



**Summer
2020**

INSIDE THIS EDITION

Focus on Literacy	2
Outstanding Leadership	3
Rising to the Challenge	4
Commitment to Community Service	5
Celebrating the Arts and Culture	6

Superintendent Message

Looking back on the past school year it would be difficult to imagine what a year this has been! We have experienced two major events together: the first year of the Shared Services Model, and of course, the historic pandemic. Each has affected us both individually and collectively; however, we can proudly say “We made it!” It has been my honor to serve as Superintendent for both District 75 and District 120. What I have witnessed and experienced during the past year has been inspiring. Since the first day of school, our staff members have come together on the opening Institute Day and immediately began to form bonds. We looked for ways to work together on a common goal—a top-notch education for all our students, from Pre-K through grade 12. Under the leadership of building administrators and with cooperative work amongst both staffs, many great educational experiences have been bringing our programs together. While in any major change there are bumps along the way, the atmosphere in our buildings continues to remain positive. I am looking forward to our second combined year together as we continue to provide the best educational experiences possible for all of our students and staff. And then came the pandemic! Whether you are a new employee or a soon-to-be retiree, a parent or community member, none of us have ever experienced anything like this before. The Stay-at-Home Order placed us in a position where we were challenged with implementing remote learning procedures. The cooperation of the staffs was immediate and thorough, and I have been in awe of how everyone pitched in to make the best of the circumstances. Continual communication among various groups including school personnel, parents, students, village officials and many more have brought our community together. Special thanks to those who gave so much of their time in distributing food to our families in need and by seeking donations for many critical items. There has been a lot of disappointment with the loss of 8th grade promotion ceremony, spring sports, choral and band performances, activities, field trips and events. But we are resilient, and we will meet our challenges head-on thanks to all of you. Let’s also hope we can have a more “normal” summer and come back together in August with a continued resolve to provide the best education possible for all our students. My sincere gratitude to all of you.



Kevin Myers , PhD

Kevin Myers, PhD
Districts 75/120 Superintendent

Focus on Literacy

World Read Aloud Day Recognized in February

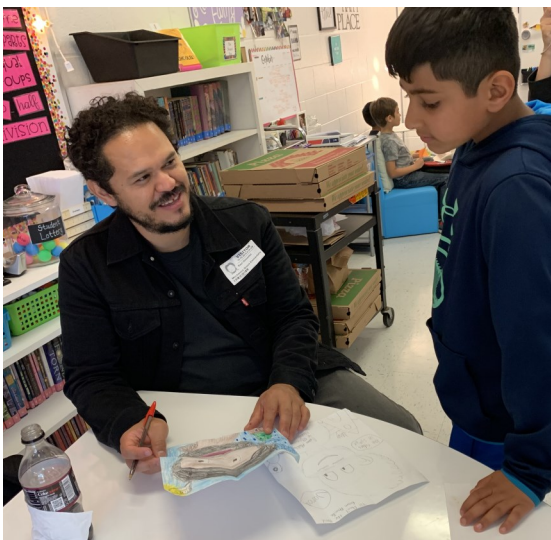
For the fifth year, District 75 schools participated in World Read Aloud Day. This event is celebrated annually by millions of students in more than 100 countries. To mark the day, students at Lincoln Early Learning Center and Washington Early Learning Center had district administration and community members read to classes and lead book discussions. Students at Mechanics Grove Elementary School and Carl Sandburg Middle School attended Skype sessions with famous authors, during which students had the opportunity to hear authors read and ask questions about their writing process.



Author Visits District Schools

Raul the Third, award winning author and artist, visited students in grades K-8 to speak to students about the writing process and support the district's efforts to develop visual literacy.

Raul the Third's work focuses on the modern Mexican-American experience and his memories of growing up in El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. His latest book, *¡Vamos! Let's Go to The Market!*, is written in both English and Spanish. "Raul the Third is a perfect fit for our school community. As we serve a largely Latinx population, as well as have a growing Two-Way Immersion program, it is important to provide role models for all students. Inviting students to see a successful Latinx author/illustrator gives students another opportunity to follow their dreams and passions," said Dan Swartz, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning.



Sandburg Redesigns Media Center

Under the direction of Jessica Rebella, Sandburg revamped, revised and overhauled its Middle School Library system during the 2019-2020 school year, successfully bringing the program into the modern Library Media Center age. Rebella, the Learning Lab Director, successfully increased not only circulation of text moving in and out of the Learning Lab, but also introduced self-selected programming during lunch times. On Mondays- Thursdays, students could visit the Learning Lab and choose from available board games, using makerspace art supplies and activities, participate in monthly programs (such as community coloring, microscope and slides, pumpkin decorating, etc), read and check out books, talk with friends, play on Chromebooks, or participate in the activity of the day. On Fridays, grade-level Lunch and Learn book clubs were held. Dozens of students enjoyed lunchtime Learning Lab offerings each day, revitalizing the library as a dynamic learning space.



Fifth grader Paige Robertson won the Mechanics Grove Spelling Bee two years in a row! This year's runner up was Lisa Choi.

School District Awarded for Outstanding Financial Reporting

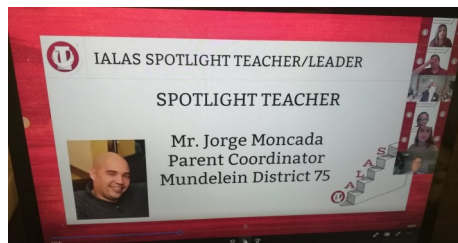
Mundelein Elementary School District 75 was awarded the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO). This Certificate of Excellence recognizes districts that have met the program's high standards for financial reporting and transparency. The school district earned the Certificate of Excellence for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the fiscal year ended 2019. "Receiving the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting demonstrates District 75 commitment to transparency and sound fiscal management of our resources," said District 75 Superintendent Dr. Kevin Myers. To be considered for the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting, districts submit their CAFR for review by a team of financial professionals, who provide feedback to improve future documents. If the CAFR meets the requirements of the program, the document may receive the Certificate of Excellence. A district's participation in the COE program can facilitate bond rating and continuing bond disclosure processes.

Educators Honored by Latino Superintendent Organization

Two staff members from Mundelein School District 75 received recognition from the Illinois Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (IALAS) at the organization's 5th annual Statewide Conference in May. Annais Diaz, Bilingual Coordinator, received the #IALASStepsUp Award for her work to "empower students, parents, and communities, even in the face of adversity and uncertainty," according to the association. Diaz received this honor because of her work with district families during the COVID-19 pandemic, which included helping organize the entire district food distribution effort; personally delivering meals and learning materials directly to families without access to services and organizing and distributing of groceries with Mundelein High School and The Chapel to 150 families.



Jorge Moncada, District 75 Lead Parent Coordinator, received the Teacher Spotlight for the third quarter of the 2019-20 school year, recognizing his efforts as "an advocate for all students and hard work toward achieving educational equity," according to IALAS. Moncada was honored for his work with students and families.



District Staff Present at Professional Conferences

Several district staff members shared their expertise at educational conferences throughout the midwest. Washington reading specialists Jessica Martinsen, Mary Carlson and Kristin Kincaid presented at the Illinois Reading Council's annual conference. District 75 Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Dan Swartz and Mundelein High School Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning Stacy Gorman delivered a presentation titled "Equity Through Access" at the Illinois ESSA Conference. Mechanics Grove Principal Tanya Fergus and teacher Jackie Ewing spoke about student leadership at the Raising Student Achievement conference. Jen Vincent, Sandburg language arts and social studies teacher, presented at several conferences over the year, including the annual convention of the National Council of Teachers of English.

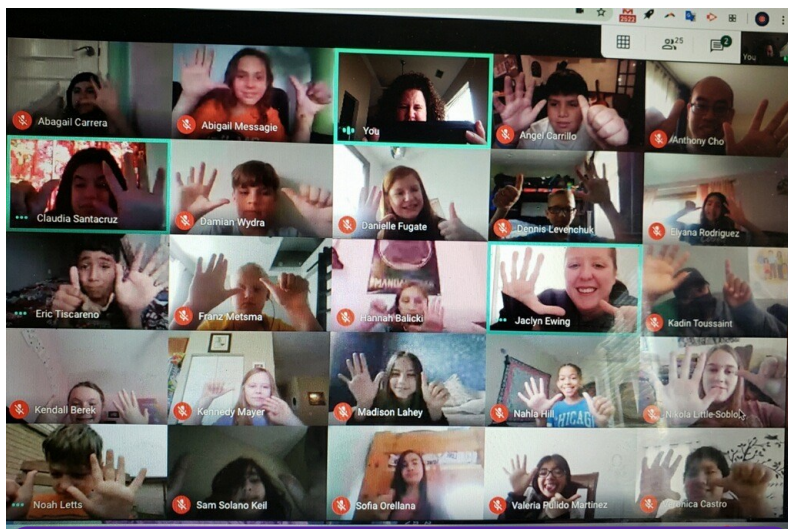
Board Welcomes New Member

The Mundelein Elementary School District Board of Education appointed new member Freddy Gallegos at its May 20 board meeting to serve the remainder of former member Alexandria Avila's term. Gallegos will serve until the general election in April 2020. Gallegos is looking forward to his term, saying "I hope to continue making Mundelein a great town to live in and raise a family. Representing the whole community is something I will take very seriously and hope to make a positive impact."

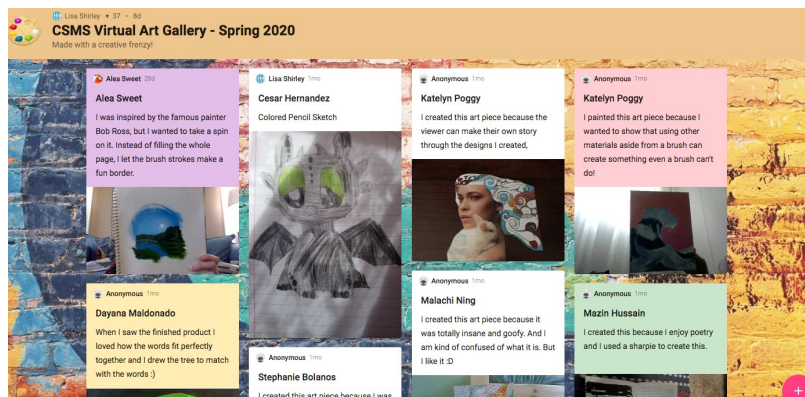
Rising to the Challenge

Learning Continued Remotely

Like school districts all across the United States, District 75 shifted to remote learning during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. While this unprecedented time was filled with uncertainty and many obstacles, staff and students in District 75 rose to the challenge to keep learning and growing. The shift in instructional delivery created many opportunities for our staff to be creative in ways to reach their students remotely, and while they didn't meet for in-person instruction, they certainly connected during distance learning.



Teachers throughout the district held 1:1, small group and whole class Google Hangouts with students to stay connected, deliver instruction and even read bedtime stories.



Sandburg Art Teacher Lisa Shirley ensured her students' work was viewed by family and friends by creating a virtual art show.



District 75 Teachers Read Aloud

191 videos • 4,305 views • Last updated on May 26, 2020






Watch videos from our District 75 teachers reading favorite stories. We'll include an activity at the end of each book. We will also share Book Talks from our CSMS staff.

Instructional Coaches Patience Bertana and Sharon Tweed read aloud by district teachers.



Fifth Grade Band Directors Carol Holck and Chelsea Hutchings travelled to student homes to perform "driveway duets" with their band students.

Building Bright Futures Together

- 
Ms Banks reads Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons
 Added by [Jessica Martinsen](#)
- 
Ms Banks reads Lorenzo the Pizza Loving Lobster
 Added by [Jessica Martinsen](#)
- 
Ms Banks reads Giraffes Can't Dance
 Added by [Jessica Martinsen](#)
- 
Mr. Crowe reads Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets - Chapter 6
 Added by [Jessica Martinsen](#)
- 
Mr. Crowe reads Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets - Chapter 5
 Added by [Jessica Martinsen](#)

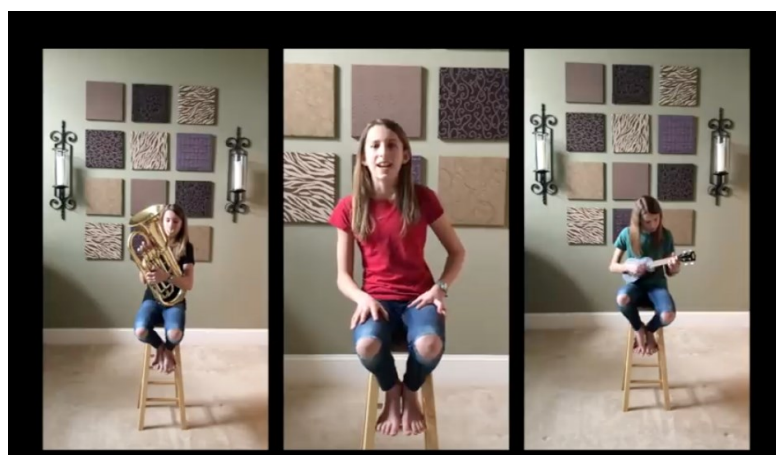
...d created a read-aloud resource with almost 200 books read



Join me at 2:00pm everyday!
 Mechanics Grove Principal Tanya Fergus held a whole school read aloud. At 2:00 pm every weekday, Fergus read chapters from the book *Restart* by Gordon Korman. Dozens of students tuned in daily. The book was also uploaded onto the school's YouTube channel.



Sharon Colen (formerly Rosenberg) retired after 20 years in District 75. The fourth grade teacher was honored with a retirement parade at Mechanics Grove. She will be missed!



We've cleaned everything here in my home-uh
 When Sandburg Language Arts teacher Sara Rafalowicz assigned her 7th grade class a project to reflect on their quarantine experiences, little did she know that one submission would become a viral sensation. "All Day Long (The Quarantine Song)" written by student Chloe Langford and her father, has racked up more than 235,000 views on YouTube and was featured in local media.

Celebrating Culture and The Arts

District Marks Dia de los Muertos

District 75 hosted Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), a Latin American cultural celebration of life in which participants honor and remember their loved ones who have passed away. Hundreds of students and their families participated in the November 1 event, which featured fun activities for children, food, music, dances and a traditional ofrenda (altar). "We were ecstatic to be able to provide this cultural event here at District 75 for the first time ever! Día de los muertos validates a culture that represents a third of our community's population," said Annais Diaz, District 75 Bilingual Coordinator.



Sandburg Stages 3rd Annual Musical



Carl Sandburg Middle School staged The Lion King Jr. in January 2020 to sold-out crowds. These annual musicals have become one of the district's most anticipated annual events. The production brought together the talents of students, staff from both District 75 and District 120 and community members. "The annual musical is a wonderful addition to the arts program at Sandburg. It truly represents all aspects of the arts as it exposes students to music through singing, dance, artistic creation through set and costume design and technology," said Sandburg Principal Mark Pilut. "The effort put forth to produce a production of this quality is truly remarkable. All the Tigers involved are truly demonstrating living the CODE."

Sandburg Bands Continue to Shine

Sandburg's Concert Band Program performed at Northern Illinois University and Northwestern University with two of its students earning playing positions in the Illinois Music Education Association Honor Band, Abby Atkinson and Chloe Langford. Atkinson and Langford were 2 of 88 students selected throughout the state for this honor of the more than 330 who audition. Langford ranked 3rd best trombone in state and Atkinson ranked 2nd on euphonium.

Three Sandburg students received accolades in Music Composition through the Illinois Music Education Association so achieved success in Music Composition. Marisa Chen, Jacob Irabagon and Joey Pettinato all received first place awards for original compositions.



Many students participated in the annual Mechanics Grove talent show. The show was organized by parents Aly Stanczak and Nikki Fugate.

Student Volunteer Efforts Help Those in Need

Carl Sandburg Middle School's Community Service Club and National Junior Honor Society provided opportunities for students to serve their community. NJHS collected more than 1,200 canned food items and \$750 for the Fremont Township Food Pantry. The Community Service Club collected more than 3,000 new or gently used books that were given to students in need during food distribution efforts during the school building closure. Additionally, the club took more than 50 students to Feed My Starving Children to pack food, and provided holiday gifts and meals for four Mundelein families.



District Raises Thousands for Pennies for Patients

Three district schools -- Lincoln Early Learning Center, Washington Early Learning Center and Mechanics Grove Elementary School -- participated in the annual Pennies For Patients fundraising drive sponsored by the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. A total of more than \$15,000 was raised by the three schools. At Washington, students collected \$12,000 for the initiative, half of which went to the family of first grader Lucas Blanco, who completed his chemotherapy treatments in February. The school honored Lucas and his family and celebrated the culmination of his treatments at a school-wide assembly. Staff and students dressed in orange, the color of Leukemia awareness, and presented checks to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and the Blanco family.



At Mechanics Grove, students raised more than \$3,000 for the society. In honor of reaching their fundraising goal, students had the opportunity to duct tape Principal Tanya Fergus to the wall.



Big 10 Math Program Going Strong

Since its inception in 2016, the Big 10 math program is demonstrating outstanding growth, increasing the number of 8th grade students taking algebra by 20%. Even more impressive, 85% of the Big 10 students, when studying honors geometry during their freshman year of high school, have received a grade of “C” or better. “These first semester results show that students were well-prepared for the challenges of honors math in high school,” said Dan Swartz, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. “What is even more impressive is that these students would not have had the opportunity to access honors geometry as a freshman without the Big Ten Math Program. This is a testament to hard work and perseverance of each student in the program.”

The Big 10 math program was designed as a creative way to get underserved students into Algebra 1 in 8th grade, as research shows that students who take algebra in 8th grade have greater opportunities in high school math and beyond. It is a two-year program beginning in 6th grade. Students loop with the same teacher for a double period of math. The students research Big Ten universities, pick the name for their cohort and then work very hard to cover three years of math in two years.

Outstanding Effort by Sandburg Sports Teams

Sandburg’s 8th grade soccer and 8th grade boys volleyball teams had very successful seasons. The 8th grade soccer team, coached by Tony Guzzarde and Josh Albers, won the Lakeside Conference Soccer Tournament and were the 2020 Conference Champions. The 8th grade boys volleyball team, coached by Mike Fansler, Dago Diaz and Ashley Buchman, were the Lakeside Volleyball Tournament victors and the 2020 Conference Champions.

