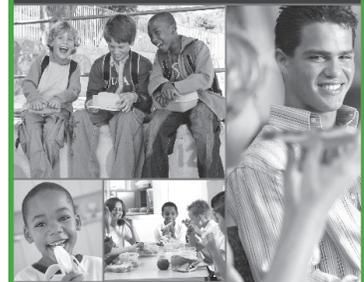
Mandarin will be a four year option for 5th-8th graders in D39. During their four-year Mandarin experience, students will be taught basic language skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with integrated exposure to Chinese culture. An additional Mandarin teacher is being added for 2014-15.

Each of the District's five language options offers students an excellent and unique world language experience. Because the selection made by students and their parents as entering 5th graders also impacts their opportunities in high school, careful consideration of the choices is important. Students who choose to continue with Spanish through 8th grade and in high school, typically start as freshmen in Year 3. Students who choose a new language to study during 5th - 8th grade, typically continue that language in Year 2 as freshmen. It is anticipated that D39 Mandarin students will be able to continue in Year 2 at New Trier as well. Of course, all students have the option to begin an entirely new language when they enter high school.

Update - Food Allergies in Schools

In December, the Federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released new guidelines for managing allergies in school. D39 was among the first in the nation to address the issue of food allergies in public schools more than a dozen years ago. The new CDC guidelines were modeled after the work done in D39, and this is acknowledged on page five. You can find the CDC document on our website under For Parents/Health Info. One D39 student got creative with this topic. HMS Student Council President Jack Yonover created a Public Service Announcement to help students understand the importance of a nut free classroom and why rules are in place. You can find Jack's PSA at http://www.wilmette39.org/images/stories/videos/PSA_SchoolFoodAllergies.mov. He is working on a 45 minute documentary on the same subject.

Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies In Schools and Early Care and Education Programs



SECURITY UPDATE

District 39 continues to make improvements in school security. Visitor Management Systems are now in place in all D39 buildings and working well; visitors present a photo ID, which is scanned, and a visitor tag is produced. For 2014-15, all school entrances will utilize a "double-buzz" system. Construction will take place over the coming summer at WJHS, HMS, McKenzie, and Romona so those buildings can achieve the "double-buzz," which is already in place at Harper and Central. This system means that a visitor first gains access to an inner foyer or vestibule, then has a photo ID scanned by the Visitor Management System before being able to enter the building. The biggest project is at WJHS, where a new entrance for visitors will be constructed to the south of the existing entrance. This will take visitors directly into a vestibule in the office. Highcrest will be getting a new set of locked doors part way into the lobby area.

In addition, the District has applied for a grant that would cover a significant portion of the cost of upgrading classroom door locks so they can be operated from inside, as recommended by the District's School Safety Task Force. This modification has been considered by D39 since last year, when renewed focus on school safety led to a list of potential improvements. However, the cost of changing the locks on all classroom doors was considerable. If this grant is approved, the District will be able to make this change more quickly.

D39 Staff Focus on Wellness

In an effort to promote wellness among staff, D39 has established an Employee Wellness Committee ("Wellness 39"). The committee has been charged with finding ways to address personal wellness needs that fall into the broad categories of: health, fitness, diet, and finance. A staff survey indicated that fitness was the highest priority. Wellness 39 established a relationship with the Wilmette Park District to assist in offering fitness programs for staff. Communication is another priority, so a Wellness 39 staff website is being developed as a clearinghouse for information related to health and well-being. The website includes information about District 39 events and local fitness activities, as well as community discounts on fitness services.

Wellness 39 has launched their first activity - **Step it Up** - a new voluntary program that gives D39 staff members some extra motivation to get fit. Developed with the support of the Wilmette Park District, this program sets up a friendly competition between teams of D39 employees to see which one can be the most active. Each participant pays a \$20 fee and receives a pedometer and a T-shirt. The pedometer automatically tracks steps, and bonuses can be earned for certain activities such as participating in a PE class with students or taking a walk with a non-participant.

"This is a great way to make us all more aware of our level of activity and encourage us to crank it up a notch," says Dr. Margaret Clauson, D39's Assistant Superintendent. "The Wilmette Park District had already done this with their staff and were more than happy to help us get it started in D39."

Ten teams were created from the 160 staff members that signed up and the competition is underway. Teams will earn points from, April 14 - June 8, and then the winning team and individual will get a prize!



Wilmette District 39

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District 39 Educational Foundation Update

The D39 Educational Foundation's 2nd Annual Trivia Night was a success with more than \$10,000 raised! The proceeds will support the Foundation's Gripp Grant program, providing funding opportunities for innovative educational programs, experiences, and technologies. More than 200 people attended, and over 35 local businesses donated items for the raffle.



Thanks to the tremendous support of the community, the Foundation has met its goal of raising \$110,000 over a two-year period for the WJHS science labs. Earthquake towers, microscopes, DNA extraction kits, and forensic detective labs are just some of the items purchased with these funds. The Foundation was proud to present the District with a check for \$55,000 to fulfill this goal.

Science Olympiad finished its first full season with HMS and WJHS students. Competition students had two practices before the official regional tournament. Special thanks go to Alison Eakley, Amanda Utynek, and Sue Cooper (the foundation's D39 Olympiad Curriculum/Competition Advisor) who ensured the kids had a fantastic experience. We are also grateful to the 54 volunteer parent scientists who taught the kids each week.

Closing Ceremonies for this year's Science Olympiad included an open house science fair where all Science Olympiad participants and leaders had a chance to demonstrate their achievements. Family and friends came to learn more about Science Olympiad and to see presentations by our 5th-8th graders on exciting topics like robotics, engineering, anatomy, meteorology, and more!

Join us Thursday, April 17 at the Michigan Shores Club as we present the Foundation's Distinguished Citizen award to Beth Drucker, president and co-founder of Go Green Wilmette. Sharing her love and passion for nature, Ms. Drucker has been instrumental in raising environmental awareness and inspiring residents to take action to make a difference in our community. Her involvement in establishing the HMS and WJHS teaching gardens, Bike-to-Highcrest, and the annual environmental fair, Going Green Matters, are just a few of the ways Beth has made Wilmette and surrounding neighborhoods a greener place to live! For more information and to order tickets go to www.d39foundation.org.

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TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Whether or not you have children in our schools, we are interested in your ideas, feedback, and suggestions. Send them along via email to opinion@wilmette39.org or contact Dr. Ray Lechner at 847-512-6030. Mail can be sent to the Mikaelian Education Center, 615 Locust Road, Wilmette, IL 60091.