



“Working together as a school community, we must put children first . . . we all have an obligation to touch children’s lives and make a difference.”

Superintendent
Kurt Wachholz

Superintendent’s Message

News from the Superintendent to help inform parents, staff, and community of current school district news, events and issues.

August-September 2011

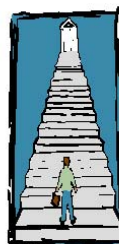
Welcome Back!!!
building Relationships...identifying Relevance...developing Rigor

THERE IS NO MAGIC WAND!

WE MUST DO MORE THAN “WISH” IT TO HAPPEN...



- COLLABORATION
- DIFFERENTIATION
- NEXT GENERATION SKILLS
- ASSESSMENT DRIVEN LEARNING
- DATA DRIVEN PLANNING & DECISIONS
- PERSONALIZED LEARNING PLANS FOR ALL STUDENTS
- CHALLENGING HIGHER LEVEL THINKING/QUESTIONING
- ACADEMIC & BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS
- “ALL” CENTERED AROUND RELATIONSHIPS-RELEVANCE-RIGOR



AN ACCOUNTABILITY FOR LEARNING & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

AS WE TAKE THE NEXT STEPS FOR & WITH OUR CHILDREN

If you have any questions about our STAR Power focus, please consult with your school’s principal. The West Allis-West Milwaukee School District is dedicated to being child-centered and “Putting Children First.” We are off to a great start this school year! Staff and parents thank you for all your support!



Schools Receive State Recognition

Wisconsin Schools of Recognition Award for 2011 - 2012

The West Allis–West Milwaukee School District has five schools named as “Wisconsin School of Recognition” for the 2011 – 2012 school year. These schools are: Horace Mann, Jefferson, Longfellow, and Wilson Elementary Schools along with Lincoln Intermediate School. This is the highest number of schools by any district in the state according to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

This is the fifth year in a row that the WAWM School District has had at least three or more schools receive this prestigious award. Since this time the West Allis–West Milwaukee Schools have been recognized 29 times. Wilson Elementary (5 consecutive) and Lincoln Intermediate (5 times as an elementary and intermediate school) are receiving this award for the fifth time, Jefferson Elementary for the fourth time, Longfellow Elementary for the third time, and Horace Mann Elementary its first ever recognition. Wilson Elementary will receive special recognition from the Department of Public Instruction due to this being its fifth consecutive year attaining the Wisconsin School of Recognition status. This prestigious award recognizes schools for their consistent achievement over time and closing the achievement gap that these schools face in light of ESEA: No Child Left Behind. These schools must also meet certain additional academic and demographic criteria in order to qualify.

The West Allis–West Milwaukee Schools are also home to three elementary schools that have been nominated as National Blue Ribbon Schools over the past four years. Two of these, Walker and Wilson Elementary Schools, received this award within the past three years. This is a great honor for our district’s schools to be recognized; in addition, it is a tribute not only to these schools but ALL of our schools and ALL of our employees who continue to put children first and focus on student learning and achievement with Wilson receiving special recognition.

Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook

Please review this with your child on an on going basis

The "Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook" for 2011-2012 was distributed to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students at the beginning of this school year. If you do not have a Handbook, please contact your child's school or Director of Student Services Dan Weast, 604-3016, for a copy. This Handbook provides parent(s)/guardian(s) with the expectations of the district and the rights and responsibilities for every student.

The Handbook provides students and parents with the district's mission statement, building information, parent calendar, student expectations at school, parent(s)/guardian(s) expectations from school, school expectations of student/parent(s)/guardian(s), guidelines to student rights and responsibilities, the district's code of conduct, unacceptable conduct, School Board policies, and a form for parent(s)/guardian(s) to complete and return to their child's school office. The parent signature form indicates that you have not only received the hand book but that you have also discussed the content with your child/children.

Please partner with the district as we work together to provide a SAFE, RESPECTFUL, and FOCUSED learning environment where ALL children CAN SUCCEED and ACHIEVE. We ask that on a regular basis all parents take the time to review the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook with their child. By doing this, parents can help their students avoid disciplinary action, which includes detention, suspension, and, in some cases, expulsion. Remember, it is the district's goal to work together with parent(s)/guardian(s) to keep all students safe in order that all students may achieve and succeed.



Reduction in Equalization Aid & Categorical Aid

Public School Funding Update

Since early this year, there have been significant changes in our state government and the funding provided to public school districts throughout Wisconsin. Schools in Wisconsin have seen nearly \$800 million reduction in overall school aid, as well as a reduction in the per-pupil aid. In the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District, this translated into a per pupil reduction of \$550 or 5.5 percent as well as significant reductions from the state in categorical equalized aid coming into our District this year and has left the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District with a deficit of approximately \$9.4 million. We have used a variety of components to address the shortfall and also worked to maintain quality programming for the students of the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District. These have included receiving several revenue streams from state and federal grants as well as saving the Federal Jobs Program and ARRA monies to help lessen our shortfall.

In addition, we consolidated our School District Administration, Recreation and Community Services Departments to a repurposed existing building located at 1205 South 70th Street. This move allowed us to consolidate all of these programs as well as additional district programs under one roof. We also consolidated all of our alternative learning programs under one roof in another newly repurposed building located at 1135 South 70th Street. The significance of these two facilities is that both have leased tenants on the lower levels of the facilities. These additional funds allow us not only to pay for the entire operational costs of these two district owned buildings, but to bring in additional revenue, help address budget shortfalls, and invest money into programs for our students. We also used the changes in state law that have come forth through our Governor and Legislature in Wisconsin Act 10 and Wisconsin Act 34 (state budget) to help address some of these shortfalls.

With our current state of funding, most districts, including the West Allis-West Milwaukee School District, will be left to face difficult decisions in the coming years. To this point, our school district has been able to avoid significant layoffs or program cuts. This was due in part to the federal stimulus funds that we received in the 2009 - 2010 school year which were wisely spread over the past two years. However, time will tell on what the future will bring with regard to state funding. I want to assure you that we will continue to put children first and keep them as our main priority and do all that we can to ensure that ALL children can and will learn. We also want to ensure that we are the school district of choice for our residential students and that the programs and offerings we currently offer and will have in the future are desirable for our students. Another important factor is hiring and maintaining high quality teachers and staff which have the ability to get the best out of each student and continue the award winning achievement programs for which our district has been recognized.

It is important that we maintain good working relationships with area businesses and the community at large. The saying "It takes a village to raise a child" certainly has merit. While it is ultimately the responsibility of our school district to educate children, it is also vital to have the backing and support of community members and area businesses. The West Allis-West Milwaukee School District is proud of the working relationships we have had in the past and look forward to forging new relationships in the future. A strong partnership between a community and its school district only makes the entire community stronger and creates a sense of pride for everyone. We must all do our part during these difficult financial times to ensure that our children, our future, receive a quality well-rounded education. Remember: our children are our future and the success of our strong vital economic well being begins with an educated and literate public that roots itself in public education!

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