

The Newsletter of LaGrange School District 105

The Blackboard

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Countryside
Hodgkins
LaGrange

105

District Office
701 S. Seventh Avenue
LaGrange, IL 60525
(708) 482-2700

Dr. Glenn T. Schlichting,
Superintendent of Schools

January/February 2013

Gurrie Selected as DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL



Gurrie Middle School students benefit from the Whole Child Initiative, which focuses on health, safety, active engagement in learning, connections to the school and community, access to personalized learning by qualified, caring adults, and academic challenges. The photos on this page and on page five showcase some of these tenets in action.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), a 150,000-member organization that develops programs, products and services for educators, will hold its sixty-eighth annual conference in Chicago in March. Educators from all over the world who want to further their knowledge of current educational practices will meet at McCormick Place for three days. They come to participate in workshops and hear highly regarded speakers/educators including Maya Angelou, Sarah Day O'Connor, Robert Marzano, and Charlotte Danielson. They will also have the opportunity to visit any of six Chicago area schools whose educational practices exemplify the Whole Child Initiative. District 105 is proud to announce that the ASCD has selected Gurrie Middle School as one of these model schools!

Gurrie Principal Ed Hood was instrumental in applying for the distinction. He knew that Gurrie would meet the five tenets of the Whole Child Initiative and sent a very detailed application to

ASCD. After an extensive screening process, that included a site visit by ASCD president and the executive director of the state's ASCD chapter, Gurrie was chosen for this prestigious honor.

The Whole Child educational initiative focuses on these five tenets:

- Each child enters school healthy and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
- Each child learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults.
- Each student is actively engaged in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and is supported by qualified, caring adults.
- Each student is challenged academically and prepared for success in college or

further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.

- Schools implementing the Whole Child approach use collaboration, coordination, and integration to ensure the approach's long-term success.

"We are all very excited," Principal Hood stated. "The staff has worked hard to create a safe, supportive, engaging environment for all of our students. Not only academically, but to develop well-rounded individuals who will be successful in high school and beyond. I am very proud of our staff and students, and of the community for its support."



Turn to p. 5 for more Gurrie photos

Gurrie Middle School
1001 S. Spring Avenue
LaGrange, IL 60525
(708) 482-2720
Ed Hood, Principal

Hodgkins Elementary School
6516 S. Kane Avenue
Hodgkins, IL 60525
(708) 482-2740
John Signatur, Principal

Ideal Elementary School
9901 W. 58th Street
Countryside, IL 60525
(708) 482-2750
Steven Bahn, Principal

Seventh Avenue Elementary School
701 S. Seventh Avenue
LaGrange, IL 60525
(708) 482-2730
Sherry Krzyzanski, Principal

Spring Avenue Elementary School
1001 S. Spring Avenue
LaGrange, IL 60525
(708) 482-2710
Elizabeth Webb Peterman, Principal

Introducing New Staff Members



(Top row, L to R): Alba A. Aguilar, Jennifer Chadwick, Sarah Cruz, Beth Donnelly, Danielle Downey, Megan Hansen, Marie Juengling, Christina Junic, Amanda Kernagis, and Rachel Matter. (Bottom row, L to R): Maggie Melone, Violet Muser, Lindsay Richardson, Sarah Rusk, Kelly K. Sabatini, Madelyn Srajer, Jennifer Sutsser, Jennifer Weaver, and Alexa J. Wierenga.

The district welcomed a number of new staff members at the beginning of the school year. Introducing the newest members of the District 105 family:

District

Violet Muser, Orchestra Director

A first-year teacher, Mrs. Muser is enjoying making music with her students. She earned a Bachelor's in Music Education from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and a Master's of Music from DePaul University. "All of the parents, students and staff in District 105 have been very supportive, helpful, and welcoming. I look forward to making a home here and growing with my students. It's going to be a great musical journey for all of us!" Mrs. Muser affirmed. Outside of school she performs with a string quartet and also enjoys baking and photography.

Gurrie Middle School

Jennifer Sutsser, Library Media Specialist

After spending the last nine years teaching sixth grade reading/language arts and math in the Chicago Public Schools, Ms. Sutsser is now the District 105 Library Media Specialist. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education English from Western Illinois University, a Master's in Curriculum with a Reading focus from National-Louis University, and attained math, science, social studies, reading, language arts and library media specialist endorsements. Ms. Sutsser previously coached girls' softball, sponsored Student Council and a student newspaper. "Everyone in the district is so welcoming," Ms. Sutsser commented, "I am fortunate to have the opportunity to work with such talented and caring individuals every day." She enjoys photography, scrapbooking, running, playing softball and

volleyball, traveling, and spending time with family.

Hodgkins School

Christina Junic, Sixth Grade Teacher

A District 105 resident and LTHS alumna, Miss Junic loves working in the district. This is her first year at Hodgkins School, but she also served the district last year as a paraprofessional. She taught third grade for one year at a Chicago Public School. Miss Junic earned a BA in Elementary Education, concentration in Language Arts, from Michigan State University, East Lansing, and an ESL Endorsement from National Louis University, Lisle. Outside of school she is a figure skating instructor. She skated with an internationally ranked team for several years. She is thrilled to be "part of the wonderful environment in District 105, where everyone is welcoming. The vision of the staff, teachers, administrators and community members makes the district stand above every other," Miss Junic emphasized.

Ideal School

Alba A. Aguilar, Bilingual Preschool Teacher

Miss Aguilar taught in the Chicago Public Schools for two years and is herself a CPS graduate. She earned a BA in Early Childhood Development, National-Louis University, minor in Psychology: Human Development. Besides enjoying teaching, Miss Aguilar is "glad to be part of a great professional team that supports efforts to give students the best possible education," and helps her continue to develop professionally. She visits friends in Guadalajara, Mexico, each year, enjoys a variety of outdoor sports, dancing, and family gatherings. "I feel privileged to be part of District 105 and appreciate the support teachers receive daily," she stated.

Megan Hansen, Second Grade Teacher

Miss Hansen grew up in LaGrange and is excited to have her own classroom. She has three years of teaching experience. She earned a BA in Elementary Education and Math, University of Iowa, and an ESL endorsement from National Louis University. When she began working in the district she was immediately impressed with the enthusiasm and work ethic of the entire staff. "I am so happy that I am a part of this great community of educators!" Miss Hansen related. She enjoys dancing, running, and spending time with her twin sister.

Marie Juengling, Fifth Grade Teacher

Beginning her second year of teaching, Miss Juengling is excited to be working in District 105. She achieved a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from DePaul University, Chicago. "Everyone in the district has been supportive and accommodating," she remarked. "It is a wonderful learning experience."

Sarah Rusk, Kindergarten Teacher

Miss Rusk attained a BS in Elementary Education from Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, and is now enjoying her first year as a teacher. She is "very impressed with the district and is excited to be part of this community." She likes to play soccer and spend time with her two nieces.

Seventh Avenue School Danielle Downey, Intermediate Resource Teacher

Mrs. Downey earned a BA in Communication Studies, University of Kansas, and an MA in Special Education (Learning Behavior Specialist LBS1) from Lewis University, IL. This is her first year of teaching. "I am really enjoying

working in the district," she said. "I was fortunate to have done my student teaching at Seventh Avenue and got to know the staff and students. I think this is a great place to work!" Mrs. Downey also loves to spend time with her two children.

Amanda Kernagis, First Grade Teacher

When she saw the wonderful things her three children were experiencing as Spring Avenue School students, Mrs. Kernagis decided she would like to teach in District 105. She brings nearly 10 years of teaching experience to her new role at Seventh Avenue School. Mrs. Kernagis earned a BA in Speech Communication from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and a Master's of Education from DePaul University, Chicago. "District 105 is a very special place," she said. This teacher enjoys the time she spends with her husband and their three children, reading, teaching fitness classes and playing volleyball.

Spring Avenue School

Maggie Melone, Third Grade Teacher

Miss Melone has three years of teaching experience. She earned a BA in Elementary Education, focus in mild intervention, from St. Mary's College, Indiana. She is enjoying "every minute in District 105" and said, "Each new opportunity has been a learning experience. The staff, students, and parents work together to provide an excellent learning community." Miss Melone grew up in La Grange Park and spends her free time with family and friends. She likes to exercise and travel.

Lindsay Richardson, First Grade Teacher

Coming from a family of educators, teaching has always been a part of Lindsay Richardson's life. Both

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District Prepares for **COMMON CORE**

The *Common Core State Standards* are “national” learning standards adopted by Illinois and 46 other states to update and replace existing learning standards. In spring 2015 students will take a new Common Core state assessment based on these challenging new learning standards. At the heart of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) is the need to better prepare students to be successful in college and the workplace. Current research shows that United States students are significantly behind the College and Career Readiness benchmark standards.

The Common Core State Standards do not tell teachers how to teach, but they provide a specific breakdown of content knowledge and skills students must master at each grade level. “Teachers can then build differentiated lessons and environments for their classrooms to support mastery of these standards. These common standards support students and parents by setting clear and realistic learning expectations for success,” explained Director of Curriculum Kathryn Heeke.

Classroom Implementation Begins

Similar to districts around the state and throughout the country, District 105 has implemented a three-year plan for full CCSS classroom implementation. “CCSS is not simply a set of standards that teachers will teach, but a set of standards that will change how we deliver content and how children express what they know. These standards will increase students’ level of engagement through higher levels of cognitive demand. They will not only ‘know’ the information, but also demonstrate understanding and synthesize information to reason and solve problems,” Ms. Heeke contributed.

To support this dramatic shift in teaching and learning, District 105 is working with the *Common Core Institute (CCI)* and *Collaborative Learning Inc.* to support the long-term Common Core implementation. CCI is working with many states on Common Core implementation, including statewide professional development for Indiana, over 200 schools in New York, and the Chicago Public Schools.

CCI and District 105 have created a detailed plan for initial Common Core implementation support. This plan represents the first year of a 3-5 year implementation timeline.

2012-2013 School Year Focus

- Common Core Certification training for 17 teachers and administrators. This team will lead Common Core implementation throughout the district.
- In summer 2012, the new English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Common Core Standards were aligned to the district’s curriculum.
- Provided a district-wide lesson plan template aligned to the Common Core, that District 105 teachers are now using.
- Ongoing professional development for district educators in a variety of areas.
- Connect English/Language Arts and Math Common Core Standards across curriculum areas (i.e. science, social studies, PE, music, etc.).

Introducing New Staff Members (Continued from page 2)

of her grandmothers were teachers. This is Mrs. Richardson’s second year in the classroom. She previously worked in educational publishing. She holds a BS in Communication from the University of Tennessee, majoring in Journalism and Electronic Media, and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Columbia College, Chicago. “It has been a privilege getting to know the wonderful students, families and colleagues in our district. I am very thrilled to be part of the LaGrange District 105 ‘family!’”

MULTI-SCHOOL Spring/Ideal Schools

Kelly K. Sabatini, General Visual Arts Teacher

This first-year educator earned a BS in Fine Arts with a concentration in Drawing and Ceramics from Illinois State University, Normal, and went on to achieve an MA in Secondary Education with an elementary and middle school endorsement. Ms. Sabatini believes that “District 105 has a strong commitment to children and in ensuring their success in and out of school.” She is a proud member of the Kappa Delta Pi National Honor Society. Ms. Sabatini also teaches ceramics classes to adults.

Madelyn Srajer, General Music Teacher

An accomplished musician, Ms. Srajer has given private lessons since 2003. This is her first year as an educator in an elementary classroom. She earned a Bachelor’s degree in Music from Roosevelt University’s Chicago College of Performing Arts, with a major in Music Education, and a minor in Performance. “The people in the district are very

helpful and supportive,” she stated.

In addition to being an active musician who performs a large variety of genres, Ms. Srajer teaches students to play just about any type of brass horn in her private studio.

She is grateful to her parents for teaching that hard work brings success. Ms. Srajer enjoys learning to play new instruments and likes spending time with friends and family.

Jennifer Weaver, Physical Education Teacher

Jennifer Weaver is a first-year teacher who earned a BS in Athletic Training, with a physical education teacher’s certificate, from Indiana University, Bloomington. Her majors were Physical Education and Athletic Training. She is “happy to be a part of such a warm and welcoming district and community. The administrators, staff, students and families have been wonderful to work with.”

Ms. Weaver, a certified athletic trainer, grew up in the district and attended Spring Avenue and Gurrie schools. She loves to volunteer, enjoys running, and is a huge Indiana Hoosiers fan. She looks forward to having a great school year.

Spring/Seventh Avenue Schools

Jennifer Chadwick, Fifth Grade Math Teacher/ SAIL Instructor

Mrs. Chadwick not only has five years of teaching experience, but has also gained valuable learning experience as the mother of four children. She earned a BA in Political Science and German from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and a Master’s of Education from the University of

Illinois, Chicago. She is teaching fifth grade math at Spring Avenue, and fifth and sixth grade SAIL instruction at Seventh Avenue School.

She grew up in Hinsdale, and resides in Western Springs. Mrs. Chadwick volunteers in her children’s classrooms, is the art appreciation volunteer in her daughter’s second grade classroom, and the recording secretary of the LTHS Parent Council. She is “enjoying the helpful and caring atmosphere of the district, and her co-teachers’ invaluable innovation and inspiration.”

Spring/Gurrie Schools

Beth Donnelly, Speech/Language Pathologist

Mrs. Donnelly is applying 20 years of experience in education to her new role in District 105. She earned a BS in Speech/Language Pathology and Audiology from Marquette University, Milwaukee, where she also earned an MS in Speech/Language Pathology. The mother of two boys, Mrs. Donnelly volunteers at their schools and for their Boy Scout troop. “This is a wonderful place to work,” she observed, “where everyone is very welcoming and more than willing to offer help when it is needed.”

Rachel Matter, Resource Teacher

A graduate of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Ms. Matter earned a BA in Learning Behavior. She grew up in Lake Zurich and recently moved to Chicago. In addition to working as a resource teacher, she is the district coordinator of the fifth and sixth grade TEAM 105 intramurals. Ms. Matter emphasized that everyone in the district

A Message from Dr. Glenn Schlichting, Superintendent

School Board and community members, parents, staff, students, and administrators from all five of our school communities have been working together since September to update our District 105 Strategic Plan. This important process has focused on strengthening the alignment of our resources to the needs of our students.

The planning committee has developed a draft of a District 105 Strategic Plan. The draft is a result of a planning process which has included:

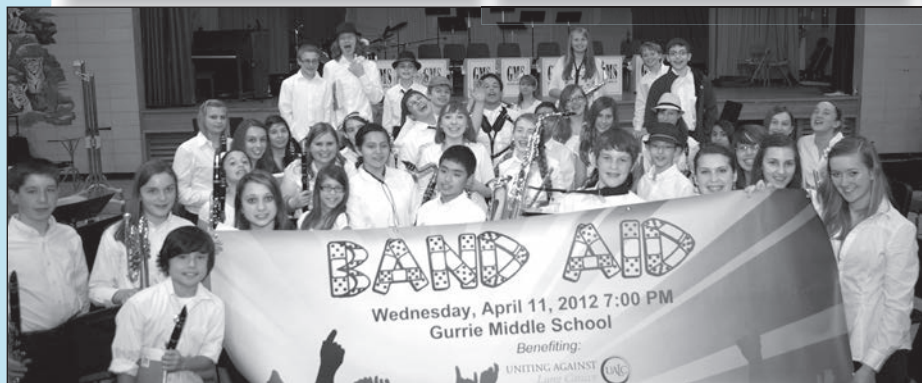
- Careful review of feedback from parents, staff, students, and community members.
- Comprehensive review of District 105 data about our finances, facilities, technology, learning environment, and student achievement.

- Thorough analysis of our District 105 strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Examination of research about the “best practices” in classrooms, schools, and school districts.

The draft of the Strategic Plan includes a revised mission statement, a new district motto and vision statement, long range goals, and high level strategies we will implement to pursue our long range goals. The draft of the Strategic Plan, along with all of our strategic planning presentations, agendas, and working documents, is posted on our website under the *About District 105* tab.

We anticipate that the District 105 School Board will adopt the updated Strategic Plan at its regular meeting on January 28, 2013. I encourage you to review the draft of our Strategic Plan and to send your feedback to gschlichting@d105.net.

Gurrie Selected as DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL



From lunchtime leadership meetings with the school social worker (top left), being engaged in learning (top center), and making healthy lunch choices (top right), to helping other people through fund-raising events (above) and thanking veterans for their service (above right), Gurrie students are receiving an education that benefits the “whole child.” Read why Gurrie was selected as a Demonstration School by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in the article on page one.

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DISTRICT 105 BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mark Smith, President	<i>The public is invited</i>
David Herndon, Vice President	<i>to attend board meet-</i>
Eileen Tucker, Secretary	<i>ings — generally held at</i>
Virginia Kogen	<i>Gurrie Library Learning</i>
Kristine Lonsway	<i>Center on the fourth</i>
Larry Prystalski	<i>Monday of each month,</i>
Jan Reagan	<i>7:30 PM.</i>

Changes To DISTRICT OFFICE STAFF

Mary Ann Webb Retires

Mary Ann Webb, who served the district for 28 years, retired on December 31. She worked in the District Office for the past 16 years, as an administrative assistant/receptionist and also worked in accounts payable.

Mrs. Mary Ann Webb is deeply rooted to the district, where she and her family have lived since 1984. She and her husband raised three children who attended Spring Avenue, Gurrie, and LTHS.

Her initial work with the district began when her children were in school. She was a PTO volunteer, room parent, and piano accompanist for the IGMSA solo music competition. For five years she volunteered and worked part-time in the Spring Avenue Library Learning Center (LLC), then served for seven years as an LLC aide before joining the District Office staff. She enjoyed working with teachers and children, and then later, with administrators. She also enjoyed that she was always able to walk to her job!



(L to R): Therese Junic, Pam Butters, Kelly Lenti, and Mary Ann Webb.

She has a degree in teaching and taught French for a brief time. Her dream is to visit France and learn the language all over again; a dream that may begin to be realized when she and her husband spend a week bicycling through Bordeaux in 2013.

Mrs. Mary Ann Webb is grateful to the many, many people in District 105 who have influenced her life throughout the years. She is looking forward to an active retirement that includes playing tennis and bridge, reading, traveling, hiking, biking, practicing piano, enjoying the outdoors, volunteering at church, and spending time with her husband, children and grandchildren.

The entire District 105 community extends its best wishes to Mrs. Mary Ann Webb on her retirement.

Therese Junic

Upon Mrs. Mary Ann Webb's retirement, Mrs. Therese Junic began serving as the district office receptionist, and also working in accounts payable. She was a paraprofessional at Spring Avenue School for the past four years, where she was very involved in the Developmental Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs. Mrs. Junic earned a BS in Business Administration from Northern Illinois University, with a minor in Psychology. Her prior business experience includes 10 years in the Human Resources/Payroll environment.

She has four children, and two of them attended the District 105 schools. Her daughter, Christina, is a new teacher in the district! Mrs. Junic enjoys time spent with family, and volunteering with the Boy Scouts, where her two sons have earned the rank of Eagle Scouts.

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Summer Program CONNECTS With Students

For the second year, a program that helps students enhance and maintain reading and math skills furthered student achievement. The goal of the district's CONNECT program is to negate summer regression in math and English. This regression causes a loss of precious instructional time as teachers delay the introduction of new concepts and skills at the beginning of the school year because they spend time helping students to regain lost ground.

The CONNECT program began in the summer of 2011 and was successful. In the summer of 2012, the program was adjusted and expanded. Over 400 K-8 students participated in the nine-week program. Changes to the program included students reading an average of thirty minutes a day, seven days a week, and also participating in math activities, thirty minutes a day, seven days a week. Students used the new web-based IXL.com Math Program, which allowed them to work on math each day on their home computer. Coaches accessed students' reports by computer, offered feedback, and assigned challenging lessons within the program. Each student also met in person with his/her coach at least five times.

Data shows that students who fully participated in the CONNECT program showed less summer regression than their peers who did not participate.

A survey found that 96% of parents found the CONNECT program to be supportive. Comments included:

- Both of my children really benefited from the program. Going into summer, my children were a bit behind in reading and math. The extra work in the summer made a huge difference. I recently received MAP scores for my oldest child and was thrilled to see that all of her scores went up!
- It was better than I expected. I was a bit reluctant going in. I thought the one-hour requirement per day was a bit much. Once we started, however, I found that we worked it into our daily routine and that it was easy to accomplish each day. I also appreciated how much more consistent the program was this year — both of my kids had an equal amount of work to accomplish each week.

The district looks forward to continuing the program in the summer of 2013, with additional improvements based on the input of parents, CONNECT coaches, and students.

Board of Education ELECTION

Five LaGrange District 105 Board of Education seats will be up for election on April 9, 2013; four full-term, and one two-year vacancy. A full term is four years. The Board of Education members help lead the district, and serve without pay. On April 9, remember to vote for the candidates of your choice.

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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013

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Introducing New Staff Members

(Continued from page 2)

has been very welcoming, and she is “thankful to have the opportunity to work with the great staff, administrators, and parents in District 105!”

Alexa J. Wierenga, Art Teacher, Grades 2-8

Ms. Wierenga is a first-year teacher and a graduate of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where she attained a BFA in Art Education. “District 105 has surpassed all my hopes in a school and community,” the teacher stated. “I could not imagine a better place to share my enthusiasm for the arts with children.”

She is an active artist who enjoys photography, metal work, painting, and interior design. Her favorite quote is by impressionist artist Edgar Degas: “Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.”

Hodgkins/Seventh Avenue Schools

Sarah Cruz, ESL/Bilingual Teacher

Mrs. Cruz brings 15 years of experience in education to her work in the district. Originally from Wisconsin, she lived and taught in Spain and Puerto Rico, then moved to Chicago where she taught in the Chicago Public Schools for ten years. Three years ago she moved to LaGrange and taught preschool. She achieved a BA in English and Spanish (double major) from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, earned teacher certification, then attained a Master of Education (M.Ed.) in Instructional Leadership from the University of Illinois, Chicago. “I am impressed with how things are run in the district, how student-centered it is, and how dedicated the staff is. I love this district and am very happy to call it home!” she said. Mrs. Cruz has two young sons.

Changes to District Office Staff

(Continued from page 3)

“This is an exceptional school district,” Mrs. Jumic related, “a great environment where everyone works together for the same goal: the enrichment of our children. I am thrilled to be part of such a great learning community!”

Pam Butters

Mrs. Butters and her family moved to the district four years ago. She has two boys who attend school in the district. She served as Seventh Avenue PTO secretary for the past two years, where, she said, “I had the opportunity to work with some of the most dedicated, supportive parents I have ever met.”

She earned a BA from the University of Wisconsin, Parkside, and an MA from Western Illinois University. She majored in English and Writing.

“The District 105 staff has made me feel very welcome,” Mrs. Butters remarked. “I love being part of a team that cares so much about creating the best learning environment for our children.”

Kelly Lenti

Kelly Lenti became the administrative assistant to the superintendent/curriculum upon the retirement of Denise Struve in July. This is Mrs. Lenti’s fifth year of work for the district. She previously served as part time administrative assistant to the business manager and director of curriculum.

She is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater, where Mrs. Lenti earned a BBA in Business Management.