



December 14, 2011 meeting

## Summit Hill District 161 Board Briefs

*Serving 3,498 students living in portions of Tinley Park, Mokena, and Frankfort*

For additional information, please contact Superintendent Barb Rains at 815.469.9103

### **Board Members discuss snapshot of District finances and current planning model**

At Wednesday's meeting, the Board of Education discussed the current state of the District in terms of finances, enrollment, and staffing as it begins the process of planning for the future. In 2002-03, the District was lowest in the State in operating costs per pupil, running a very basic operation. Since then, District 161 Boards of Education approved enriched student programming such as reading support, gifted and honors, special education offerings, encore offerings, extracurricular activities, and the maintenance of low class sizes. In comparison to the 2010-11 school year, the District has received less state and federal funding as well as less new growth in the area. Coupled with Education Fund cost increases in employee benefits and staffing decisions, the FY 2012-13 budget will show a \$2.5 million deficit. Schools must continue to rely on local taxpayer dollars to fund schools. To bridge the gap, the District took the first step by approving the 2011 property tax levy request, the most conservative in District 161's recent history. The second step is to look at school programs and operations. At the meeting, the current planning model was shared as well as the current model of delivery which includes a kindergarten attendance center, five elementary neighborhood schools, one intermediate attendance center, and a junior high attendance center. Anticipated enrollments for 2012-13, the number of available, and number of open classrooms per building were shared as well as the anticipated overall reduction in classroom sections due to the roll up of current students per grade level. The planning timeline and communication plan to engage the community were also presented. At the January 11 Board Meeting, the Board will hear a presentation utilizing the current model with efficiencies and also a model looking at building use/total capacity. Administration also will share a plan to utilize District parents and local residents in an advisory capacity in the planning process. School community members who were unable to attend the meeting may access the audiocast and planning presentation by visiting the District 161 homepage at [www.summithill.org](http://www.summithill.org)

### **Board hires Barb Rains as permanent Superintendent of Summit Hill District 161**

At Wednesday's meeting, the Board of Education hired Barb Rains, the current Interim Superintendent, as the permanent Superintendent of Summit Hill District 161. Her contract is effective immediately and runs through June 30, 2013. Mrs. Rains previously was District 161's Director of Human Resources and Communications. She has been a teacher, director, and editor of a newspaper prior to coming to District 161. Mrs. Rains has earned a bachelor and master's degree, a Type 75 administrative certificate, and a certificate of advanced study in superintendency. Earlier this year she was honored as the ISBE Those Who Excel award winner in the administrative category and Administrator of the Year from the Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. Mrs. Rains is a past president of both the Orland Park Area Chamber of Commerce and Illinois Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. She has earned more than 230 awards for educational programming and publications produced on behalf of Orland School District 135 and Summit Hill District 161.

### **Board Members pass \$30 million property tax levy request**

The Board passed its 2011 property tax levy request which is a slight increase over last year's amount which was \$30,004,572. The levy was set at \$30,689,111 which is the lowest year-to-year increase in the past four years. A public hearing was held prior to the Board vote with no one sharing any comment.

### **Mrs. Molinare resigns seat to become member of LincolnWay District 210 Board**

At Wednesday's meeting, the Board discussed the process to fill the Board seat vacated on December 8 by Dee Molinare. Mrs. Molinare has been a member of the District 161 Board of Education for 10 years. She was appointed to the Lincoln Way District 210 Board of Education on December 8. The Board is accepting applications from District 161 residents through December 16. The review process and interview schedule will then be developed based on the number of applicants. The vacancy will be filled by a vote taken during an open Board meeting held prior to January 22.

### **In personnel matters, the Board**

- accepted the resignations of Jamie Reed, Jennifer Mazur, Deana Duvall, and Linda Arnold;
- approved the employment of Andrea Roney and Kelly Arthur as teachers; and
- approved the employment of Larry Trotter as a lunchroom supervisor, Pam McGee as a substitute custodian, and Shamila Kahn and Diane Farber as substitute lunchroom supervisors.

### **In other matters, the Board**

- recognized sixth-grade Walker School artists who received honors in the Lions International Peace Poster Contest. Winners were Michael Trost, first place; Veronica Cervantes, 2<sup>nd</sup> place; and Tara Tischer, 3<sup>rd</sup> place. The Board also recognized Amanda Kovacic, a student from Lincoln Way North for her exceptional efforts to support District Office business staff;
- heard an update on progress made to date on the Board of Education Goals for Student Achievement;
- heard an update from the recent Summit Hill Educational Foundation meeting and the Finance Committee meeting;
- approved the Second Reading of Board Policies 2:250, 3:30, 3:60, 3:70, 4:80, 5:90, 5:100, 5:125, 5:200, 5:240, 6:60, 6:150, 6:300 and 7:305;
- began a discussion on the 2012-13 District calendar;
- authorized a hearing on January 11, 2012 at 7 p.m. for the purpose of approving a school waiver to continue to observe Presidents' Day in lieu of Lincoln's Birthday for the 2012-13 school year;
- heard that 81.5% of parents who completed the recent Parent Survey rated District schools an "A" while 14.9% rated District schools with a "B"; and
- heard that there are 3,501 students in grades Pre K- 8.