River Forest Public Schools
District 90

State of the District

February 15, 2012

Introductions/Acknowledgements:

District 90 Board of Education

- Jim Weiss, President
- Pat Meyer, Vice President
- David Latham, Secretary
- Juli Geldner, Member
- Roman Ebert, Member
- Liz Fischer, Member
- Ralph Martire, Member

District 90 Administration

District 90 River Forest Education Association Leadership

District 90 PTO Leadership

District 90 Mission Statement

"To deliver excellence in education through an unwavering commitment to the whole child."

Our Greatest Assets:
The **People** of River Forest District 90

- Engaged, responsible, and enthusiastic students
- Dedicated and child-centered faculty and staff
- Focused and results-oriented Board of Education
- Supportive and involved parents and PTO members
- Talented and experienced administrative leaders
- Informed and invested community members

District Demographics

- Total enrollment: 1,321
  - Lincoln Elementary School: 384
  - Roosevelt Middle School: 587
  - Willard Elementary School: 350
- Racial makeup:
  - 76.3% white
  - 6.0% black
  - 7.6% Hispanic
  - 4.1% Asian/Pacific Islander
  - 5.9% Multi-racial/multi-ethnic
- Low income: 5.2%
- Our faculty/staff:
  - Pupil-teacher ratio: 15 to 1 (state average: 18 to 1)
  - 127 certified teachers
  - 56 support staff members (teaching assistants and technology, clerical, and custodial staff)
  - 9 administrators

Student Accomplishments

- Percent of all District students meeting or exceeding state standards:
  - For math: 97.5%
  - For reading: 94.3%
- For all grades, percentage of students in the "exceeds" category is double or nearly triple the state average:
  - Holds true across gender and economic lines
  - Especially pronounced among special-education students, who outperform state averages by a wide margin
- Attendance rate: 97.2%
- Among the student accomplishments of the past year:
  - Roosevelt's Robotics Team qualified to compete in the state tournament and was a finalist in the teamwork category
  - Roosevelt's Reading Olympics finalist team went on to win the championship against all the Oak Park schools' finalist teams.
  - In basketball this year, the eighth grade girls and seventh grade boys were among the top teams in their conference
  - In an adjudicated orchestra festival last spring, the senior orchestra scored 98.5 out of a possible 100 points
- Service clubs at each school:
  - Food drives for the Oak Park-River Forest Food Pantry
  - Meals for PADS
  - Visits to nursing homes

Staff Achievement

- Average teaching experience: 13 years
  State average: 13 years

- Teachers with master's degree and above: 86%
  State average: 57%

- Classes taught by teachers designated "highly qualified": 100%

- Five National Board Certified Teachers, out of just 5,153 in the state.

Nature of Our Program

Our mission: To deliver excellence in education through an unwavering commitment to the whole child.

What does it mean to educate the "whole child"?

- Academics
  - K-4 core curriculum - Science example: "Balloon Cars"
  - 5-8 core curriculum - 8th grade Reading example: "Shakespeare Festival"
- Exploratory Classes
- Music and Fine Arts Program
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Extra-Curricular Activities and Athletics
- Focused Articulation with OPRF High School

Recognitions

- ISBE Awards of Excellence (2011)
  - Lincoln School
  - Willard School
  - Roosevelt School
- Bright Red Apple Award Winning District (2011)
- Bright A+ Award Winning District (2011)

In addition, the ISBE has nominated Roosevelt Middle School to apply for the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award.

Strategic Plan

- Implementation of five-year plan began in 2010-2011
- Plan details *what* the District intends to accomplish and *how* it will reach the designated objectives
- Outlines goals in five broad areas:
  1. Assessment, Curriculum, and Instruction
  2. Community Involvement
  3. Facilities
  4. Human Resources
  5. Technology
- The District is currently ahead of schedule in meeting the goals of the plan
- Once goals are accomplished, a new plan will be established

Overview of District Finances

- Fiscal year 2012 total budgeted operating fund balances are around $23 million
- Classroom instruction takes priority - personnel costs account for 85% of Education Fund expenditures
- Amount of budget derived from local revenues: 93.3%
- 2011 Tax Levy: an increase of just 1.5% over previous year extension
- District finances are healthy despite state budget crisis—no anticipated referendum in foreseeable future

Addressing the Challenges That Face the District

Maintaining Strong Financial Stewardship

- Current strong fund balances are the result of years of responsible fiscal decision-making by the Board
- Long-term planning is essential
- Minimize incremental decision-making
- Cost-benefit analyses must be considered
- Remaining prepared for uncertainty
- Studied and deliberate decision-making, based on strategic planning initiatives

  Examples: iPad initiative, full-day Kindergarten

Student Safety

- Balancing student safety vs. an inviting school environment
- Completion of life safety work to increase security
- Collaboration with River Forest Police and Fire Departments
- Mobilization of crossing guards to reflect safety and parent concerns
- Provision of cyber-safety education programming for students and parents
- Communication of safety notices and alerts, as needed
- Implementation of crisis planning and drills

Common Core State Standards Initiative

- Most significant educational change in decades
- Replaces widely-varying state learning standards with uniform, nationally aligned standards
- Emphasis on:
  - English/language arts
  - Mathematics
  - Integration of technology into instruction and learning
  - Informational/nonfiction reading
- Common Core-based assessment begins in 2014, replacing Illinois Standards Achievement Tests (ISATs)
- District 90 is preparing for the change:
  - Teacher leadership - TLC and SLC
  - Staff development programming
  - On-going training

Technology Integration

- Balancing financial considerations vs. academic needs: What technologies provide the greatest instructional value for our investment?
- Technology used differently, and for different purposes, by:
  - K-4 students
  - 5-8 students
  - Faculty and staff
- Fully integrating iPads as instructional tools and evaluating the program
- Articulating with District 200

Meeting Individual Student Needs

- The objective: supporting *all* children in achieving their full potential
- Differentiated Instruction
- Response to Intervention Initiative (RtI)
- Special Education Services
- Leveled courses (Academically Talented Program)
- Our goal is to fully realize outstanding achievement for all subgroups of students - *how do we accomplish this in the future?*

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Q & A

Breakout Sessions

Finance and Construction

Mr. Anthony Cozzi, Director of Finance and Facilities

Instruction and Student Services

Ms. Martha Ryan-Toye, Director of Student Services

Ms. Karen Boozell, Special Education Coordinator