

Community Unit School District 200

Administration and School Service Center

130 W. Park Avenue

Wheaton, IL 60187

Phone: 630/682-2000

Fax: 630/682-2227

March 2006

Dear Families:

As we approach spring break and the last quarter of the school year, I'm excited about all that is happening to help students achieve at higher levels. Our schools and our district leadership team have focused efforts throughout the year on helping all students succeed. We are confident that the results of this month's state testing program—ISAT, IMAGE, and IAA—and next month's PSAE will again provide evidence that we are closing the achievement gap among student groups, while still increasing our overall scores. This is happening because we follow a systematic process which includes:

- The development and renewal of curriculum based on the state's learning standards and our own expectations.
- The selection of materials that support, but do not dictate, the curriculum.
- The administration of tests that assess how well students are learning the curriculum.
- A targeted training program to help teachers deliver the curriculum more effectively.
- The use of data to identify students who need additional support to learn at higher levels.
- The allocation of resources to provide that support with more teachers and specialized programs.
- The development of school and District improvement plans that identify specific learning targets.

In summary, we continue to focus our resources on improving student learning and we do it in a systematic way. While all of these activities are important, your involvement and support of your child's education will increase his or her chances of being a successful learner. Please take the time each day to talk about what your child learned in school and the activities that took place in the classroom.

Please Give Us Your Email Address

As I mentioned in one of my earlier newsletters, we are beginning to rely more on email to communicate with parents, especially when messages need to reach you quickly. Our voice messaging system includes a feature that allows you to receive messages via email as well as phone. We have heard that many parents prefer email notification as the message reaches them quickly at home or at work and gives them flexibility to respond in a timely way.

We certainly understand if you don't want to receive information by email, but if you do, it is important that you provide the school with your email address or let them know if your address has changed. We started collecting email addresses during the registration process last year. The student enrollment card (for new students) and the student verification sheet (for returning students) have spaces to provide email addresses for those adults listed as contacts. Please be

sure to provide that information when you register your student for the 2006-07 school year or contact your child's school now to add or change your email address.

Please know you will never be excluded from receiving information if you don't use email, but we believe it is important to give parents this option. We are working to update our technology so that we can distinguish how parents prefer to receive the various kinds of information that schools typically send home. Thank you for your cooperation as we transition to this technology.

In the future, please note that my newsletter will be sent via email to those who have provided their email addresses and also posted on school web pages and the District web page. Those without Internet access may contact their child's school or the District office to receive a paper copy of the letter.

Wheaton North Field House Open for Public Use

I'm pleased to announce that the new field house at Wheaton North High School is open for public use during limited weekday hours. Residents may use the track between 5 a.m. and 6:30 a.m. Monday through Friday and from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday on non-game days. At this time, the track is closed to the public on weekends. Visitors may enter the field house at Door # 7 on the northwest side of the school. Gym shoes with rubber soles are required and food, beverages, and strollers are not permitted. The field house at Wheaton Warrenville South High School is scheduled for completion this spring and will be opened to the public at that time. Even if you don't intend to use the track, I invite you to stop by during public hours and see this wonderful new facility. It has truly expanded opportunities for students and has already become an integral part of our high school program.

High School Construction Update

Construction is nearly complete at both high schools, slightly ahead of schedule and still under budget. These facilities have opened up exciting new opportunities for students and reflect the value this community places on a strong local system of public education. We look forward to showing off these new spaces in August when we host open houses at each high school. These events will be well advertised this summer. Meanwhile, construction is nearing completion on the second half of Wheaton North's classroom addition and the field house at Wheaton Warrenville South. We expect to occupy both of these new spaces later this spring.

Fees for the 2006-07 School Year

The Board of Education accepted the recommendation of the District's Technology Steering Committee and voted to increase the student technology fee to help pay for paper and ink cartridges used in the schools. As more classroom computers are added and students become more sophisticated in their use of technology, the cost of supplies is rising. Fees will increase \$5 in the elementary schools, \$10 in the middle schools, and \$15 in the high schools, marking the first increase in the technology fee since it was initiated five years ago. The Board also raised registration fees \$2 in grades one through five to cover the cost of classroom calculators that are used to support the new math curriculum. We are always reluctant to recommend a fee increase, but in these two cases we believe the fee is warranted based on the increased costs of delivering the program.

Vision and Mission Statement

A new vision and mission statement was also adopted by the Board on March 8. The statements reflect the values expressed by residents who participated in focus groups and a community survey conducted last year. Comments on the draft statements were solicited and changes made based on those suggestions. The new vision and mission, along with a set of ten belief statements, provide the direction for future decisions and the framework for the Board's long-range planning efforts. We appreciate the involvement of so many residents—more than 1000 in the focus groups and another 500 in the survey—and have worked hard to incorporate the concepts that emerged into the statements. Please see the new statements on the back page of this newsletter.

Superintendent Selection


Since I last wrote to you, I have announced my intent to retire at the end of the 2006-07 school year. I notified the Board of Education about my plans in November to give them ample time to select my successor. The Board has invited four firms that lead superintendent searches to the March 22 meeting to discuss their process and timeline for conducting a search. As the discussion continues, the Board will keep you informed and seek your involvement in various steps of the process.

N.E.W. 200 Foundation to Sponsor the Distinguished Teacher Award

The N.E.W. 200 Foundation is now sponsoring the Distinguished Teacher Award initiated and supported for many years by GATES-200. The award recognizes District 200 teachers for their excellence by presenting an annual Distinguished Teacher Award to one teacher each from the elementary school, middle school, and high school who has put forth extra effort to enrich the educational experiences of District 200 students. Students and parents of students who are currently enrolled in District 200 schools may submit nominations. Any teacher who is currently employed by District 200 is eligible for nomination. Nomination forms are available online at www.new200foundation.org and must be postmarked by March 24, 2006.

For those who may not be familiar with the organization, the N.E.W. 200 Foundation is a nonprofit, district-wide organization dedicated to supporting and rewarding innovative teaching methods in our district and funding new academic initiatives. We thank them for taking over sponsorship of this recognition program and for all they do to support our students.

Sincerely,



Gary T. Catalani, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Inspiring in everyone a passion to excel

Our vision is to be an **exemplary, student-focused** school district that is **highly regarded** for the **competence and character of our students** and the **excellence of our people, programs, and learning environment.**



Our mission is to **inspire, educate, challenge, and support** all students to reach their highest level of learning and personal development.

We believe:

1. **All students can learn beyond expectations.**
2. A **highly qualified, nurturing, and enthusiastic staff** is necessary to ensure each student's success.
3. Each student deserves a **challenging, rigorous, and comprehensive curriculum** that leads to academic achievement, social well-being, self-realization, good citizenship, and personal growth. Each student should have the opportunity to enhance these characteristics through a **comprehensive extracurricular program.**
4. **Technology** must be an integral part of the instructional program.
5. Schools should promote a **culture of respect** that values individual differences.
6. A **safe and secure environment** should be provided in all of our buildings.
7. **Well maintained facilities** support the instructional program and promote student learning.
8. Services must be delivered in a **cost-effective** manner.
9. The **community has high expectations** for the quality of education in its public schools.
10. Successful schools result when a **partnership** exists between the schools, parents, and the community

Community Unit School District 200
Office of the Superintendent
130 West Park Avenue
Wheaton, IL 60187

Non Profit
U.S. Postage
PAID
Warrenville, IL
Permit No. 12

Future Newsletters to be Posted Online

To save postage and printing costs and get information to families more quickly, future issues of the Superintendent's newsletter will be emailed to parents and posted on school websites. Please contact your child's school to update your email address or request a paper copy of the newsletter.