

# ***COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE***

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Wilmette Public School District 39  
Wilmette, Illinois

May 31, 1994

Mr. Thomas Nathan  
President  
Board of Education  
Wilmette Public Schools, District #39  
Wilmette, Illinois 60091

Dear Mr. Nathan:

Thank you for the opportunity to present our research and recommendations to the District #39 Board of Education at a specially designated meeting. The 1993-94 Community Review Committee appreciates the extra time devoted to the communication between the community and the Board of Education.

At the June 1993 meeting of the Community Review Committee it was determined that our work would begin immediately since the issue of Highcrest and the feasibility of inaugurating a consolidated kindergarten at this facility needed to be decided by February, 1994. A subcommittee was formed to examine this issue. Our research was presented to the Board of Education in February. We feel that our report was timely, informative and important to the outcome of the vote.

The additional topics selected for study by the 1993-94 Community Review Committee were chosen from over twenty-five subject areas. The list was compiled from suggestions made by the CRC membership, the Board of Education, the administration, the PTA and PTO membership, the faculty and the community at-large. Three topics were chosen for research and one for additional study of prior CRC reports. All final reports were unanimously approved by the entire CRC.

## **Research Reports**

### **1. BULLYING**

The report from the Bullying subcommittee speaks to the issue of student treatment of other students. It is a comprehensive study of how this issue is currently treated within district schools and provides extensive recommendations on how the administration, teachers, support staff and parents can work together to ensure all children are treated with respect and kindness during their school day.

### **2. EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AT RISK AND CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL TALENTS OR INTEREST**

Building on the 1992-93 CRC report on Volunteerism which recommended that the district establish a tutoring program for children who are struggling in the classroom but not receiving assistance through our learning disabilities program, this report examines how other districts work with children who are at-risk. Additionally, in light of the revisions of curriculum for our gifted students, the report also looks at how these students might receive additional stimulation through extra-curricular programs.

### **3. BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

The report from the Budget Reductions subcommittee looks at the current process for budget cuts within the district and to recommend guidelines or criteria that could be applied as the district budget is

**WILMETTE DISTRICT #39 COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE  
1993-94**

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Barbara Savitt, Principal, Harper  
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**PAST PRESIDENT**

Barbara Milsk

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

### Community Review Committee

The Community Review Committee (CRC) is an organization composed of community members from many differing constituencies who work to examine issues of interest to the District 39 Board of Education, the community, and to CRC itself. The CRC is an organization whose membership is determined by its contributing organizations and by the Board of Education, in the case of at-large members. The CRC will work to develop documents and reports that the membership feels should be brought to the attention of the Board of Education and the community at large. To this end, the CRC consults with the Board of Education, community, faculty and other representatives of the educational community. In many cases, CRC will make recommendations for change or enhancement directly to the board. CRC looks forward to a timely and thoughtful response from the Board of Education.

These bylaws and procedures have been adopted by CRC to govern its operations. The use of such guidelines helps CRC to carry out, efficiently and effectively, its responsibilities. These rules and procedures ensure uniform understanding of policy as well as consistency and continuity in recommendations and presentations to the Board of Education and the community at large.

#### I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Community Review Committee (CRC) of Wilmette Public School District 39, Wilmette, IL.

#### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of CRC shall be to:

A. Study and discuss topics under consideration by the Board of Education and/or of interest to the community. Subcommittee written reports should be researched, written and presented to the whole CRC for approval prior to presentation to the Board of Education.

B. Review the Local District Program Plan and present suggested revisions to the Board of Education. To evaluate progress made in meeting the *Systems Goals* of the Program Plan.

C. Educate the CRC membership about educational issues the membership deems appropriate. CRC members should be informed about community educational issues.

#### III. BASIC POLICIES

The CRC is a citizens' committee composed of representatives from all parts of the community.

C. New CRC members may attend the joint May meeting to observe the proceedings, but may not vote on the submitted reports. At the May meeting they shall actively participate in discussions about future study topics. New CRC members vote for officers at the June election meeting.

D. Membership on CRC carries with it several requirements:

1. Any member of CRC who misses three meetings the first year will be ineligible to serve on CRC for the second year of the term, and the sponsoring organization shall replace said member.
2. All subcommittee members have the responsibility to attend their subcommittee meetings and participate fully in the development of a report according to the group's timeline.
3. Members should make every effort to attend Board of Education meetings. All non-officer members will be assigned board observer responsibility for a minimum of one regularly-scheduled Board of Education meeting.

Revised Policy Adopted: March 18, 1985  
Revised April 18, 1994



# BULLYING

A report by the Subcommittee on Bullying  
of the Community Review Committee  
Wilmette School District #39  
May, 1994

Jan Friedland  
Ron Gilbert  
Tom Hirsh  
Ann Jonaitis  
Jesse Markow  
Joy Pickens

Final

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**2. The psychological and social consequences of bullying can be severe.**

A British organization studied 4,000 children who called a telephone help line to complain about bullying or some other problem. Eight per cent of the students felt it had affected their lives to the point that they had tried suicide, had run away, refused to go to school or been chronically ill.<sup>2</sup>

Over the long run, the bully may suffer, too. A U.S. study that started with 870 eight-year-olds found that by age 19, those who had been most aggressive as kids were 3 times more likely to have been in trouble with the law. A Norwegian study found that 60% of childhood bullies had at least one criminal conviction by age 23, and 40% had three convictions, compared to 10% for the general population.<sup>10</sup>

**3. Bullying could result in a lawsuit against the school district. Victims have won lawsuits in some other districts.**

The courts are taking steps to see that the schools in the United States are accountable for providing non-hostile, non-threatening environments for students. They maintain that an educational climate should be provided that would guarantee an equal education to all.

Bullying can result in legal action and the District can be at financial risk when an educational climate is not maintained for students to learn in a non-threatening manner. In a recent WJHS inservice on sexual harassment (March 4), attorneys advising the District reported that Title 9 guarantees a student's private right of action free of bullying or harassment. In a case involving an incident of bullying in New Jersey, U. S. Supreme Court Justices Powell and O'Connor wrote "apart from education, the school has the obligation to protect pupils from mistreatment from other students." Therefore, it is evident that a clear, consistent policy for dealing with bullying problems in District 39 schools should be firmly in place.

Recent court cases illustrate that accountability for bullying acts, acts of aggression, and sexual harassment are in process or have been settled. The following court cases illustrate the need for a firm district policy:

The mother of a student who was killed by a neighborhood bully sued the City of New York and The Board of Education. The Appellate Courts held that the defendants voluntarily assumed a duty to protect the student from the bully and the defendants breached that duty.

## Survey of District 39 Programs That Relate to Bullying

### Student Instruction

Central	First grade unit on kindness, given by social worker Second grade four-month unit on good citizenship given by social worker; once a week visits by social worker on topics of social growth Fourth grade stress management classes
Romona	Second grade kindness program given by social worker Fourth grade stress management classes
Harper	"Kindness is contagious" Fourth grade stress management classes
McKenzie	"No Put Downs" campaign "Book of Winners" rewarding kindness Fourth grade stress management classes
WJHS	"No Put Downs" campaign Sixth grade Skills for Adolescents class taught by social workers -- may include "World of Difference" unit on stereotyping and ethnic differences

### Support Services

Central	Conflict Resolution Program -- faculty, 15 parents, and 40 students involved in current program for third and fourth graders
Romona	Second graders trained to seek out social worker if victimized
Harper	NSSSED "Kids on the Block"
McKenzie	NSSSED "Kids on the Block" Social worker teaching problem-solving skills to third graders
All elementary schools	Principal as recordkeeper and counselor "Snowflurry" half-day program for second graders sponsored by WJHS Student Advisory Committee



### Recommendations -- Summary

1. The District should establish a policy on bullying which includes a broad definition of bullying, so that cruel behavior cannot be rationalized as "normal" conflict between kids.
2. This definition should be communicated on a regular basis to all staff, students and parents. All schools must hold to the same standard.
3. Students should be trained to report bullying whenever they experience it or witness it.
4. If bullying is reported, then some action must be taken. Administrative guidelines should be established to handle these cases, and the guidelines should be consistent throughout the district.
5. Teachers should be trained to recognize the signs of bullying. They should also learn to identify children who might be especially vulnerable to bullying, and learn techniques that can be used in the classroom to strengthen the most vulnerable kids.
6. Support staff should also be involved in a comprehensive approach dealing with bullying. Bus drivers, custodians, secretaries, playground supervisors, et al. should receive annual training in district policy and strategy.
7. In order for this district policy to succeed, parents must be involved.

The committee is interested in a unified effort that is communicated to all members of the school community. The expectations for behavior should not change from building to building or bus to bus. It is particularly important that we work as a District and not a group of separate schools.

**3. Students should be trained to report bullying whenever they experience it or witness it.**

In the Toronto study, 53% of the kids who were bullied told their teacher about it and 36% told their parents, but 28% told neither.<sup>12</sup> Students and parents in District 39 have reported that victims are reluctant to relate incidents of bullying for fear of retaliation or fear of being labelled a tattletale.

We need to send a clear message to our children that bullying is unacceptable and must be reported, whether they are victims or bystanders. Bystanders can provide critical support for victims by reporting the bullying or intervening to stop it.

"Silence and secrecy undermine the power of the school and affirm the power of the bully," wrote the authors of a Scottish study on bullying. "Teachers can give their pupils the message that speaking out about bullying is sneaking, that telling is weakness, even deliberate trouble-making...In some schools the reaction to uncovering bullying was to find a way of removing the victim. Such behavior defines bullying as acceptable in that school, provided it is kept out of sight...To be seen to act is important as taking action--silence and secrecy nurture bullying."<sup>7</sup>

Of particular interest is a program begun in January, 1994 at Central School. The peer mediation program, which is a beginning type of conflict resolution, encourages students to come forward with their disputes and differences in order to determine a fair resolution under the guidance of a mediator. Third and fourth grade students are trained to act as mediators. Parents are trained to monitor the sessions. The children follow a set negotiating plan. The plan includes the following steps:

1. Agree to negotiate.
2. Gather points of view.
3. Find common interests.
4. Create win-win options.
5. Evaluate options.
6. Create an agreement.

The goal of this program is to help the participants become aware of their choices in conflict situations, and to enable them to resolve conflict in their lives with confidence and independence. By bringing both sides of a conflict together, this program can help both the bully and the victim improve their lives. However, some bullies would not be interested in such a meeting. For that



- VI. School personnel should be on the alert for symptoms of bullying.
  - VII. Identify a complaint procedure for teachers, staff and students to follow when they encounter bullying. The procedure should:
    - A. Tell students what is likely to happen when a complaint is made (detailed investigation procedure).
    - B. Protect confidentiality.
    - C. Protect against retaliation.
    - D. Require that appropriate action be taken.
    - E. Describe a system for recordkeeping.
  - VIII. Keep professional staff informed about latest research on bullying.
  - IX. Develop a student code of conduct. Be consistent about enforcing it and give students a part in developing it.
5. Teachers should be trained to recognize the signs of bullying. They should also learn to identify children who might be especially vulnerable to bullying, and learn techniques that can be used in the classroom to strengthen the most vulnerable kids.

Michele Elliot, in her book, "Bullying, A Practical Guide for Schools", lists some of the telltale signs of bullying. She says a child who is being bullied may:

- be frightened of walking to or from school
- be unwilling to go to school and make continual excuses to avoid going
- beg to be driven to school
- change their route to school every day
- begin doing poorly in their schoolwork
- regularly have clothes or books or schoolwork torn or destroyed
- come home starving (because lunch money was taken)
- become withdrawn
- start stammering
- start acting out or hitting other children (as a reaction to being bullied by those children or others)
- stop eating or become obsessively clean (as a reaction to being called 'fatty' or 'dirty')
- develop stomach-aches and headaches due to stress
- attempt suicide

7. In order for this district policy to succeed, parents must be involved.

Inform them of the definition of bullying and related guidelines and procedures. Parents should know what resources are available in the District. Bullying should be addressed in a program sponsored by the PTA/PTO or the District. The parent pamphlet on bullying should be included in regular district mailings, i.e., registration packet or school newsletter.



# BULLYING

As parents we want our children to be in a safe school environment, where everyone treats everyone else with respect. We do not want them to be either bullies or victims of bullies. But sometimes we see that this is not the case.

Bullying is the act of  
hurting,  
frightening,  
threatening,  
embarrassing,  
intimidating,  
excluding, or  
controlling someone  
by a student or a group of students  
using physical, verbal, or psychological means.

It may be one incident or a series of repeated incidences. A bullying incident may manifest itself in name-calling, petty theft, extortion of money, harsh pranks, ethnic, racial, or gender slurs, assault, sexual molestation, rage, or a minor jostling in the halls.

The results of bullying are widespread. The effect of bullying on the victim can range from absenteeism and underachievement to

is always important to let others know if you are being bullied or if someone else is being bullied.

**\*Why is Everyone Always Picking on Me?** by Terrence Webster-Doyle. This book is written for both the victim and the bully. It describes the victim and bully and provides exercises for teaching each person to change his/her behavior. The methods used are often based on the principles of the Martial Arts. The author was bullied as a child and found this discipline to be helpful to him.

Middle grades:

**\*Tell Me Your Best Thing,** Anna Grossnickle Hines, 1991. Sophie, a timid third-grader, is ridiculed by the class bully, Charlotte. Her spunky friend, Jill, stands up for her - but even Jill is not perfect. Somehow Sophie has to be able to defend herself.

**\*A Bundle of Sticks,** Pat Rhoads Mauser, 1982. Eleven year old Ben is beaten up and taunted by another boy in his class. He learns an oriental style of self defense kajukenbo and learns to accept himself as someone who will never fight.

Junior High:

**\*When Kids Drive Kids Crazy** by Eda Leshan. This book is filled with anecdotes dealing with a wide variety of adolescent problems. It explores why kids behave differently with one another and what they can do to change behavior. While offering many solutions and providing information on problems encountered in peer relationships, the book focuses on positive actions and encourages responsible behavior.

**\*The Chocolate War** by Robert Cormier. This novel details the misuse and abuse of power in a high school. Jerry Renault, a freshman, refuses to sell chocolates for a school fund raiser. He becomes a hero by refusing and then an outcast when he is bullied. The book illustrates the terror and panic experienced by some, who under pressure, do things they do not want to do but lack the courage to defy the system. Jerry has the courage to follow his convictions and remain honorable despite paying the consequences for doing so.

2. When a parent learns that bullying is taking place at school, the first person to be contacted should be the classroom teacher or teachers responsible for the children. Together the adults should try to understand why this is happening and work toward a



**\*National Lewis University, 2840 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60201, 708-256-5150, ext. 2101, Dr. Diane Salmon of the Center for Learning; "Friendship Groups" focus on problem solving and conflict management**

As parents we do all we can to help our children grow up as strong, caring, productive individuals. Developing a healthy identity and an understanding of others is a long term process. When problems arise, as they inevitably will, we nurture the skills and qualities within our children so they can cope. We trust we have the wisdom to know when this is not sufficient and outside help, from ourselves or others, is necessary. We live in a community that cares very much for its children and has many resources to benefit them.

COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

WILMETTE DISTRICT 39

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS  
FOR CHILDREN AT RISK  
AND  
CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL TALENTS  
OR INTERESTS  
JUNE 1994

Subcommittee Members

Gwen Andersen, Co-chair  
Mary Charles  
Anne Dooley  
Ellen Falkof, Co-chair  
Holly Goldin



C.R.C. REPORT ON EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS  
FOR CHILDREN AT RISK AND CHILDREN WITH  
SPECIAL TALENTS OR INTERESTS

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Last year's C.R.C. subcommittee on how volunteers are used in District 39 recommended that District 39's Board of Education consider establishing a tutoring program for children who are struggling in the classroom but who are not receiving assistance through our learning disabilities program. This year C.R.C. decided to have our subcommittee determine whether other schools have been able to establish successful tutoring or other extra-curricular programs for these at risk students and to recommend whether any such programs should be considered for District 39 students.

Additionally, last year District 39 eliminated a program for gifted students known as the extended enrichment program (EEP). This program was offered to selected students as part of their classroom time. EEP was the subject of a detailed analysis by last year's C.R.C. While the District is establishing its new curriculum for these students, we decided to examine extra-curricular programs which schools offer to students with special interests and talents. We focused on programs that supplement a school's curriculum for these students. We did not repeat the work of last year's C.R.C. subcommittee which focused on how schools deliver their gifted/accelerated programs during normal classroom hours.

A. For purposes of this report, we established the following definitions:

1. "At Risk" - students who are struggling in one or more academic areas but do not qualify for special support services such as a learning disabilities or ESL program. This definition is similar to the criteria that District 39 uses to determine which students a teacher should recommend for District 39's Summer School supportive math or reading programs. Teachers are asked to recommend students that are at least one year below grade level and who are not receiving special support services. For summer school in 1993, 115 students were recommended.

2. "Special Skills Students" - students who exhibit special skills or interests in one or more areas.

B. This report summarizes and analyzes information from the following sources:

1. Periodicals and books concerning the various



punishing and demeaning." 2. This early learning defeat emanates primarily from reading difficulties. The consequences of this failure to read are severe because these students often develop poor self-concepts as learners which potentially places them at risk for all future school subjects. As explained by Susan Winebrenner, an educational consultant recently in-servicing District 39 teachers, poor readers are not going to "student" any better than they read. 3. Three specific remedial reading programs, Reading Recovery, Success for All, and Project Prevent\* have curriculum and materials developed to successfully target early reading reinforcement. 4. These innovative programs are conducted during the school day by specifically educated teachers. There also are some integrated computer-assisted instruction programs like Writing to Read which have documented statistics of student improvement.

The most basic overall strategy for answering the at risk student's needs centers on the classroom teacher's ability to incorporate a variety of learning styles into the delivery of information and materials. A broadened delivery approach accommodates a spectrum of learning styles allowing students whose learning styles deviate from the norm to more equitably access the education. Teacher sensitivity to a variety of learning styles exemplifies the mandate verbalized by education expert Rita Dunn, "When students cannot learn the way we teach them, we must teach them the way they learn." 5.

Beyond implementation of various classroom strategies, the needs of at risk students are also met through the effective use of tutoring programs. Research documenting the success of reciprocal peer tutoring, 6., adult volunteer tutoring, 7., and one-on-one teacher tutoring outlines the merits of each approach. While the immediate results of all tutoring are positive, the largest and longest-lasting effects of all tutoring programs are the models which use teachers as tutors in one-on-one situations.

### III. DISTRICT 39'S EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS FOR AT RISK AND SPECIAL SKILLS STUDENTS

A. With the exception of a small program at Romona and tutoring offered by the Junior High Coalition of Wilmette, District 39 does not have any organized program to assist at risk students outside of normal classroom hours. Without additional compensation, some teachers throughout the District provide special assistance to their students outside of normal classroom hours. These tutoring efforts are not coordinated by the District. Thus there is not consistent availability of teachers or widespread awareness of this option among students and parents.

At Romona, there is a joint program with Wilmette Junior High where sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students come to Romona once a week to meet with students individually. These students work with Romona students academically in the classroom and then have



### 3. McKenzie:

-This year, McKenzie started the "McClubs" program which offers several after school options. These programs are staffed in part by teachers who are paid extra but also by parents on both a paid and volunteer basis. Information on McClubs is attached as Appendix C.

- Great Books
- Chess Club
- Chorus - Grades 3-5
- Computer Club
- Drama - 2 sections: Primary and Intermediate
- Earth Club - Grades K-2
- Science Club - 2 sections: Primary and Intermediate
- Drop in computer lab

### 4. Romona:

- PTA sponsors Great Books and Foreign Language Club
- Wilmette Junior High provides leaders (6th and 7th grade students) for the following:
  1. Chess Club
  2. Board Game Club
  3. Crafts activities

### 5. Wilmette Junior High School:

- Actors Workshop and Performance Ensemble
- Art Club
- Band/Music Club
- Drama (2 sections - Primary and Intermediate)
- Green Machine (Environmental Club)
- Math Club (Accelerated math students only)
- Peace Corps
- Science Club - 2 sections - Primary and Intermediate
- School Yearbook Club
- Stage Crew Club
- Student Advisory Committee
- Student Council
- WJHS Chorale

A description of the programs at the Junior High is attached as Appendix D.

## IV. Summary of Key Findings of Surveys

We contacted 20 elementary grade schools in an attempt to



Battle of the Books  
Chicago Tribune Stock Market Project  
Comic Book Club  
Decision Making  
French Club  
Great Books  
School Newspaper  
Band and Jazz Ensemble  
Problem Solving  
Stargazers

\*Oakton School (K-5th grade)  
Evanston - District 65

TLC - Tomorrow's Leading Coaches - is a tutoring program offered in conjunction with Chute middle school. The 6th-8th graders come to Oakton twice a week for a hour each day and are paired with a student in need of assistance in some area. A Middle School teacher and an Oakton teacher coordinate the program. The tutors are chosen to participate in TLC because they are somewhat lacking in self esteem but are good (not great) in math. The Oakton teachers recommend the students to be tutored. They try to make the program fun for all the kids. The tutors are given a t-shirt and a special bag with tutoring materials. They are trained by teachers. Their payment is a trip to Great America. At the end of the year there is a party for everyone in the program. TLC has been operation for four years and is very successful. The program is funded by the school district but costs are limited.

A Chess Club is run by a volunteer parent and is very successful.

Great Books and Oratorical Speaking are currently teacher run.

Junior Engineers is an after school program for students who have a strong interest and ability in science. A teacher runs the program and uses a Northwestern graduate student to teach some science units.

\*Shabone School (Grades 4-5)  
Northbrook - District 27

Positive Peer Group is a program designed to help students learn appropriate social and interpersonal skills. It is offered over lunch once a week. The program was begun because they felt that kids were not



school.

**\*Willard School (K-5th grade)**  
Evanston - District 65

A teacher-student volunteer tutoring program is offered after school to help kids struggling in one or more subject areas. Teachers volunteer to tutor children in their own classroom. The district pays for a snack and bus transportation. The tutoring takes place once a week for 45 minutes. Fifty percent of the teachers participate.

PTA sponsors computer and foreign language clubs. Parents pay a fee to compensate the teachers.

**\*Lincolnwood School (K-5th)**  
Evanston - District 65

The PTA sponsors a before school program called "Books, Breakfast and Beyond" where students come for a breakfast snack and a story which is read by a parent. Teachers identify students who could benefit from the program but anyone can participate.

The PTA runs a computer club, language clubs, and a science club.

**\*Marie Murphy Middle School (6th-8th grade)**  
Avoca

The math lab is open and staffed both before school and at lunch for students who want or need extra help.

**\*Westbrook (K-3)**  
Glenview

A family "Science Night" is held two or three times each year. Students come with their parents and visit different hands-on stations.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our research there are opportunities to improve the outlook for students who are at risk academically but who do not qualify for our existing learning disabilities programs. The two subjects most often cited as problematic are reading and math but obviously failure to master these academic areas will affect performance in almost all areas of the curriculum. Children who require some repetition or special attention to master basic



where they should be in reading or math. These same students would be likely candidates for before school tutoring. Currently, teachers who tutor one child receive anywhere from \$25.00 to \$60.00 per hour. Assuming enrollment of approximately 115 students and a 10 to 1 student/teacher ratio (the ratio provided for in remedial summer school classes) we project these tutoring services would cost approximately \$42,000 per year. This figure is based on a tutoring fee of \$35.00 per hour, 3 hours per week, 35 weeks per year, or a \$3,500 salary for 12 teachers.

Funding could come from parents of participating students, District 39, or the Angel Fund. For perspective, if the fee were partially subsidized by parents it would still be considerably less than the hourly rate charged by some local tutors. Conversely, if the District funded the program it would probably still be less expensive than the costs of later remediation for many students.

Many members of the Junior High teaching staff already arrive early each day to provide assistance for students who are struggling. However, some students who would benefit most do not seem to be aware of the availability of tutoring or to understand how the pass system works. In order to increase the awareness of parents and students, we recommend the administration "formalize" these tutoring services and publicize them. At-risk students and their parents need to understand who will be available, when they will be available, what services they will provide, and how students can take advantage of available services.

Once the administration formalizes the availability of before school tutoring, we recommend a memo be sent to all parents describing the tutoring program and outlining instructions for participation. At the grade schools, the memo should encourage parents to contact their child's teacher to arrange participation. At the Junior High, the memo could outline how the pass system works. These memos should be sent to the parents several times during the year to maintain high awareness of these services.

2. Extra-curricular enrichment programs that provide stimulation for students with special interests and skills are extremely valuable and should be implemented district-wide. These specific skill-oriented workshops would offer a spectrum of related educational activities. The workshop format provides for classes of limited duration which allows a child flexibility of choices during the year. Curriculum suggestions for these workshops could be found from the EEP program's curriculum or from programs like Northwestern University's Center for Talent Development's brochures and Oakton Community College's Kids' College. (Appendix D). Kids' College is one of the programs administered by the Main, Oakton, Niles, Northfield Adult and Continuing Education Program ("MONNACEP") at Oakton College.

While qualified parent volunteers may be available to organize these programs, faculty members should teach the workshops and be paid a stipend for their efforts. This stipend could be at least partially funded by user fees like before-school foreign language



WILMETTE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
DISTRICT #39  
COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE  
BUDGET REDUCTIONS  
SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT  
JUNE - 1994

Terry Chess  
Ellen Feldman  
Ralph Klinge  
Maria S. Ochs  
Jeff Sherman



## INTRODUCTION

The task of this subcommittee was to examine the budget reduction process and to suggest guidelines or criteria that could be applied in the future if the need for budget cutting ever arises again.

We have interviewed current school board members and representatives from the current administration, as well as superintendents and/or business managers from several other school districts in the area. Additionally, interviews were held with several education finance experts from three universities. (See Exhibit I for list and background report for summaries.)

One thing we learned is that although it may become necessary to make sudden, large budget reductions, it is far better to prepare for their possibility. And the best time to plan for this situation is when the road ahead looks smooth.

What follows are specific recommendations concerning four areas the subcommittee feels would facilitate any budget reduction process in the future. These are:

- Incorporation of five-year planning models
- Reformulation of a district Finance Committee
- Modification of the existing financial calendar
- Suggested criteria for actual reductions

But first, some background to help understand why the scope of these recommendations is far greater than just developing a list of budget cutting criteria. And that the best time to act on these notions is now.

## BACKGROUND

Public education in America is entering perilous times. The future of real estate tax-based funding is in question. Currently, thirty states are fighting lawsuits over spending disparities due to variations in local property taxes --or else have had their laws invalidated. <sup>1</sup> Illinois is one of them. And locally, tax-cap legislation seems more a certainty than ever.

What avenues do we as a district have to help smooth out any unforeseen financial difficulties? The federal government? Hardly. Total U.S. Government aid to education has declined. Nationally, total U.S. aid was 9.8% of school expenditures in 1980 and is currently about 1% in District 39. State aid to the district amounts to roughly 6% of revenues (an amount probably far less than the percentage of expenditures for state-mandated programs), and Illinois overall ranks somewhere low in the mid-forties of all states for education funding.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

### FIVE-YEAR PLAN-BUDGET MODEL

Prudent business planning in the uncertain environment surrounding public school financing is necessary to protect the financial integrity of District 39. The essence of planning is to analyze possible consequences of alternative actions beforehand. But as one government-funding expert explained, "Within the bounds of a single year, it is virtually impossible to make a genuine evaluation of alternatives." 3

#### Recommendations:

1. Develop a 5-year budget plan for all funds separately as well as in aggregate. The plan should include actuals from the previous year, the budget for the current year, and projections for four years out. See Exhibit A for a suggested format.
2. The 5 year budget plan should be tied to the strategic plan, aligning spending with academic priorities.
3. Develop expenditure projections for the first year that are +5% and -5% of the anticipated budget in the event revenues significantly exceed or fall short of plan.
4. Increase the unreserved fund balance for contingencies from its current 2% to 5% in increments over the next three years.

#### Rationale:

Long range planning from a strategic sense has already been put in place in District 39 with the development and revision of the current Strategic Plan. Forward thinking must be linked with forward spending to make the concepts in the academic strategic plan a reality. One benefit, summarized by public funding experts, is that "...activities of the school district are to be placed in the program budget in view of their interrelationships not only with other activities in the current year, but also with other activities over time." 4

Examination of several surrounding Districts found long-range planning in place. Glenview and Winnetka have 5-year budget plans, Schaumburg a 3-year budget plan, and Deerfield also stressed the need for long-range planning. Exhibit A, a prototype summary for District 39, was based on the details of the 5-year budget model in place in Winnetka District 36.



## RECOMMENDATION II

### REFORMULATION OF THE DISTRICT FINANCE COMMITTEE

About one year ago, the District 39 School Board suspended the Finance Committee concept so that the entire board could focus on the district's financial situation. This was appropriate for the times.

During our research, however, we discovered several other Districts that have Finance Committees composed of individuals other than school board members only.

They were, along with their varying compositions:

#### Schaumburg District 54

- 2 school board members
- 2 union presidents
- 2 citizens
- 2 business people, such as bankers
- School Business Manager

#### Glenview District 34

- School board member
- Superintendent
- Business manager
- 3 teachers
- President of the association
- Business Manager
- Board president sits in on meetings

#### Deerfield District 68

- 3 school board members
- Superintendent
- Business Manager

Also, although the entire Board sits on the Finance Committee at Skokie District 68, a Strategic Planning Action Committee is being formed which would have a Financial subgroup. (See Exhibit C)

#### We recommend the following Finance Committee composition for Wilmette District 39:

- 2 board members
- 2 teachers
- 2 citizens, with business or education backgrounds
- Business Manager

Re-creation of an expanded District 39 Finance Committee would provide several benefits: 1) professional expertise, 2) broader involvement, and 3) community contact, "which can be useful when critical decisions are before the governing body." 8



### RECOMMENDATION III

#### REVISING THE DISTRICT FINANCIAL CALENDAR

This proposed budget cycle revision takes all of the current budget planning elements, but accelerates the budget process to allow more time to make changes, if necessary. Budget approval would be completed about two months earlier than at present. Some school board members deemed this desirable since the district forms teacher hiring strategy in March.

Also, public hearings on the proposed budget could be better publicized. Besides mentions in the District 39 Bulletin and Wilmette Life, a special letter or postcard to District residents may heighten awareness and involvement in the budget process.

It is further suggested that a quarterly financial statement or "budget snapshot" be given to the school board. The object is to catch potential problems before they become actual problems. The public version should eliminate all the usual pie charts and bar graphs and utilize a simple profit statement with income, expenses, and cash balances similar to the school PTO report included in Exhibit D.

The current twice-yearly statement of financial condition should continue to be made available to District 39 residents. For comparison reasons, we are including a financial calendar for another Cook County school district--Exhibit E.

A revised calendar follows, beginning with the next levy period ahead of us.



May

- Week 3 July committee of the whole meeting: review of  
1993-94 budgets, tentative 1994-95 budget  
and 5-Year Plan
- Week 4 July regular board meeting: approval of  
tentative 1994-95 budget  
Approve budget requirements: set date for  
public hearing in July and publish legal  
notice in June

June

- Week 2 Legal notice published re: 1994-95 budget

July

- Week 2 Hold public hearing on 1994-95 legal budget  
Week 3 Hold public hearing on 1994-95 legal budget  
Week 4 Adopt 1994-95 legal budget/5-Year Plan  
Quarterly financial statement to the board

August

Nothing scheduled

September

- Week 3 Adopt estimated 1994 estimated tax levy  
resolutions
- Week 4 Approve 1993 tax levy requirements and set dates  
for public hearing and publication of legal  
notice

October

- Week 4 Quarterly financial statement to Board  
-start over-



We recommend a variation on the criteria proposed by Dr. Herman in his article included in Exhibit G.

Ideally, any budgetary cut that will be made should be made with the knowledge of the actual net savings of the cut. For example, the elimination of a position may cause the payment of higher premiums for unemployment compensation.

A suggested prioritization of criteria could be as follows:

1. All rational non-curriculum income-producing activities will be investigated, such as building rentals or bus leasing.
2. Non-academic extra-curricular activities will be reevaluated if they are not self-supporting. Special care should be paid to a non-gender bias in any reductions.
3. Support services will be reduced as much as possible before any reductions are made in student educational programs. (Food service would be made self-supporting, for example.)
4. Although program dollars may have to be cut, no core program should be totally eliminated as a first option. Re-start up costs can become prohibitive. If any programs are considered no longer germane or necessary, they should be eliminated during a general review. (See Recommendation I.)

We suggest, as well, that the staff and community be involved in developing cost-cutting ideas, that their ideas be given serious consideration, but that the final decisions rest with the Board. Also, it is crucial that these decisions be made in open, publicized school board meetings.

One idea, proposed by Dr. Herman, was to hire a facilitator to come into the District to run a large public hearing dealing with specific cuts. "The bigger the cuts, the bigger the group," he feels. Another approach could be to prioritize functions within departments/programs so minimal reductions can be made across several areas to achieve the dollars needed. (Exhibit H) As an additional resource, we are including a bibliography of public funding, budgeting, and management in Exhibit J.

Overall, we should keep in mind that the District's core academic program is our most valuable asset. We should attempt to achieve any cost savings without affecting it, whenever possible.

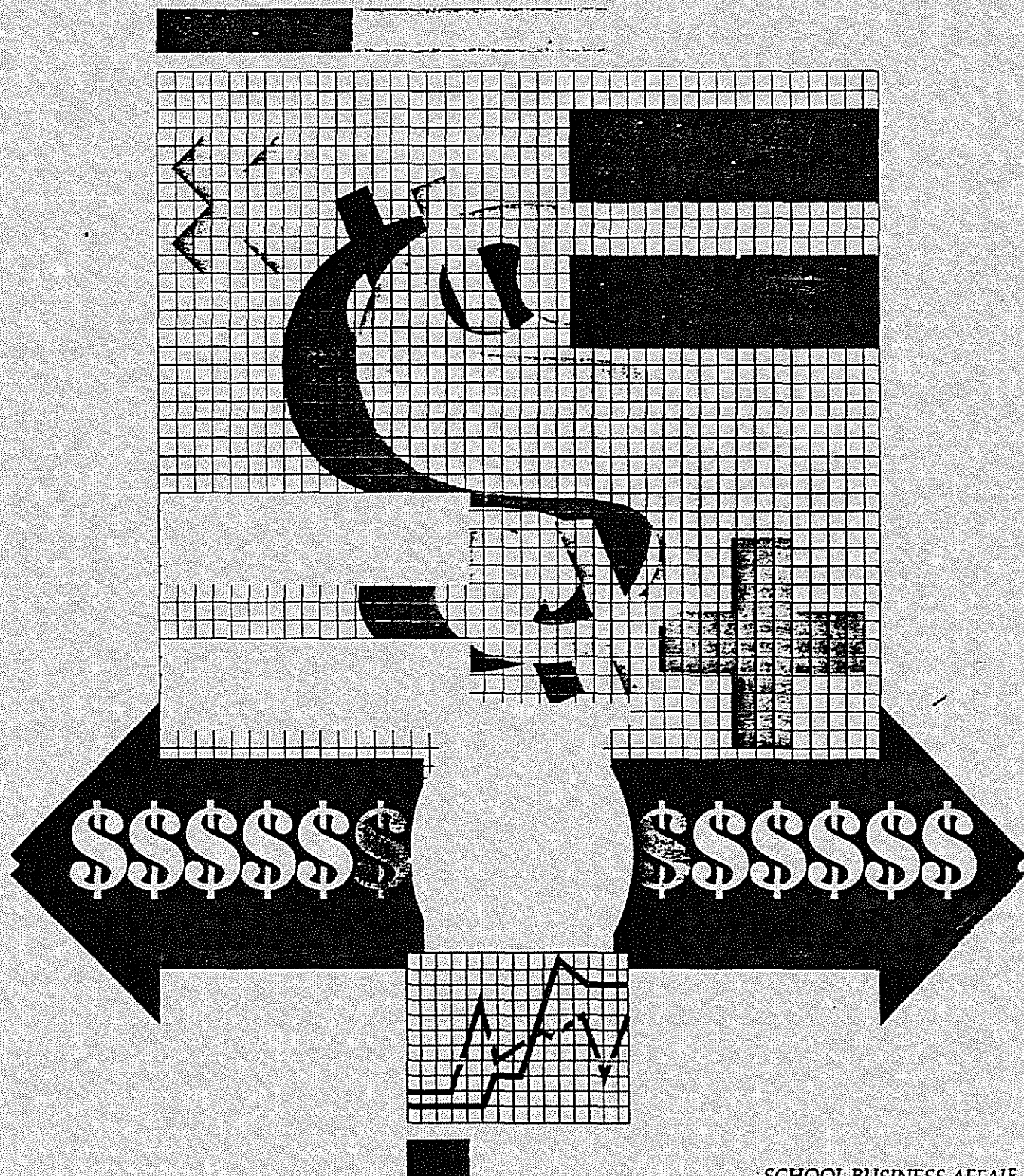


## APPENDIX



# Unreserved Fund Balance and Public School System Finance

◆ By Ian J. Allen





categories based on the purpose of the monies held. Figure 1 shows typical fund balance accounts.

Unreserved fund balance is often subdivided into designated and undesignated portions. The former reflect tentative management plans for future financial resource use, such as the replacement of equipment.<sup>1</sup>

Other designations include "for contingencies" and "for appropriation in future years."

Undesignated portions of unreserved fund balance represent expendable available financial resources that can be used to meet contingencies and working capital requirements.

The focus of this article will be on the unreserved fund balance that public school systems maintain in their general fund for contingencies and which is available for use in the event a system experiences financial difficulty. The general fund is singled out because it contains the bulk of monies appropriated for school system operations. Most school systems seeking to set aside financial resources for contingencies assign them to the general fund's unreserved fund balance, either in the "unreserved, undesignated" account or in the "unreserved, designated for contingencies" account. Some school systems create a separate fund for contingencies or financial emergencies, such as a budget stabilization or "rainy day" fund.

It is important to note that:

■ Unreserved fund balance resources "designated for contingencies" can be made available for

<sup>1</sup> The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants' (AICPA) audit and accounting guide, *Audits of State and Local Governmental Units*, provides that "such designations should be supported by definitive plans and approved by the government's chief executive officer or the legislature." It should also be noted, however, that section 1800.124 of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board's 1990 Codification of Governmental Accounting and Financial Reporting Standards states, "such plans or intent are subject to change and may never be legally authorized or result in expenditures. Designated portions of fund balance represent financial resources available to finance expenditures other than those tentatively planned."

**FIGURE 1**  
**Typical Fund Balance Accounts**

■	Reserved for advances to other funds
■	Reserved for debt service
■	Reserved for encumbrances
■	Reserved for endowments
■	Reserved for fixed assets held for resale
■	Reserved for inventories
■	Reserved for noncurrent loans receivable
■	Reserved for prepaid items
■	Reserved for disability
■	Unreserved
■	Unreserved, designated (for specific purposes)
■	Unreserved, undesignated

self-insurance purposes, although they would not be restricted to that use; and

■ School systems may have some flexibility in transferring resources between some of the reserved fund balance accounts and the unreserved fund balance account, although resources assigned to legally restricted reserve accounts could not be utilized in this manner (legal restrictions on transfers between reserve accounts vary from state to state). This flexibility may improve the ability of school systems to respond to a fiscal crisis, although movements of this type may constitute an abuse of the fund balance reserve account structure.

### Why Is an Unreserved Fund Balance Necessary?

Two important goals of public school systems are the maintenance of a stable stream of revenue from the real property tax and the orderly provision of instructional and support services to students. Such stability is necessary for maintaining or improving the system's credit standing, but can be threatened by uncertainty emanating from a number of areas; foremost is economic uncertainty.

### Economic Uncertainty

Determining how well the local or regional economy will perform and its subsequent impact on school system finances is one of the more difficult tasks facing the school business official. Changes in economic activity affect both

revenues and spending, with the effects varying from system to system. Of critical importance to school systems attempting to maintain fiscal stability is that the growth in revenues continue to match or exceed the growth in expenditures.

The finances of school systems that are dependent upon governments that are reliant on economically sensitive revenues, such as general sales or income taxes, will be more affected by a downturn in the economy than school systems and governments that are dependent on more stable tax sources, such as the real property tax.

The economic situation is more complicated for dependent school systems which receive their funding through county or municipal governments. Those systems generally receive a contribution from their "parent" government that reflects the economic and fiscal climate faced by that government. If that government is experiencing fiscal problems, that is quite often passed through to the dependent school system.

The former are more likely to benefit from the maintenance of an adequate level of unreserved fund balance. Public school systems that are dependent on the real property tax may also be affected by an economic slowdown, particularly if the market value of real estate and assessed values decline. In addition, economic downturns may contribute to the loss of major taxpayers in some jurisdictions, severely depressing



contingencies and other purposes. Such a policy provides taxpayers with an explanation of why financial resources have been set aside and the conditions under which such resources will be expended. While this policy should cover all fund balance accounts, this article limits its focus to those accounts used for contingencies.

A public school system's fund balance policy should address:

- Setting aside financial resources for contingencies;
- Allocating financial resources to unreserved fund balance (or a budget stabilization fund);
- Utilizing unreserved fund balance resources; and
- Determining the appropriate size of unreserved fund balance (or budget stabilization fund).

Some school systems included a statement regarding the level of financial resources that they will set aside for contingencies in the Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (SSAP) or the letter of transmittal accompanying the system's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). These policy statements, along with the system's comprehensive financial policy, should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to reflect current economic and financial conditions.

### Setting Aside Financial Resources for Contingencies

Public school systems committed to setting aside financial resources to hedge against economic and other forms of uncertainty can choose among the following options:

- The fund balance of the general fund;
- A fund established specifically

for budget stabilization or "rainy day" purposes; or

- Other funds.

### General Fund

The general fund provides the simplest and most direct way of

setting aside financial resources for contingencies. Allocating such resources to the general fund's unreserved fund balance makes clear the system's policy regarding the establishment and maintenance of financial resources for contingencies.

The main problem is that allocations to

*The main problem is that allocations to unreserved fund balance are readily identifiable and represent an attractive pool of monies . . . to both taxpayer and spending advocates.*

unreserved fund balance are readily identifiable and represent an attractive pool of monies that taxpayer advocates will eye for tax cuts and that spending advocates will eye for spending increases.

The major questions facing school business officials adopting this approach will be: "How can monies not be earmarked for something and be unavailable?"; and, "Under what circumstances can these monies be utilized?"

From an accounting perspective, it is preferable that financial resources set aside for contingencies be assigned to unreserved fund balance or a fund established specifically for that purpose. Resources allocated to unreserved fund balance should be either "designated for contingencies" or maintained as an "unreserved, undesignated" balance. Assigning such resources to the reserved fund balance accounts should be avoided as it could result in misleading financial statements.

### Budget Stabilization Funds

A number of governments, particularly at the state level, have established special funds to guard against the negative effects of an

economic downturn such as revenue shortfalls and increased expenditure demand. At present, 35 states have established budget stabilization or "rainy day" funds to guard against these effects.

The availability of monies in such a fund can minimize the need for tax and spending changes during the fiscal year.

For more information on state budget stabilization funds, see the references at the end of this article.

### Other Funds

School business officials and other local government finance officers interested in the indirect approach to setting aside financial resources for contingencies have utilized a variety of funds, including self-insurance funds and claims reserve funds. The use of other funds represents the least obvious method of developing adequate levels of resources for contingencies, but has sometimes resulted in abuses of proper accounting standards and procedures.

It is important to note that there is no economic difference between the general fund, budget stabilization fund, and other funds alternatives. Total cash position will be the same, as will the amount available for use during a budget crisis and the amount withheld from current spending or for tax reduction.

There are other differences among the three approaches, however. Budget stabilization funds, for example, will almost always require the passage of enabling legislation prior to their creation, while the other two alternatives would not. This is a major drawback to the use of budget stabilization funds.

The other drawback to the budget stabilization approach is the high visibility of financial resources set aside in a fund established specifically for contingencies (also a problem for the general fund approach), which represents a tempting pool of monies to both taxpayer and spending advocates, a fact that underscores the need for a formal fund balance policy. Finally, the "other funds" approach is less desirable than the other two approaches because it is an



### Size of Unreserved Fund Balance

What level of unreserved fund balance should a public school system maintain? It should be directly related to the degree of uncertainty which it faces; the greater the uncertainty, the greater the financial resources necessary. Each school system must evaluate the risk it faces on an annual basis and decide the level of financial resources it wishes to maintain for contingencies. This evaluation will involve analyzing past experiences, including an examination of cash flows, and estimating the uncertainty currently faced.

Traditionally, two methods have been used in determining the appropriate size of unreserved fund balance:

- Allocating financial resources equal to a percentage of annual operating expenditures; and
- Allocating financial resources equal to a certain number of months' operating expenditures.

As a general rule, public school systems should maintain an amount equal to five percent of annual operating expenditures. To some extent, this standard has been supported by credit rating agencies. School systems facing greater uncertainty should maintain a higher level of unreserved fund balance.

Is there a level of unreserved fund balance that is considered excessive? An informal standard that is used by some general purpose governments holds that a balance over ten percent should be examined carefully. The City of Minneapolis, for example, has decided that it will not maintain an unreserved fund balance in excess of ten percent of annual expenditures so as to avoid "banking" the taxpayer's money. Auditors in the Office of the State Comptroller in New York also use this ten percent rule for determining excessive levels — although this is not a hard and fast rule. This in turn will satisfy the concerns of those analysts who consider a large unreserved fund balance to be unwarranted.

But there are other ways to calculate the unreserved fund balance. Some school systems use a method that involves setting the unreserved fund balance equal to a certain number of months of

operating expenditures. While the equivalent of one month's operating expenditures (8.3 percent of annual operating expenditures) is widely used, two to three months or more is not uncommon.

Like many other things in school and governmental finance, determining the appropriate level of unreserved fund balance for contingencies is an art, not a science. Past experience can be used as a guide, with attention paid to:

- School systems that are dependent upon governments with volatile revenue structures (such as those dependent on general sales tax revenues) will need a larger unreserved fund balance than other systems to provide the same stabilization result;
- School systems with greater ability to defer purchases can operate with a smaller unreserved fund balance than school systems which do not have such ability. (The payment of principal and interest on a government's outstanding debt obligations, of course, could not be deferred. At the same time, deferral of payments for other items, such as actuarially required pension contributions, may create or contribute to long-term financial problems. Given this, it is important that school systems examine the ramifications involving the deferral of purchases/expenditures very carefully.);
- School systems with consistent operating surpluses may not need a large unreserved fund balance;
- School systems with occasional or frequent operating deficits will need a larger unreserved fund balance; and
- School systems with uneven cash flows can minimize the need for short-term borrowing by maintaining a larger unreserved fund balance.

### Using Unreserved Fund Balance Resources

Criteria should be developed to guide the use of financial resources set aside for contingencies, whether those resources have been allocated to unreserved fund balance or to a fund established specifically for that purpose. Of critical importance are two questions:

- Under what circumstances should unreserved fund balance resources be utilized?; and
- Who should make the decision regarding their use?

The primary reason for using unreserved fund balance resources should be to alleviate unanticipated short-term budgetary problems, such as revenue shortfalls or budget deficits. These problems are often uncovered during routine analysis of a school system's cash flow patterns. Returning to the two major goals of public school system financial management, the resources should be utilized to stabilize real property tax revenues and ensure the orderly provision of instructional and support services to students. It would not be appropriate to use these resources in an attempt to solve long-term financial problems, which should be dealt with in other ways.

Often, the decision on whether to use financial resources set aside for contingencies is a political one, determined by spending needs or the desire to maintain tax stability. These decisions are typically made by the superintendent or the board of education. In this case also, a mechanism must be established for determining when those resources should be used. A number of methods are available, including:

- Supplemental appropriation of the resources to correct revenue shortfalls or budget deficits;
- Executive orders requiring the transfer of resources to operating accounts;
- Formula disbursement of the resources to various operating accounts; and
- Automatic appropriation or transfer in case of budget shortfalls.

### Conclusion

School business officials concerned about the possible effects of an economic downturn (or other external influences) on their school system's financial condition should consider the development of a sufficient level of unreserved fund balance that can be used for contingencies.

Determining what level of unreserved fund balance to



My assignment as a member of the committee exploring the budgeting process is the area of the finance committee. As former chairman of the finance committee of the Corporate Village of Wilmette we limited the finance committee to board members. This is true of other Municipal Governments.

In visiting neighboring school districts I found the finance committee could go beyond board members.

Schaumburg School District 54  
Business Mgr. Mathew Corby 885-6700  
Finance Committee:  
2 Union Presidents  
2 School Board Members  
2 Citizens  
2 Business people as bankers  
Business Mgr. Mr. Mathew Corby CPA.

Glenview School District 34  
Business Mgr. Robert Strand 998-5000  
Finance Committee:  
3 Teachers  
President of the Association  
School Supertendent  
Business Mgr.  
School Board member  
President sits in on meetings

Deerfield School District 109  
Business Mgr. Don Goers 945-1844  
Finance Committee:  
3 School Board Members  
Superintendent  
Business Mgr.

Skokie School District 68  
Business Mgr. James B. Frittz 676-9000  
Finance Committee:  
It handles finances as a board responsibility.  
Finances are handled at regular board meetings.  
No special Finance committee.

Note: On Skokie Dist. 68  
A Strategic Planning Action Committee is being formed. Three areas are: Student Achievement, Communication and Financial.  
They operate with a five year plan.



## BUDGET AND FINANCE

EXHIBIT E

### I. Budget Calendar

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| * Enrollment and Staff Projections  | Fall     |
| * Long-Term Financial Projections   | Fall     |
| - Short-Term Revenue Estimates  | Fall     |
| - Per-Pupil Allocations and Costs of Capital Equipment and Building Projects, Buses | Fall     |
| * Decision on Need for Program Adjustments  | Winter   |
| A. New Programs   | Winter   |
| B. Expenditure Reductions   | Winter   |
| - Staff Assignments Made  | Winter   |
| - Refinement of Revenue Projections   | Spring   |
| - Compilation of Expenditure Plans  | Spring   |
| - Salary Adjustments Estimated  | Spring   |
| - Budget Document Prepared  | Spring   |
| * Board Reviews Budget and Tax Levy   | July     |
| - Budget on Public Display  | July     |
| * Public Hearing and Adoption of Budget   | Fall     |
| * Board Reviews Tentative Tax Levy  | November |
| * Public Hearing and Adoption of Levy   | December |

- \* Points at which Board is informed or involved



involvement by stakeholders in the decision making process leads to better understanding and ultimately better support for the final decision(s) that is made.

Our district was aware of cost reduction efforts in other districts and noted that often times a plan was crafted, presented to a school board, and then a tumult of Biblical proportions ensued. In the end much time and further meetings occurred, political pressures overturned reductions, and hundreds of people became involved. We decided to reverse this process, get the involvement up front instead of at the end. You are going to pay a psychic price and it might as well come sooner rather than later. Our District has been chided in a low key manner for having such a large committee and for spending so much time on the process. We agree, we did these things, but (a) our budget reductions went through intact, and (b) other districts end up with just as much time and people only in the form of complainants at the end of the process.

### HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?

#### BASE QUALITY

The definition of 'base quality' is the first of several key steps. Base quality represents a set of criteria that cannot be violated by a cost saving alternative recommendation from any of the committees. The criteria that constitute the definition are approved by the board, and represent definite mandates for the district.

1. Recommendations must not result in a federal mandate being violated.
2. Recommendations must not result in a state law or DESE rule/regulation being violated.
3. Recommendations must not result in a violation of the district's existing level of attainment toward the minimum standards set forth in the Missouri School Improvement Program.

Additional criteria may be added, keeping in mind that base quality should represent a rigorous, and minimal definitional statement since any alternative formulated by a committee must be screened against the criteria in 'base quality' before it can receive further consideration.

Consideration must be given to three areas that essentially fall between base quality and local objectives. The first is health and safety. Recommendations cannot create environments that present health and safety issues; however, health and safety should not be used unfairly to void recommendations. The second involves the need to change board policy. Some recommendations may involve modifications/changes in board policy and although such changes should be held to a minimum, recommendations should not be voided outright just because a change in policy may be required. Finally,



Maximize are examineded and the recommendation with the lowest quantifier value receives a scale score of one while the highest quantifier value receives a 100. Objectives beginning with the word Minimize are grouped together, with the item with the lowest quantifier value receiving a scaled score of 100, the highest of the values receives a scaled score of one. Quantifier values between the two extremes receive a pro-rated or proportional value assigned by a computer program. The scale scores are then multiplied by the weighted value of the objective to obtain an overall weighted score. The overall weighted score is the basis for the final, composite, rank ordered list of recommended actions.

When the calculations have been completed for all the alternatives from each committee, the entire list is rank ordered. The dollar values are associated with the alternatives and then listed in rank order.

When the rank ordered list with the associated cumulative dollar values is complete, it is forwarded to the Board for consideration.



sary will be reduced in scope in order to meet the expenditure reduction goal. The reason for this criterion is that it is extremely difficult to resurrect programs that have been eliminated.

**Criterion 3 —**

Support services will be eliminated as much as possible before any reductions are made in students' educational programs.

Any support service, such as that of food service, will be made self supporting or it will be eliminated to save money.

**Criterion 4 —** Co-curricular (athletic and nonathletic) activities will be eliminated if they are not self supporting, with the exception that one female, one male and one coed co-curricular activity will be offered during the fall, winter and spring terms. In addition, since co-curricular activities are considered an integral part of the basic educational experiences offered students, these activities will be supported by regular budgetary means, including local tax funds. Therefore, no contributions will be accepted from individuals or support groups unless those individuals or support groups provide sufficient funds to operate the entire co-curricular activity program at the qualitative level that has been historically expected. This decision will keep the popular entertainment activities, such as football or band or basketball, from being funded by outside contributions, while other co-curricular activities, such as debate or field hockey, are eliminated.

**Criterion 5 —** Program and staff reductions will be made at the senior high schools, the junior high schools, and the middle schools prior to cuts being made at the elementary schools.

**Criterion 6 —** Purchasing of supplies and equipment will be

reduced to the absolute minimum before the above criteria are considered.

**Criterion 7 —** In addition, all rational and legal income producing activities will be thoroughly investigated. Examples could include renting portions of the school buildings after normal student hours and renting available space during the school day, bidding for computer training of the employees of local businesses, and beginning a foundation program for the long-term benefit of the school district.

Once the criteria have been adopted, the board of education

can have the required data collected, arrayed and analyzed. The board can then make the required cost reduction decisions utilizing the adopted criteria. This approach will avoid an over emphasis on emotional decision making; instead it will rely upon rational and open decision making.

While the legally mandated decision makers, the board of

education members, are agreeing on the criteria, it is helpful to involve all employees in developing cost cutting ideas.

When the employees are asked to make suggestions, the board of education, superintendent of schools, and the chief business official must make two matters very clear:

- The board, superintendent and chief business official will seriously consider all suggestions submitted by the employees; and
- The final decision as to which of the suggestions that are to be

accepted is in the hands of the board of education because the members of the board are those persons legally responsible for the final decisions.

### Employee Brainstorming

To be most beneficial, brainstorming by employee groups should be assisted by a facilitator, and the sessions should operate with official brainstorming rules. Those rules should include the following:

- All suggestions are valid and welcome;
- There should be no explanation of or elaboration upon the idea(s) given during the brainstorming period;
- No questions shall be asked during this period;
- Members of the brainstorming group should not verbally or non-verbally agree with or disagree with, nor express negative or positive emotions about any suggestion of any person; and
- Piggybacking, adding to someone's original suggestion in an innovative manner, is encouraged.

By using a facilitator and working in a formal brainstorming manner, many excellent ideas can be gathered in a very short time period. When the formal session is completed, explanations can be

provided, and agreement can be reached on those to be recommended to the board of education.

Two actual examples from the author's personal experiences in using this procedure will illustrate the value of this technique:

**Example 1 —** Most school districts spend money on cleaning rags, and in

many cases, the rags are thrown away when they become very dirty. A brainstorming suggestion that came out of a session with a custodial unit was to collect the rags in duffle bags, pick them up with the internal

accomplished at an acceptable qualitative level during a single shift by an "average" worker.

- Draw up detailed specifications for all purchases, award the contract to the lowest reliable bidder, and take advantage of any available discounts for prompt payment or large quantity, economy of scale, purchases.
- Review your energy usage, and computerize your heating and ventilating on a zoned basis.
- Join in cooperative purchasing arrangements with other school districts and other governmental agencies.
- Make all of your non-instructional programs, such as food services or community education programs, self supporting.
- Work with other agencies, such as a city recreation department, to take over some of the services that have been historically performed by the school district.
- Rent vacant space in your school buildings.
- Hire your own media, office equipment and computer repair technicians to maintain and repair

these expensive machines.

- Establish your own school district's warehousing and maintenance repair shop.
- Level down equipment whenever possible. For example, if a clerk does mostly filing, that clerk doesn't need a powerful, state-of-the-art computer.
- Be alert to federal surplus sales.
- Purchase athletic and other pieces of equipment after the normal season. The goods will be new, but you may be able to obtain a large discount.
- Make certain all account payables are paid by the date that allows the district to take advantage of the full discount allowed for prompt payment.
- Group your contracted jobs in a manner that allows full savings to be realized, and pay attention to timing when letting bids for the jobs. For example, bid all black-topping for all buildings at the same time, and place your bids during a slow season.
- Establish strict building door key control policies.

- Consider refunding existing bond issues when current interest rates are favorable.

- Standardize your equipment and supplies.

- Consider paying a reduced dollar amount bonus for unused sick leave.

- Upgrade the skill and knowledge levels of your employees when more sophisticated equipment is purchased. This training will keep equipment breakdown and misuse to a minimum.

Many additional suggestions can be considered by the local school district's fiscal decision makers. All they have to do is participate in a wide open brainstorming session, and numerous excellent cost saving ideas will surface.

### Summary

Four major points related to dealing with a budgetary crisis and development of long-term efficient and effective fiscal procedures were made. When faced with severe budgetary reductions, establish budget cutting criteria before collecting and analyzing financial data. Then instigate a budget building procedure which builds level income, 10 percent decreased income, and 10 percent increased income scenarios. Also, insist that all budgetary expenditures be identified in a prioritized listing. To help broaden the accountability for fiscal decisions, initiate site-based budgeting, and investigate all possible improvements in cost benefits by engaging in brainstorming about all fiscal expenditures. □

THIS REPORT ON DEALING WITH BUDGETING CUTBACKS WAS RECEIVED FROM DON GOERS THE BUSINESS AGENT FOR DEERFIELD DISTRICT 109. THIS WAS THE RESULT OF A VISIT BY RALPH RALPH KLINGE MEMBER OF CRC.



*Dr. Jerry J. Herman is professor and area head of the Department of Administration and Educational Leadership at the University of Alabama at*

*Tuscaloosa, and a member of the ASBO Publications Research Committee.*



SOURCES INTERVIEWED

McHenry - District 15  
Alison Smith, Business Manager  
815-385-7210

Glenview - District 34  
Robert Strand, Business Manager

Glencoe - District 35  
Ron Chilcote, Business Manager

Winnetka - District 36  
Gene Kucharski, Financial Manager

Schaumburg - District 54  
Matthew Corby, Assistant Superintendent-Business Services

Deerfield - District 109  
Don Goers, Business Agent

Worth - District 127  
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**A REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ON KINDERGARTEN CENTER**

CRC Kindergarten Center Subcommittee

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In February, 1993, the Administration of District 39 proposed a Kindergarten Village to be located at Highcrest Center. The initial proposal was for a small number of kindergarten classes at Highcrest with students enrolled on a voluntary basis from all parts of the district. A variety of reasons for the program were given, including providing a richer experience for kindergarten children and freeing up classroom space at the four elementary schools. Also, families with parents working outside the home could have their kindergarten-age children at one place for a majority of the day, thereby reducing the number of daily transitions for these young children.

The Kindergarten Village issue became an emotionally charged one. The Administration conducted a preliminary survey while an interested group of parents conducted its own survey. The Administration had originally hoped to begin the program on a test basis in the 1993-94 school year, but ultimately delayed those plans pending further study of the issue. In the Spring of 1993, the Administration asked the Community Review Committee (CRC) if it would look into the Kindergarten Village program as one of its study topics in 1993-94.

The CRC agreed to take on Kindergarten Village as a study topic. A subcommittee was named and began meeting in late August, 1993. The purpose of this report is to present the subcommittee's findings and recommendations. To this end, the following will be addressed:

- Objectives
- Methodology
- Survey Results
- Recommendations

## **OBJECTIVES**

The CRC subcommittee's objective was to determine if there is sufficient interest among the parents of students who will be entering kindergarten in District 39 during the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school years to justify developing a district-wide Kindergarten Center at Highcrest Center. "Sufficient interest" was defined by the subcommittee members and some school board members to be approximately 80 students who would be likely to attend such a program in 1994-95. This would allow for four classes to operate at Highcrest.

It is important to note that it was not the subcommittee's objective to assess whether a Kindergarten Village was a "good" or "bad" idea from either an educational or financial standpoint, or whether the community as a whole was for or against the idea of such a program operating at Highcrest. The study was designed solely to determine whether the program was feasible from the standpoint of filling the classrooms.



Highcrest to hypothetically feasible programs such as ones using an alternative delivery model, ones with expanded Park District offerings, and a full-day kindergarten. A draft of the survey was circulated to members of the community who had indicated to Dr. Mikaelian an interest in the subject of Kindergarten Village. In addition, the draft was reviewed by Ms. Jaye Golanty, a survey professional and Wilmette resident, and ultimately by the full CRC. The final version of the survey was readied for distribution during the last week in October.

#### 4. Distribution

The survey was targeted to families with children eligible for kindergarten enrollment in 1994 or 1995. Since the overwhelming majority of this group participates in some form of organized preschool program, the subcommittee determined that the most efficient way to reach the target population was via the preschools used by Wilmette families. Efforts were made to include half-day programs, day care centers and programs with extended-day options, and preschool programs attached to private schools. A list of 29 schools was developed. (See Appendix A.) Directors were called, numbers of Wilmette families enrolled in the three-year old and four-year olds groups were ascertained, and permission to distribute the survey was obtained.

On November 1, packages of surveys that included cover letters and attached stamped return envelopes were hand delivered to each school on the list. The subcommittee recognized that this distribution method, while efficient, would not provide it with an accurate count of the number of surveys actually received by Wilmette families. Of the approximately 1000 surveys distributed, there was a certain percentage given to non-residents who attend Wilmette schools, while another percentage was certainly lost somewhere between school and home.

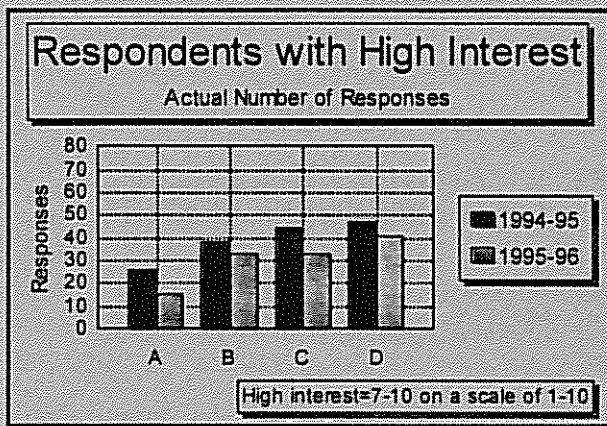
In addition, a press release was sent to the Pioneer Press with information about obtaining a survey for any interested parent who had not received one via a school. A small but steady series of requests for surveys were received into early December.

The approximately 1000 surveys and cover letters distributed were identical with one major exception. The Wilmette Community Nursery School attached its own cover letter on top of the 110 surveys distributed at its school without the subcommittee's knowledge. The cover letter indicated that the CRC survey failed to mention the Kindergarten Enrichment program offered at Wilmette Community and described the advantages of this program. (See Appendix B.) Because the surveys were not coded by preschool, the subcommittee was unable to assess how this additional letter may have affected results.



## 2. Overall Level of Interest

Significantly more respondents expressed interest in a Kindergarten Center at Highcrest Center if it included (a) the alternative delivery model (versus the current model) and (b) a five-day kindergarten enrichment program provided by the Park District (versus the current two-day Park District program). However, regardless of the half-day kindergarten delivery model or whether there is a two-day or five-day kindergarten enrichment program provided by the Park District, there was not sufficient interest expressed in a Kindergarten Center at Highcrest to suggest that 80 children would be voluntarily enrolled in the program in 1994 or 1995.



A=Current delivery model with 2-day Park District enrichment Program

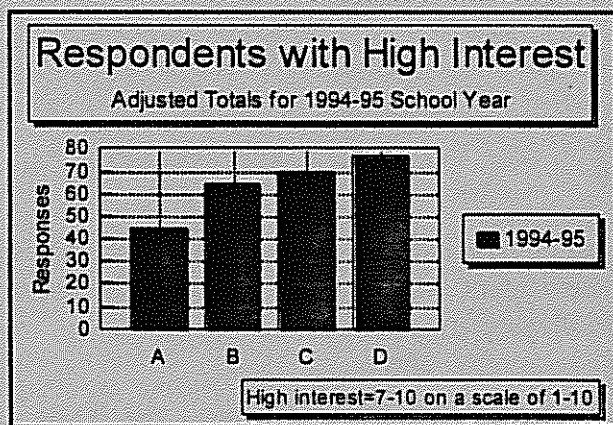
B=Current delivery model with 5-day Park District enrichment program

C=Alternative delivery model with 2-day Park District enrichment program

D=Alternative delivery model with 5-day Park District enrichment program

## 3. Adjusted Level of Interest

Even when the number of responses was adjusted for the actual number of children likely to attend kindergarten in 1994 at each of the Wilmette elementary schools, it is not likely that 80 children would be enrolled at a Kindergarten Center at Highcrest next year.



A=Current delivery model with 2-day Park District enrichment program

B=Current delivery model with 5-day Park District enrichment program

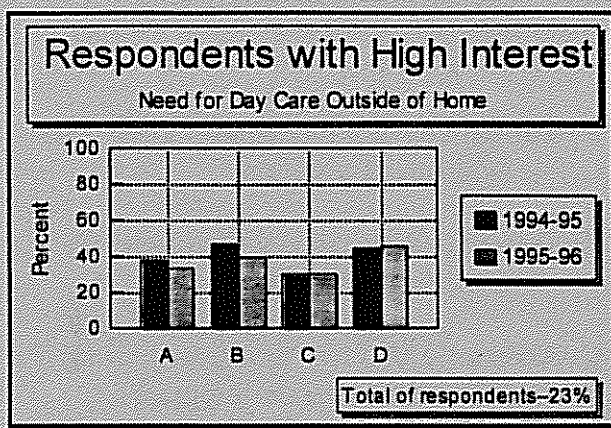
C=Alternative delivery model with 2-day Park District enrichment program

D=Alternative delivery model with 5-day Park District enrichment program



## 5. Day Care Requirements

Depending on the type of program, 30 to 47% of the respondents who indicated a high degree of interest in sending their child to Kindergarten Center at Highcrest require day care outside of their homes, as compared to 23% of total respondents requiring day care for their children. However, while there would be a higher percentage of children at the Highcrest Kindergarten Center requiring full-day day care outside of their home versus a typical kindergarten classroom, the majority of children who would attend Kindergarten Center at Highcrest if it were offered would not require full-day day care outside of their home.



A=Current delivery model with 2-day Park District enrichment program

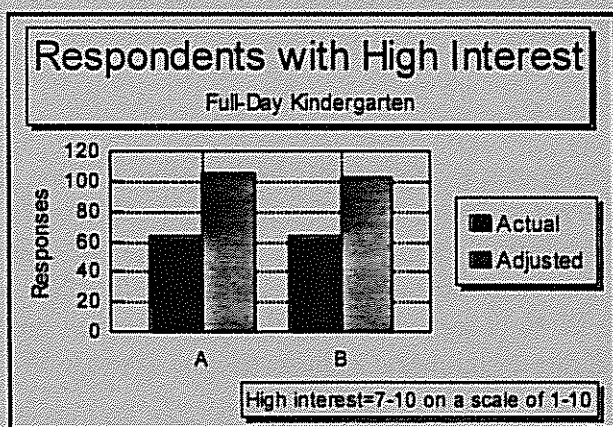
B=Current delivery model with 5-day Park District enrichment program

C=Alternative delivery model with 2-day Park District enrichment program

D=Alternative delivery model with 5-day Park District enrichment program

## 6. Full-Day Kindergarten

If full-day kindergarten were offered at Highcrest Center, regardless of the delivery model, it is much more likely that a sufficient number of students would enroll in 1994.



A=Current delivery model

B=Alternative delivery model



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In light of the above data, the subcommittee makes the following recommendations to the School Board regarding a district-wide Kindergarten Center:

1. The district should not commit funds to develop a Kindergarten Center at Highcrest at this time given the lack of sufficient interest from parents with children who will be attending kindergarten in District 39 in 1994-95 or 1995-96.
2. If the district desires to operate a district-wide Kindergarten Center program in the future, it should articulate both the rationale and details of the program to the community. For example, many respondents thought the program would be of interest only if both parents were working outside of their home. Educational attributes of the program did not seem to be considered by these parents, probably because these attributes have never been clearly articulated. Further, if a Kindergarten Center were being developed to alleviate space problems, the district should consider making it mandatory to insure its objectives are met.
3. Establishment of a Kindergarten Center should be preceded by detailed talks between District 39 and the Park District to coordinate the two districts' various programs. It is clear that if one of the benefits of using Highcrest is the possibility for students to take advantage of Park District offerings without having to leave the building, the two entities must be in agreement on the size of the program and what is expected of each.
4. Given the public's interest in the "alternative delivery model," the district should encourage kindergarten teachers to consider modifying the kindergarten program organization to include such aspects as team teaching, more shared resources and more integrated curriculum.
5. With a moderately strong interest in full-day kindergarten and the district's improved financial condition, the school board should consider a full-day kindergarten program either at Highcrest Center as an option to parents or district-wide in the neighborhood schools.



Cornflakes 620 Lincoln Winnetka	7
Covenant Preschool 2133 Harrison Evanston	20
Discovery Preschool - YMCA 1420 Maple Evanston	15
Harkness House for Children 630 Lincoln Winnetka	25
Highcrest Preschool Hunter and Illinois Roads Wilmette	125
Lutheran General Children's DayCare 2921 Illinois Road Wilmette	60
Northminster 2515 Central Park Evanston	15
Pied Piper 927 Happ Road Northfield	10
Ronald Knox Montessori School 2031 Elmwood Wilmette	50
Rose Hall Montessori School 1140 Wilmette Avenue Wilmette	60



Winnetka Public Nursery School 1155 Oak Winnetka	10
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Additional surveys distributed per telephone request	11
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<u>TOTALS:</u> 29 Preschools and Day Care Centers	988*
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\* Please note that while 988 surveys were distributed to 29 preschools and day care centers and 11 homes, a lesser number of surveys probably reached the parents who were intended to receive them. Some non-Wilmette preschools and centers declined to identify the exact number of District 39 children who attended their programs, and so requested a larger number of surveys than they had District 39 children. Other Wilmette preschools and day care centers declined to identify the exact number of non-Wilmette children who attended their programs and therefore requested more surveys than they needed, also. In addition, of the 977 surveys that were distributed through the preschools and day care centers, it seems likely that some portion of these, though delivered to the appropriate children, did not actually make it home to the parents.



# APPENDIX C

## KINDERGARTEN CENTER SURVEY RESPONSE SUMMARY

### Number of Responses

# Respondents  
With High  
Interest (7-10)

Question #	School Year	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	NA
1	94/95	7	1	9	9	9	14	4	10	18	117	1
	95/96	4	0	10	1	14	12	7	13	8	61	1
2	94/95	11	9	10	8	8	7	6	15	16	108	1
	95/96	6	5	10	12	11	10	4	12	5	54	0
3	94/95	27	12	14	11	8	6	4	12	10	95	0
	95/96	20	9	16	8	6	10	4	5	5	47	1
4	94/95	13	7	12	12	9	16	10	12	18	89	1
	95/96	5	7	12	8	10	11	5	7	8	54	3
5	94/95	15	12	16	4	6	15	11	10	20	87	4
	95/96	8	9	17	7	11	9	2	9	6	49	3
6	94/95	31	15	13	5	5	10	4	15	14	84	3
	95/96	21	9	15	9	5	8	4	5	8	45	2

26  
15  
38  
33  
64  
53  
44  
33  
47  
41  
64  
54



## **Kindergarten Center - Parent Questionnaire**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. You are about to read and answer questions regarding a possible kindergarten program at Highcrest Center. Different school district and park district alternatives are described. Please read each description and answer the questions.

When you answer the questions, you can assume that a wing of the Highcrest Center would be modified to provide a safe, secure environment for your child and that appropriate personnel would be on-site (e.g., nurse), as exists in the Wilmette elementary schools today. Kindergarten classrooms at Highcrest would be staffed by District 39 personnel. Transportation would be handled by District 39 staff.

### **■ CURRENT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The current kindergarten program has a locally developed district-wide curriculum taught by a teacher with an aide in a single classroom divided into various "interest areas." Rooms are typically shared by two groups of children in half-day (2-1/2 hour) morning and afternoon programs.

The program provides experience in literature, music, art, science, social studies, math, health and safety. There is a balance of individual, small group and total group activities.

This traditional program organization and use of space can promote the growth of a cohesive group of children with attachment to a single teacher. Within the context of the local school, the current program provides the potential for exposure to older children as role models and to the larger school building and its resources.

A variety of optional programs are currently available to parents on fee basis. The current programs include:

- District 39 before-school care from 7 to 8:45 a.m.
- Park District supervised "brown bag" lunch program (daily).
- Park District Kindergarten Enrichment program (2 days per week) -- children may be enrolled in a morning or afternoon session of this program which consists of field trips that leave from and return to Highcrest.
- Park District classes such as Art, Gymnastics and Performing Arts.
- Park District babysitting.



#### ■ ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

District 39 would offer an **alternative kindergarten program** that would retain the current kindergarten curriculum, but could allow for a different program organization for the children. Although there would most likely be two kindergarten classes taught in the morning or afternoon (with two teachers and two aides), there would be three to four connected classrooms for these students. Children would begin the year in one classroom set up in a traditional manner. When teaching staff felt the children were ready, the classrooms would be rearranged so that each room would contain a wide array of materials to enhance certain types of learning. For example, one room could be devoted to math and science, another to art and music, a third to language arts, and a fourth for blocks and dramatic play. This organization and use of space could make more materials available to children, allow projects to be saved over time, and give children greater exposure to the different "specialties" of different teachers. It could also provide fewer distractions for both teachers and children and better enable teachers to focus on one group of children at a time, and provide children greater freedom to pursue their interests.

Questions 4 through 6 relate to a Kindergarten Center at Highcrest that would involve the current kindergarten curriculum and the **alternative program organization** (that is, the use of three to four connected classrooms and coordination among the two teachers and two aides) described above.

4. If a Kindergarten Center were established with the current kindergarten curriculum, **alternative program organization** described above, and the current optional Park District programs, how likely would you be to enroll your child at Kindergarten Center (circle one)?

10    9    8    7    6    5    4    3    2    1

Definitely  
Would

Definitely  
Would Not



**Please complete the following:**

Elementary School (check one) ☐ Romona ☐ Harper ☐ McKenzie ☐ Central

Number of your children that will enter kindergarten: ☐ 1994-1995 ☐ 1995-1996

Do you need full-day child care outside of your home? ☐ Yes ☐ No  
If yes,

How many days per week? \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate hours (e.g., 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.)? \_\_\_\_\_

We ask that you include your name and address on this survey **but it is optional.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_



### Park District

After neighborhood schools, the concern most frequently expressed related to the Park District. The quality, consistency and organization of Park District programs were repeatedly questioned.

The After School Rec program, Babysitting program and Kindergarten Enrichment program, each of which could be used in combination with kindergarten at Highcrest, were criticized independently. Specifically, the current Kindergarten Enrichment program, which is based on field trips and requires kindergarteners to ride buses, was viewed by some respondents as "unsafe" and "disorganized." Several respondents mentioned that there were other superior kindergarten enrichment programs in Wilmette and others felt that District 39 should "govern" everything regarding the administration of Kindergarten Center.

### Needs of Parents Who Work Outside of the Home

The majority of comments relating to the needs of parents who work outside of the home demonstrated a genuine support for Kindergarten Center. Although most respondents who commented on this issue indicated that they themselves did not have a need for full-day child care, they also stated that they believed "there's a need for this . . . and support it. . . on a voluntary basis." Similarly, other respondents said that "the School District must try to help families with two working parents," but they reiterated the sentiment that the program "must be optional." "The choice is for each child and each family."

A significant, but fewer, number of respondents who commented on this issue stated that they "needed" Kindergarten Center. They expressed enthusiastic support for the program and sent their names and phone numbers so they could be contacted for questions and additional participation. One mother wrote ". . . my work situation demands this. I'm absolutely counting on this program."

An even fewer number of respondents who commented on this issue were against the School District helping parents who work outside of the home. They expressed concern over the tax dollars that would be spent helping only a specific group of parents and did not want their "child to go to a working mothers' kindergarten."

### Full-Day Kindergarten

Many respondents believed that most children would benefit from extended hours in kindergarten. They expressed concern that kindergarten was a "letdown" because most children had already been in preschool for two and one-half hours a day for two years. One respondent strongly stated that "any full day option would be highly desirable." Other respondents, however, qualified their preference. They wanted full-day kindergarten, but they wanted it at their neighborhood school of Central or Romona. Although it is difficult to draw



**LOCAL DISTRICT PROGRAM PLAN  
WILMETTE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
DISTRICT 39  
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS**

Approved by the Board of Education  
December 17, 1973  
Revised June 1994

Presented by the Community Review Committee  
Subcommittee for the Local Program Plan

Mary Ann Peter  
Barbara Savitt  
Jeff Sherman

**LOCAL DISTRICT PROGRAM PLAN  
WILMETTE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, DISTRICT 39  
WILMETTE, IL 60091**

**Introduction**

Education is the sum total of all that a child experiences in life. The Wilmette Public Schools, District 39, are dedicated to providing a quality education for each of its students. Our community values and supports quality education and the continuing search for excellence that it entails. The community is committed to providing our young residents with the education they will need to live and work in the twenty-first Century.

In addition to meeting the community's aspirations for its youth, quality education must also be adaptable to social and technological changes. It must include an appropriate balance between traditional curricula and innovation in both teaching and learning styles. It also must be consistent with the financial resources available to the district.

The following *Program Plan* sets forth the fundamental beliefs, educational philosophy and objectives that guide the district in serving approximately 2979 elementary and junior high students. The Board of Education adopted a Strategic Plan, and in the course of its ordinary business, it passes various resolutions. Both the Strategic Plan and the resolutions take precedence over this *Program Plan*. The *Program Plan*, revised yearly, reflects the curricular objectives for the district as established by the district, the Curriculum Coordinating Council, and the various curriculum review committees.

**PART I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

**A. Strategic Plan**

◆ **The Community's Fundamental Beliefs:**

The community believes:

Each child is a unique person who is worthy of respect. Each child brings prior knowledge and life experiences to the learning environment. Each child learns at an individual pace, in different ways, and at different times. Each child is entitled to an education that is effective in maximizing the child's potential. Each child should become a life-long learner. Each child should be encouraged to strive for academic excellence. Each child should become a responsible contributor to the community.

◆ **Mission:**

The District 39 community is committed to providing effective education in a caring and challenging environment to help prepare all children to live within a complex global community.



### **A. Curriculum Planning**

Curriculum is the course of study. Curriculum development in District 39 is a continuous process, guided by teachers, administrators, community, and board representatives working together as a Curriculum Coordinating Council (CCC). The CCC establishes and updates the district's guidelines for reviewing every curricular area within a two to five-year cycle, as needed. The curriculum, therefore, reflects the forefront of creativity, vision, and academic research. By making the commitment to develop its own curriculum, District 39 can craft a challenging curriculum to meet state goals and to suit the unique needs of its students.

The district currently has established curriculum review committees for health and safety, language arts/literature, mathematics, microcomputer, reading, science, and social studies. New curriculum has been written and is being implemented in the following areas: art, foreign language, health and safety, language arts, literature, mathematics, microcomputer, music, physical education, reading, science, and social studies.

Teachers and administrators apply for membership on the curriculum development committees. They are selected to represent a cross-section of grade levels and representatives from all schools on the basis of their individual skills, training, and expertise.

The district encourages the creative use of curriculum and methodology by teachers to facilitate the realization and enhancement of each student's capabilities. The teaching/learning process is continuously interactive, which allows both teacher and student to contribute and receive feedback on how well that process is meeting the needs of each student as an individual and life-long learner, and as a member of a group of peers.

### **B. Student Academic Skills**

The district has established the following objectives for its students in the academic and related studies areas. These objectives describe in general terms the basic knowledge and skills District 39 students should acquire. They also encompass objectives for the social, emotional and physical development of each child an individual. The curriculum seeks to strike a balance between traditional studies and innovations in both teaching and learning styles. In all areas emphasis should be focused on the development of a thinking, communicating individual who values learning and understands the value of acquiring knowledge.

- ♦ **Fine Arts** - The fine arts give children the means to express themselves creatively and to respond to the artistic expression of others. As a record of human experience, the fine arts provide distinctive ways of understanding society, history, and nature. The study of fine arts includes dance, drama, music, and visual arts.

A student in the fine arts program shall work toward:

1. Understanding the principal sensory, formal, technical, and expressive qualities of each of the arts.
2. Experiencing significant works of art from major historical periods, and how they reflect societies, cultures, and civilizations, past and present.

- ♦ **Language Arts/Reading** - The focus of the language arts program is to help students develop language competencies. Students learn language, learn about language, and learn through language. The knowledge, strategies, and skills that comprise language arts are the foundation for learning across the curriculum. Reading, writing, listening, speaking, and literature study are the major components of the language arts program.

A student in the language arts program shall work toward:

1. Developing positive attitudes toward reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
2. Learning to be a strategic reader.
3. Comprehending written material.
4. Thinking critically while reading.
5. Interpreting and evaluating literary works.
6. Understanding American literature heritage and literature representing different cultures, eras, and ideas.
7. Understanding and applying the steps in the writing process.
8. Producing written work that is focused and organized, as well as work that contains appropriate support and elaboration of ideas and accurate grammar and mechanics.
9. Using appropriate language and style when writing for a variety of purposes and audiences.
10. Listening purposefully, critically, and analytically.
11. Comprehending information presented orally.
12. Using spoken language effectively in formal and informal situations to communicate ideas and information, and to ask and answer questions.

- ♦ **Library/Resource Center** - The development of research and library skills is a prerequisite for advanced studies. Research skills, however, are developed gradually and sustained through continued practice. The district has developed and equipped each of the school libraries as a learning resource center administered by professional staff members. The instructional program teaches library and research skills beginning at kindergarten and continuing through junior high.

A student in the library/resource center program shall work toward:

1. Developing library skills.
2. Becoming familiar with a variety of school library resources, including a wide collection of printed and non-printed materials.
3. Developing positive attitudes toward reading, resources, communication media, microcomputers, and methods of research.
4. Utilizing opportunities for independent study enrichment and/or remedial activities.

- ♦ **Mathematics** - Mathematics provides essential problem-solving tools applicable to a range of scientific disciplines, business, and everyday life. Mathematics is the language of quantification and logic; its elements are symbols, structures and shapes. It enables children to understand and use facts, definitions, and symbols in a coherent and



- emotional, and social well-being.
  2. Developing the basic physical skills necessary to participate in sports and recreational activities.
  3. Developing those qualities essential for teamwork, leadership, and sportsmanship.
  4. Recognizing the need to include physical activities to maintain good health and fitness as part of a healthy lifestyle.
- ♦ **Related Studies** - The goal of the WJHS Related Studies program is to provide students with opportunities to purposefully discover, explore, and investigate a variety of courses leading to the development of lifetime skills, natural talents, and vocational interests. All sixth graders are required to take 18 weeks of Introduction to Visual Arts, and six weeks each of Skills for Adolescence, vocal/general music, and speech arts/drama. Sixth graders also are required to take 18 weeks of keyboarding, and computer applications, and may elect to take 18 weeks of a foreign language or individual pursuit. Foreign languages include beginning courses in Spanish, Latin and French. Continuing courses in French, Spanish, Japanese and German are also offered. Before-school options are cadet band and orchestra.

The current 7th and 8th grade related studies choices at the junior high school level are:

*Adv. Drama Workshop	Classical Mythology	Communication Arts
*Computer Graphics	Concert Band	Creative Dramatics
*Desktop Publishing	*Electronic Keyboard	Exploring Photography
Foreign Language:	Interpretation: A	Jazz Band
Spanish/French/Latin	Way with Words	Mixed Chorus
German/Japanese	**Drawing/Design	Painting
**Logo Ventures	Media Assistantship	Music
Orchestra	*Printmaking	*Students Helping Students
*Printmaking	Sculpture/Ceramics	Word Builder
Word Processing		

\*Grade 8 only; \*\*Grade 7 only.

- ♦ **Science** - Science is the quest for objective truth. It provides a conceptual framework for the understanding of natural phenomena, their causes and effects, as learned through the scientific process. The purpose of the study of science is to develop scientifically literate students who recognize that science is not value-free, and are capable of making ethical judgments regarding science and social issues. Students are taught to understand that technological growth is an outcome of the scientific enterprise.

A student in the science program shall work toward:

1. Understanding and interpreting natural phenomena through the acquisition of scientific knowledge.
2. Discovering, understanding and interpreting our environment, our relationship to it and its impact on us, and developing an awareness of technological progress.
3. Understanding and using the concepts and basic vocabulary of biological,

Intervention Reading/Mathematics Program, Chapter II (Resource Center materials), Title II (science materials), and the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act. State programs - reading improvement, learning objectives and assessment, staff development, gifted education, and bilingual programs. Applications for these programs and others are submitted yearly for state and federal funding. The purpose of these programs is to provide individual students with appropriate support systems to assure their overall educational success.

### C. Student Academically Related Skills

The district has established the following objectives for its students in academically related areas, as delineated in the program goals. A student's academic growth is in large part dependent on the development of these related areas which are concerned with affective, interpersonal/intrapersonal, and self-regulatory capabilities.

- ◆ **Critical Thinking** - Critical thinking has been defined educationally as the mental processes, strategies, and representations which people use to solve problems, make decisions, and learn new concepts. Recognizing that the teacher can design instruction in such a way as to promote critical thinking in the classroom, the following student behaviors have been set apart as particularly important in this area.

In developing skills of critical thinking, a student shall work toward:

1. Demonstrating the ability to separate fact from fiction.
2. Demonstrating the ability to consider alternative solutions.
3. Demonstrating knowledge used in the process of decision making/problem solving.
4. Developing skill in the area of inferential reasoning.
5. Demonstrating facility with the following additional components of critical thinking: classification, hypothesizing, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

- ◆ **Responsibility** - The student's responsibility in the school is defined as the student's developing a personal, individual acceptance that every human being is accountable for his/her behavior, including one's thoughts, choices, decisions, speech, and actions. The result of this awareness is the acknowledgment that, for the most part, the individual causes his/her own effects. Recognizing that the teacher can design instruction in order to promote responsibility in the classroom, the following student behaviors have been set apart as particularly important in this area.

In developing responsible behavior, the student shall work toward:

1. Demonstrating the ability to generate options and choices appropriate to different situations, and understanding how these options and choices contribute to outcomes and consequences.
2. Showing consistency in being prepared for the daily classroom routine, with regard to assignments and materials required.
3. Developing the ability to actively direct the course of learning.



1. The use of standardized achievement tests for determining individual student and overall district performance.
2. The use of diagnostic tests, portfolios, and local assessments to identify each student's strengths and weaknesses.
3. Teacher-made tests to assist the attainment of classroom objectives.
4. The review of the performance of District 39 students and the state assessments.
5. The implementation of a teacher survey on a regularly scheduled basis to identify any student who is experiencing academic, social or emotional difficulties which interfere with learning.
6. Continuing appraisal and review of goals for each student by the professional staff, administration, and parents regarding:
  - a. The effectiveness of the academic program;
  - b. The child's growth in cultural and social adjustment.
7. Review of a student's placement and academic performance throughout the first year of junior high school to assess quality of preparation from elementary school.
8. Review of high school students' data to evaluate the progress of District 39 students as a whole and individually.

#### ♦ **Assessment of Student Academically Related Skills**

Achievement of the general student academically related goals in the areas of critical thinking, responsibility education, learning styles, and self-esteem shall be evaluated by various criteria, including but not necessarily limited to:

1. The use of informal, observational notation which is developed in a way most meaningful to the individual teacher.
2. The use of narrative reporting, anecdotal in nature and giving specific information relevant to situations experienced by the individual student.
3. The use of both teacher-made and published checklists of observable student behaviors in each of these areas.
4. Investigation of more formal, standardized measurement instruments, both diagnostic and achievement in nature, developed as research in these areas becomes more sophisticated.

#### **E. Staff Development**

The teacher is the key to quality education. Employing, developing and monitoring a highly professional faculty are essential to meet the objectives of the educational program.

Professional development of faculty is promoted through district, school, and individual goals. Faculty are helped to realize their goals through inservice activities primarily provided by the district Staff Development Committee, district administrators, district curriculum review committees, and through colleges and universities.

With the support of state funds and district resources, this year faculty participated in major workshops in the district concerned with gifted education, learning styles, conflict resolution

Speech/Language Services  
 Specialized Instructional Services  
 Learning Disabilities  
 Home/Hospital Instruction

4. Provide education as a district or cooperatively with NSSD and/or LICA for:
- Visually impaired or blind
  - Hard of hearing or deaf
  - Trainable and educable mentally handicapped
  - Multi-handicapped
  - Physically handicapped
  - Behavior disordered
  - Severe/profound mentally handicapped
  - Learning disabled
  - Parent Infant Education (0-3 years)
  - Occupational and Physical Therapy

#### **Part IV. DISTRICT INFORMATION**

##### **◆ Demographic Profile**

The student population declined steadily from a peak enrollment of 4,991 in 1967 to 2,418 in 1987. Since 1987, however, the total enrollment has steadily increased, reaching 2979 this year. Moreover, enrollment in kindergarten classes has been increasing over the past several years, and recent projections indicate this trend will continue.

Until 1987, elementary school enrollment losses had been primarily the result of smaller entering kindergarten classes replacing larger graduating 8th grade classes. However, with the increase in kindergarten enrollment during recent years, the entering vs. exiting gap has been closed, and now reversed.

According to demographer John Kasarda's 1993 updated projections, a substantial number of village residents will reach retirement age during the 1990s. This should lead to a greater rate of housing turnover than was the case in the '80s, attracting younger families with pre-school and school-age children. Assuming that future fertility rates remain at present levels and that future rates of housing turnover and immigration of families with school and pre-school aged children occur as predicted, Kasarda projects that approximately 3,300 students will be enrolled by the year 2000.

Approximately 91% of our students live in Wilmette and the remainder in Glenview. The population of Wilmette (26,690 in 1990 census) is primarily upper middle class with an estimated median 1990 annual family income of \$81,568; housing is predominantly single family residences. Approximately 17% of Wilmette's families have children in the District 39 schools.

The 1990 census reports that less than 1% of the population of Wilmette is African American, 1.7% is Hispanic, and 6.9% is Asian. The 1992-93 district student population was 92.3% white, 0.5% African American, 0.7% Hispanic, and 6.5% Asian/Pacific Islander. Low income enrollment was 1.4%; limited English proficient enrollment was 3.8%. In recent years, an



up of six local organizations (five public schools and one parochial school), each of which is represented on the Village-Wide PTO Board. The Village-Wide Parent Teacher Board promotes effective communication among the six organizations. It works closely with the superintendent and his staff and the Board of Education.

An organization that channels citizen involvement into our schools is the Wilmette Volunteer Pool. The Pool provides resource personnel to assist teachers, provide enrichment for individual students and classroom programs, and to fill tutorial and clerical positions. The Volunteer Pool and the district coordinate and cooperate in the training of volunteer teacher aides and volunteer reading and mathematics tutors.

Communication between the district and constituent groups in the district is maintained through publications (i.e., the Bulletin, PTO/PTA newsletters), media (the Wilmette Life, cable TV) and community outreach (mailings, word of mouth), etc. Board of Education meetings are televised for rebroadcast on cable TV. The district employs a part-time communications facilitator to help in these efforts.

#### ◆ Financial Budget - 1993-94

The financial support of District 39 schools is based largely on local real estate taxes. The total district operational budget for 1993-94 was \$21,125,710, which resulted in a budgeted expenditure of \$6750 per student that year. Approximately 70% of the district's overall budget (and 82% of its Education Fund expenditures) is allocated directly to salaries and benefits.

In meeting the goals of the *Program Plan*, the district will utilize its resources creatively to provide the best possible environment to facilitate the learning process. Since the school budget determines which, and to what degree, services will be provided to the children of the Wilmette Schools, it becomes the foundation of the entire school program. The Board of Education and the citizens of Wilmette are able to look beyond the financial information in the budget provided by the business office in their evaluation of the school budget process. The Board of Education reviews the budget process from three perspectives: 1] the educational program; 2] the plan for financing the educational program; and 3] the expenditure plan to successfully carry out the educational program. For many years, District 39 has operated with this concept of budgeting, and has successfully kept the educational, financial and expenditure programs consistent and in general harmony with the desires of the community.

Financial projections prepared by the business office professional staff in December 1993 and presented to the board indicate that district expenditures during 1993-94 are projected to fall within budget at \$21.1 million. This amount is \$234,000 greater than the level of revenues, which means the district will be drawing on its reserves to meet actual operating expenses.

The Education Fund, one of the district's operating funds, is the financial heart of the school district because it includes teacher salaries, as well as books, supplies and other classroom materials. The expenditures in this fund during 1993-94 are expected to be almost \$170,000 below the revenues earmarked by law for its use.