

Message from Superintendent Greg Herbst

It wasn't a hide-a-bed. Nor was it the refrigerator, freezer, or china hutch. In fact, it wasn't of a physical nature at all.

The heaviest things I ever had to lift have been difficult, far-reaching decisions with long-lasting implications.

The rationale is simple—the time and task of lifting cumbersome physical items are usually very finite. Moving a hide-a-bed is arduous, but it only requires walking from the moving truck to the living room.

Abstract items, like those gnawing decisions that I mentioned, have the unenviable trait of weighing on you all day, every day. Even in more light-hearted moments, there is some recess of your mind mulling the pros and cons of every aspect. It can be exhausting.



In the near future, our School Board will make a decision on the future of our facilities—this has been well-documented. In fact, it's been so well-documented that this past March marked the ten-year anniversary of the first facilities study. Read that last sentence again—slowly, so it can be fully digested . . . ten years!

This decision—this monumental, far-reaching, long-lasting decision—will affect generations of chil-

dren; children who are not even born yet; nay, children of children of children who are not even born yet.

So to the Board members, I tip my hat. They have studied the issues, extrapolated the numbers, solicited input from constituents, and extended the many and varied scenarios.

They have sat through meetings, sifted through presentations, scoured through documents, and dare I say, had more than a few restless moments and sleepless nights.

They have also learned the hard way—from experience—that their decision, whatever it may be, will be met with both favor and disdain.

When put into context, that hide-a-bed seems somewhat weightless by comparison.



Infrastructure Assessments for the High School and Primary School

At its regularly scheduled September meeting, the Board of Education was presented information on the continued infrastructure assessments of GHS and GPS. This information was presented by Mr. Marty Johnson (Straka Johnson Architects) and Mr. Dan Kritt (Wold Architects and Engineers).

Those in attendance would likely compare the presentation to watching a movie in which you know the ending; after all, bad news does not improve with age.

The infrastructure assessment encompassed four domains—roof condition, exterior walls, mechanical, and electrical analyses. Estimates to correct deficiencies are included in the assessment, and the dollars are, to no one's surprise, significant.

In sum, repairs to the High School and Primary School are approximated at more than \$8.4M (reduced from \$8.8M in the report) and \$2.7M, respectively. These figures represent project costs, which is the construction cost multiplied by 1.25 for fees and contingencies.

It is important to note that these are the costs for repairs absent the additional costs for renovations or new construction.

The 59-page infrastructure assessment, complete with inspection notes and photographs, can be found on the District's website or by scanning the QR code shown here.



Galena Primary School

is pleased to announce the addition of **Mrs. Bevin Conatser** as a 1st Grade Teacher in our District.



BY THE NUMBERS

1.86%

The approximate annual inflation from 2006 to 2016, according to dollartimes.com. Translated into dollars, that which would have cost \$100.00 in 2006 will cost \$120.19 today.

\$695,000

The amount of money for which the District was able to bond in Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB). These bonds were purchased by Apple River State Bank and Illinois Bank and Trust. The attraction of selling these particular bonds is that they are interest-free to the District and will be part of the comprehensive plan to address facility issues.

A requirement of selling QZAB bonds is the necessity of a 10% donor match. To meet this, the District has been the beneficiary of \$69,500 in in-kind architectural services from Mr. Marty Johnson and Straka Johnson Architects, P.C.

\$1,028,459

The approximate amount of money that the District will spend in health insurance premiums during the 2016-17 school year. This represents a \$76,704 (8.06%) increase over the previous school year.



New Security Camera System

At its meeting in August, the Board approved the purchase of new security camera systems for the High School and Middle School.

Possible Early Retirement Incentive

The Board is investigating the possibility of offering an early retirement incentive to IMRF-eligible employees. The Board is not obligated by making this inquiry, and an actuarial analysis is being conducted to determine if it would be beneficial to the District before proceeding.

Collective Bargaining Agreements

The District has entered into three-year Collective Bargaining Agreements with the Custodians and Teamsters Local #722 and with the Aides, Cooks, and Secretaries and Teamsters Local #722.

New Scoreboards

Galena High School is the grateful recipient of two new scoreboards in the High School gym. These two boards were generously donated to the District by Illinois Bank and Trust and the GHS Booster Club.

Communications Committee

The Board has formed a Communications Committee, whose function is to identify and investigate various means of streamlining communications with various mediums and across all platforms in a cost-effective manner.

Committee meetings are subject to all stipulations of the Open Meetings Act (OMA). Agendas will be posted on the District website using the following sequence: District > Board of Education > Meeting Information/BoardDocs > BoardDocs link > Meetings tab.

Galena Unit School District #120

Organizational Values and Operating Principles Provide the Foundation

At its regularly scheduled meetings in late summer and fall, the Board of Education approved the continuation of its current organizational values, operating principles, and strategic plans. This framework provides the District with its core values, those non-negotiable

tenets for achieving the District's vision and mission. Shown below is a Model for Success, the blueprint for guiding our actions and interactions, thereby allowing us to create a culture of excellence.

As you visit our schools, you will likely see the

Research by Dr. Gail Matthews, a psychology professor at Dominican University in California, confirms that the most effective way to achieve a goal is to create a plan. So here is our intended sequence for success: A Model for Success

Galena Unit School District #120

VISION

The Galena School District #120 has a culture of high expectations and leadership, creating an environment that educates citizens who achieve their maximum potential and embrace the opportunities of the 21st Century.

STRATEGIC PLANS

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Goal:

Expect and support leadership at every level – student, staff, and community.

Objectives:

- Principals are leaders in each building responsible for student achievement.
- Teachers are leaders in their classroom responsible for student learning.
- Adults model all behaviors expected of students and staff.
- District leadership is active and visible in the community.
- Leaders in the community are active and visible in the district.
- Leadership development opportunities for students, staff, and community.

GOAL: Facilities

The Board will:

- Decide on a course of action by the November meeting.
- Research how the classroom environment affects learning.
- Develop a Maintenance Plan with timelines.

GOAL: Communication

The Administration will:

- Identify ways of improving communication through various mediums (e.g., website, newsletters, social media).
- Administer post-graduation and parent surveys.

GOAL: Alignment

The Board will align their Board Policy Series and Strategic Plan with the District's Vision and Mission.

INVOLVED FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

Goal:

Our schools have strong relationships with families and the community that support learning by ensuring high expectations for student achievement.

Objectives:

- Parents are engaged in their students' progress and are given tools and ideas to support student achievement in partnership with school staff.
- Stakeholders are engaged, schools are valued by the community, supported by families and are viewed as a community benefit.
- District efforts to ensure effective communication with the community, parents, students and staff improve understanding of school practices and outcomes.
- Community members participate in school activities and initiatives.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Goal:

Maximize the efficient and effective use of resources to provide increased access to 21st Century learning tools and safe facilities that support student achievement.

Objectives:

- Facility and infrastructure plans, including a long-range facility plan, are developed and implemented with community input and support.
- Resources are aligned to Strategic Plan goals and objectives to ensure proper support of planned objectives.
- Develop and share easy to understand information that share fiscal outcomes and show their impact on student achievement and the overall fiscal health of our schools.

21st CENTURY TECHNOLOGY

Goal:

Students, teachers and staff have access to the best technology and use it to support all aspects of school success.

Objectives:

- The school technology plan ensures that curricula and student and staff needs drive implementation of any new technology.
- Classrooms are well equipped to support 21st Century learning.
- Professional development is provided and put into practice by faculty and staff to maximize the effectiveness of technology.
- Technology is identified and implemented to support more effective/efficient administrative best practices.
- Access to technology is a priority in the budget.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

1. We expect **continual improvement** from the District, teachers, students and staff.
2. We **embrace** the benefits of **diversity and inclusion**.
3. We value **informed** and **collaborative leadership and service to community**.
4. We encourage achievement through **excellence** and **innovation**.
5. We are responsible for educating the **whole child** in a **safe environment**.

Galena Unit School District #120

Foundation and Strategic Plans Provide the Blueprints for Success

information presented here in poster form throughout the District. The reason for this is simple—having the District’s vision and mission statements, organizational values and operating principles, strategic plans and goals in clear view will ensure that this foundational

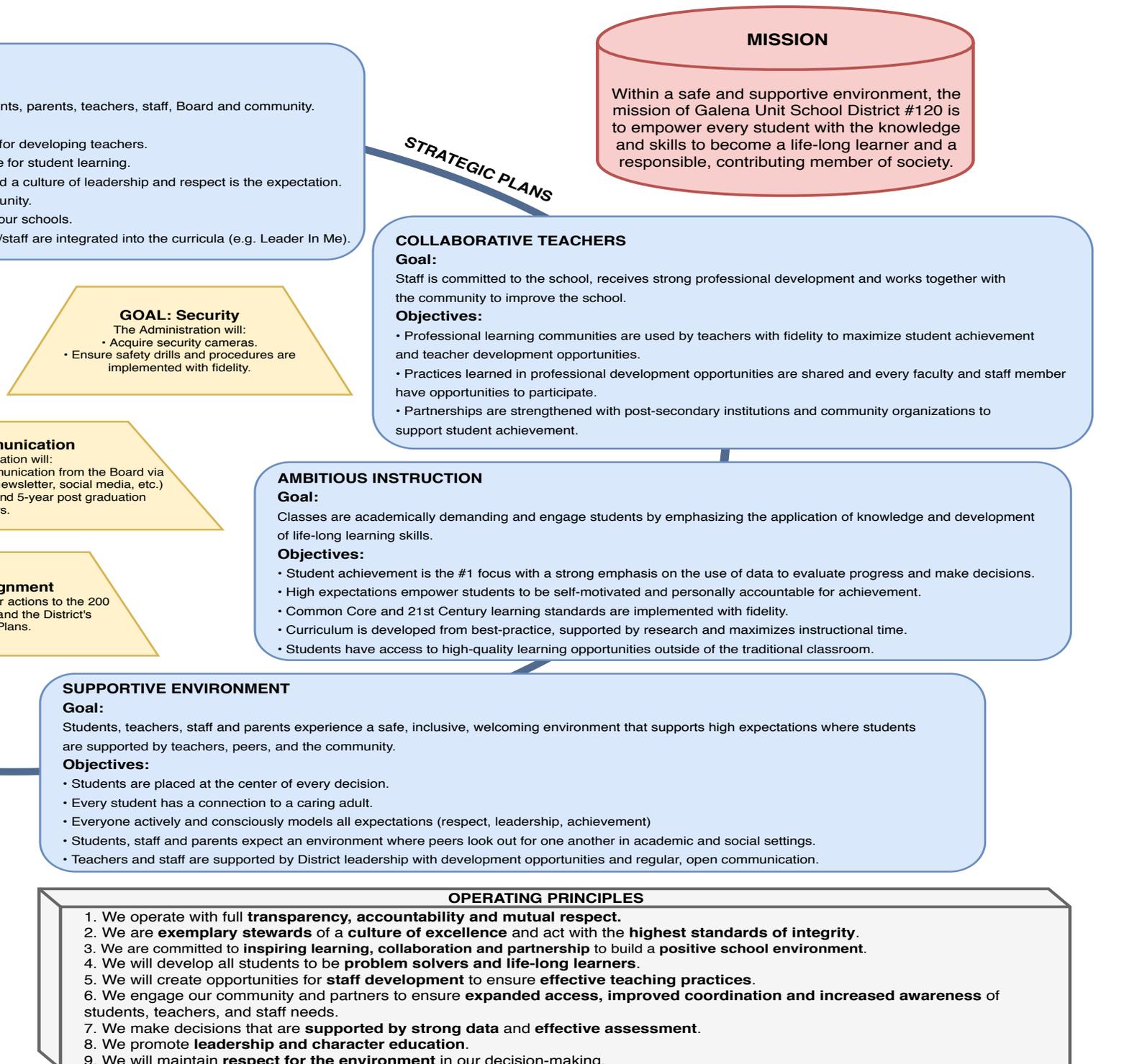
blueprint moves us from awareness to familiarity to practice, thereby becoming a foundation of our culture.

This model for success will be revisited at least every two years following Board elections and on an as-needed basis.

Included that people are 42 percent more likely to achieve their goals just by writing them down.

Awareness > Familiarity > Intended Practice > Culture

Model for Success



Imagine a school, a community, a culture that lived this every day.



Be Kind Galena

Mrs. Lisa Breitsprecker, GMS Counselor

October is Bullying Prevention Month. Four years ago, a student alerted us that an organization called "Stomp Out Bullying" (stompoutbullying.org) proclaimed the first Monday of October as World Day of Bullying Prevention and is encouraging everyone to wear blue t-shirts, the color of their cause.

Although we changed the name of our day to "Kindness Day" to have a more positive focus, our District once again chose to be involved in prevention activities that focus on kindness, respect, tolerance, acceptance, and diversity, with each building deciding how to individually carry this out.

The schedule for "Kindness Day" on October 3 included participating in lessons that encourage empathy, assertiveness, and understanding; taking part in *Mix It Up* at lunch where students sat at tables and got to know others with whom they do not usually

sit; pairing up GMS and GPS students for cooperative activities; and having grade-level assemblies featuring the Riverview Center.

All staff and students were asked to wear their "Be Kind" t-shirts that were purchased last year through the generosity of our community or a blue shirt to support the movement and to come together for a photo after a District-wide assembly where Middle School Principal, Mr. Soat, addressed the students.

Our bullying prevention/kindness efforts will continue throughout the year. On the SIP day of each month, we will wear our blue "Be Kind" shirts as a reminder that all members of our District should act kindly and respectfully and be responsible in standing up and/or in reporting any inappropriate behaviors. While we know that simply wearing a shirt will not stop inappropriate behavior, we do know that it brings awareness to the issue.

Wearing blue shirts will also be a reminder to

ourselves to check our words and actions toward others. GPS and GMS will also participate in grade-level activities from the standards-based curriculum at randomactsofkindness.org to help us reinforce positive and appropriate behaviors and kindness.

Our District is again partnering with the Riverview Center to supplement our Guidance curriculum, to maintain our bullying prevention efforts and to help work toward the goal of creating a community free of violence. Mr. Jorden Rijpma, Riverview Center's Prevention Educator, will conduct grade-level programs throughout the year on Respecting Others, Respecting Yourself, and Internet Safety.

As always, we appreciate any ideas that parents and the community can offer to ensure that our schools are safe and respectful. Please do not hesitate to contact any of our principals or counselors. We know that we can all work for our students' success by bridging school, home, and community.



Pirate Helpers Make a Difference for Other Students

Mrs. Jennifer Kaiser, GPS Counselor

Pirate Helpers is a Galena Primary School conflict mediation program in which fourth grade students serve as mediators and conflict managers for younger students. Pirate Helpers participate in a full day training in which they learn conflict resolution skills and the importance of listening and reflecting, with the aim of helping younger students solve problems. They monitor the playgrounds and try to solve classmates' conflicts in situations. They are asked to fulfill 5-6 shifts per month during recess.

Their duty is to be available to younger students

who need help working out conflicts that may occur throughout the day and to match students who are playing alone or in need of peer support with a "buddy" with whom to play. They are also asked to serve as leaders and role models to their peers, even when they are not on duty. Students interested in becoming a Pirate Helper are given the opportunity to apply at the end of their third grade year.

The small group is chosen based on their dependability, availability, positive peer relations, and their ability to lead peers in a positive direction.

I serve as advisor for this group if they have any questions or comments.



Galena Unit School District #120

Real American Heroes



With all due respect to athletes, actors, and musicians, GMS recognized these real American heroes at a Veterans' Day assembly. Perpetual thanks to all veterans and their families for their service and their many and varied sacrifices . . . special, special people, indeed.

Subscribe to the **Code Red** Emergency Notification System

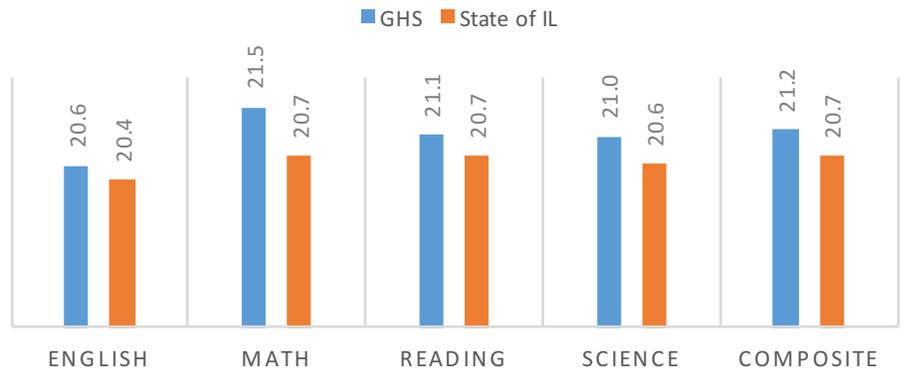
An excerpt from the City of Galena website reads, "The City of Galena utilizes the CodeRED Emergency Notification System, a high-speed telephone communication service for emergency notifications and other important public messages. This system allows local officials to telephone all or targeted areas of the city or the Galena Rural Fire Protection District in case of an emergency situation that requires immediate action. CodeRED is also used to notify residents of other important issues such as water main breaks, boil orders, and snow removal requiring no parking. The City of Galena recommends that all residents register with CodeRED. There is no cost to participate."

Although the School District currently has its own notification system in SchoolMessenger, the Code Red system can be employed as an extra layer of communication, if needed.

To sign up, visit the City of Galena website (www.cityofgalena.org) or scan the QR code below.



A.C.T. FIVE-YEAR AVERAGES AND COMPARISONS 2012-2016



GHS A.C.T. Scores Compare Favorably to the State

In the spring of each school year, juniors at Galena High School, in Illinois, and across the county take the American College Test, better known as the ACT. The ACT consists of curriculum-based tests of educational development in English, mathematics, reading, and science designed to measure the skills needed for success in first-year college coursework.

As shown in the graph above, the 5-year average ACT scores of Galena High School graduates compare favorably to the 5-year average ACT scores of all Illinois high school graduates.

5-year averages were used in these comparisons because class populations are relatively small, thereby rendering annual data as more a representation of the academic personality of a particular class than a snapshot of the performance of the school.



English

Responding to Immigration Concerns

In our diverse community, we recognize that many students and their families may be struggling with intensely personal questions, concerns, and possibly fears about the impact of the recent election.

Our critical mission is to ensure that our schools are safe spaces where a student's race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or immigration status do not create barriers to that child's education. To assist with this mission, we wanted to share information regarding immigration status and our commitment to protect students from discrimination and harassment. Please scan the QR codes, visit the District's website, or call your child's school counselor for information.



Español



Help Us “Go Green” by Signing-Up for an eNewsletter

The dilemma is clear—wanting to share school news and student and staff accomplishments while controlling costs associated with paper, printing, and postage.

The solution is equally plain—deliver information through the power of technology in an eNewsletter.

To assist us in controlling our production costs, we are asking students, parents/guardians, community members, alumni, and friends of education to sign-up to receive future editions of this newsletter in a digital format.

A special email address has been created for this unique purpose. Here’s what you need to do:

1. Send an email to this address: G120newsletter@gusd120.org.
2. Type your household name(s) in the subject line in this format—Doe, John & Jane

That’s it. Future editions will be emailed to you. As a privacy matter, your email address will not be disclosed to other recipients.

Hardcopies will still be available for those school families who do not have Internet access.

Thank you for helping us reduce expenditures and protect the environment by assisting our effort to “go green.”



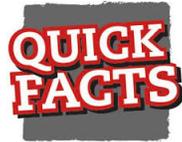
Asbestos Management Plan

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) was enacted in 1986 by Congress to determine the extent of and develop solutions for any problems schools may have with asbestos.

AHERA requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop regulations creating a comprehensive framework for dealing with asbestos in public and nonprofit private elementary and secondary schools. AHERA requires local education agencies to inspect buildings for asbestos; to develop plans to manage asbestos in schools; and to carry out the plans in a timely manner. Our facilities are inspected according to this law. School officials are required to notify parents and employee groups about asbestos-related activities.

Most asbestos-containing materials can be properly managed where they are; in fact, asbestos that is managed properly and maintained in good condition appears to pose relatively little risk to students and school employees. Accordingly, AHERA rarely requires the removal of asbestos materials.

Mr. David Phillips is the Asbestos Program Manager for the District. A copy of the District’s asbestos management plan is available for inspection in his office. All inquiries regarding this plan should be directed to Mr. Phillips’ attention by calling 815-777-3086, ext. 1014.



District Enrollment

Grade Level	November Enrollment
Blended PreK	36
Kindergarten	64
1st	73
2nd	53
3rd	61
4th	74
Total Primary School	361
5th	54
6th	59
7th	63
8th	58
Total Middle School	234
9th	67
10th	57
11th	63
12th	56
Total High School	243
Total District	838

Percentages of Students Receiving Free or Reduced Waivers

Building	Percentage
Primary School	36%
Middle School	33%
High School	30%
District	34%

Numbers of Students Receiving Special Education Services

Building	Special Ed.	Speech Only
Primary School	35	21
Middle School	27	1
High School	27	0
District	89	22

Numbers of Students Receiving English Language Learner Services

Building	Percentage
Primary School	43
Middle School	18
High School	11
District	72



Understanding School Finance

The most basic of economic principles is rooted in arithmetic, not calculus—add up your revenues and expenditures and make sure the former of these sums is larger than the latter. Violating this basic principle results in bankruptcies, foreclosures, and the like; that is, unless your last name is ‘Government’, as in Federal Government or State Government; but I digress.

This topic is important because there are two faces of education—the educational side and the business side. This division is not a dichotomy, but rather a collaborative partnership. Consider it a self-induced system of checks-and-balances with each addressing a fundamental tenet of decision-making for schools: What is best for students? What is most reasonable for taxpayers?

In future issues of this newsletter, I will be sharing information, dollars, and sense about school finance. What are the sources of our revenues? What are the differences in the budgeting and accounting funds for expenditures? Why do schools sell bonds when they need additional capital? How many bonds does the District hold currently?

Yes, you can find this information by dissecting Board minutes and financial reports; however, the intended outcome of this snapshot approach is clear—present the same information in an easier-to-understand format, thereby supporting transparency regarding the District’s financial profile.

Stay tuned . . .



A Prophecy for the Ages

“A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps both.”

James Madison in a letter to W.T. Barry, 04 August 1822



Rotary Club of Galena Furniture Program

Have furniture you no longer need? Or, do you need furniture? In either instance, you may call Steve (815.275.9024) or Helen (815.275.0430) to arrange pick-up or drop-off, respectively.

This is not resale, so please respect that this program is for those without resources.