

# 39 EXPRESS

WINTER 2020

## Meet Our New Administrators

### A Message from the Superintendent



This school year is unlike anything anyone could have expected, yet I remain inspired by and in awe of our District 39 staff, students and community as a whole. I want to share our heartfelt appreciation to the entire community for your patience, flexibility and ongoing support.

The health and safety of our staff, students and community is paramount in every decision we have made for the past several months as we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic and work ferociously to support and educate our students in the best possible way. We remain committed to building connections, nurturing the spirit of each and every child, and creating targeted and meaningful learning and growth that will reach far beyond our current challenges.

It delights me to see our students' smiles through the myriad remote and in-person experiences we create. While their faces are safely covered with masks or viewed through a screen, their determination to grow and connect shines brightly from their eyes, and their enthusiasm is almost palpable. Teachers and staff sing the praises of our students' hard work, diligent learning and ongoing relationships as they form across environments.

In turn, our parents and community have expressed deep appreciation for the relationships and connections being built, the learning and growth they see in their children, and the ongoing improvement being made by each school team. We know that this new way of learning is not easy for anyone, and we appreciate everyone's partnership and grace as we work together to support one another.

I must commend our teachers, administrators and staff who have inspired our students with tremendous care, perseverance and grit through these unusual times. I also applaud our parents for their flexibility and unwavering support for the work we do. Finally, I hail the District 39 Metrics Reopening Advisory Team that has helped advise ongoing adjustments and difficult decisions on behalf of the educational goals and important health and safety needs of our entire community. You can view our dashboard at [wilmette39.org/](http://wilmette39.org/).

We know that things will change, but it is critical that each and every one of us continues to recognize that which we know to be certain and consistent: that together we can accomplish great things for our students and community.

Your partner in education,

Kari Cremascoli, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Wilmette Public Schools District 39

#### Ms. Kate Dominique

Principal, Wilmette Junior High School  
Admin. Experience: 6 years



"While it has been a unique time to join a new school and community, WJHS and D39 staff and families have been incredibly supportive and welcoming. I am enjoying getting to know students who are both in the building two days a week, and those learning remotely at home. As I am an extrovert who loves talking with students and families, the disconnectedness that comes with COVID-19 is challenging for me, and I look forward to the time when we can gather in person and speak face-to-face. Until then, we will continue to communicate and connect despite distance and masks, while working together to support students and families."

#### Ms. Taylor Harvey

Assistant Principal, Central Elementary School  
Admin. Experience: First year, 13th year in the district



"I am ecstatic for the opportunity to work alongside the Wilmette community in a new capacity this school year. Wilmette has been a home for me since second grade and I have such fond memories as a student. Since then I have worked in D39 as a Learning Behavior Specialist, Behavior Intervention Specialist, and Student Services Coordinator. While this year presents its own unique challenges and opportunities, I am overjoyed to continue supporting the teachers, students, and parents in this new role!"

#### Ms. Lisa Anderson

Assistant Principal, Romona Elementary School  
Admin. Experience: 2 years



"Coming into a new district can be challenging, especially this year, as we navigate a global pandemic. However, I feel blessed to have the opportunity to maneuver through this year with such an amazing group of teachers, students, families and administrators. Our staff and community have repeatedly demonstrated innovative thinking, high expectations and a love for our children. I am excited to work with such a talented group of adults to develop our students, academically and social/emotionally. I look forward to continuing to foster relationships with students, families and staff."

#### Corey Bultemeier

Business Manager/Chief School Business Official  
Admin. Experience: 10 years



"District 39 has an outstanding reputation as a school district, and I'm excited to be able to join this community as the district's Chief School Business Official."

### Stay Connected



**Social Media:** Follow us @Wilmette39 on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**Neighborhood Lists:** Visit [www.wilmette39.org/](http://www.wilmette39.org/) neighbor to subscribe to our local neighbor email lists in order to keep up with the D39 school news going on in your community.

**Email:** Email us at [communications@wilmette39.org](mailto:communications@wilmette39.org) with your questions, feedback and suggestions.

# D39 Approves FY21 Budget

The Wilmette Public Schools Board of Education unanimously approved the Wilmette Public Schools Fiscal Year 2020–2021 budget during the Board’s August meeting. The budget reflects the District’s commitment to fiscal responsibility while financing educational projects that support the academic, social-emotional and physical well-being of each student.

## What to know about the budget

- In order to maintain financial stability, the Wilmette Board of Education has a long-term goal of sustaining the overall end-of-fiscal-year operating fund balance at a level equivalent to 40% or more of operating expenditures. This ratio is projected to be 47.1% at the end of the fiscal year.
- The budget figures below include \$7.5 million in capital project expenditures and nearly \$1.9 million in additional costs related to the COVID-19 pandemic.



## FY21 Budget at a Glance

<b>Total Operating Revenues.....</b>	<b>\$63,969,719</b>
Educational (78.7%) .....	\$50,337,382
Operations and Maintenance (15.6%).....	\$9,952,211
Transportation (1.8%).....	\$1,171,999
IMRF/Social Security (2.6%).....	\$1,680,047
Tort Immunity (1.2%).....	\$734,259
Working Cash (0.10%).....	\$93,821

<b>Total Operating Expenditures.....</b>	<b>\$65,901,039</b>
Educational .....	\$55,369,027
Operations and Maintenance.....	\$6,254,511
Transportation.....	\$1,900,575
IMRF/Social Security.....	\$1,772,472
Tort Immunity.....	\$604,454
Working Cash.....	\$0

**Non-Operating Funds ..... \$1,585,052**

**Construction Projects ..... \$7,507,454**  
**Non-Operating Funds ..... \$2,493,505**

**Total Revenues**  
**\$65,554,771\***

**Total Expenditures**  
**\$75,901,798\***

\* Excludes transfers between funds

**Budget Deficit \$10,347,027**

The FY 2021 Budget reflects a planned deficit of \$10,347,027 due to one-time construction projects planned for the 2020-2021 school year, as well as the additional costs associated with reopening the schools safely during the global pandemic. Across the district at several buildings \$7.5 million has been budgeted for construction projects. The budget includes the last portions of projects at Highcrest Middle School, Central Elementary School, and Harper Elementary School and the first portions of scheduled projects at Romona Elementary School, McKenzie Elementary School, and Wilmette Junior High School. The projects at the four elementary schools are necessary to support the implementation of the Kindergarten Enrichment Program.

# District 39 Strategic Initiatives

## Making progress together toward a bright future

On March 13, 2020, Gov. J.B. Pritzker made an emergency declaration to close schools statewide. Unfortunately, the 2019-2020 school year ended with teaching and learning occurring remotely as the community needed to abide by the stay-at-home order. In June, District 39 began planning for fall 2020 and formed a committee and advisory task force of more than 100 members—staff, students, administrators, district families, board members and community members.

District 39 kept the health and safety of all members of the Wilmette school community as a priority while developing its Fall 2020 Reopening Plan. The team aimed to build in-person student learning and connections as often as possible while abiding by state health and safety guidelines, and was guided by four commitments for a return to learning:

- The health and safety of students and staff is a priority.
- Flexible and adaptable instructional models must be developed to provide consistency and the ability to respond without interruption.
- Manageable, meaningful and sustainable teaching and learning are critical to our ongoing success.
- Targeted and connected learning is our goal.

In addition to reopening our schools, the strategic initiatives to which we are committed are progressing as planned. Some highlights include:

### *Culture and Climate*

District 39 continues to promote inclusion, celebrate diversity, and nurtures a sense of belonging within each school's community and districtwide. For example, all D39 schools participated in Unity Day on October 21. Students and staff wore orange to show that they stand united against bullying while standing for kindness, acceptance and inclusion. Also, students in grades 5-8 participated in the Walk Against Hate, held October 18. District 39 understands that this work has a positive impact on our school community's culture.

### *Student Growth through Differentiation and Personalization*

District 39 is committed to differentiating instruction and providing appropriate personalized interventions to have a positive impact on student growth and achievement.

## For More Information

Background and action steps for each strategic initiative can be found online at [www.wilmette39.org](http://www.wilmette39.org) under the "About Us" section

The approved FY2020–21 budget can also be found in the "Annual Financial Reports" page of the District website under the "About Us" section.

### *Creating Flexible Learning Environments*

District 39 completed the Learning Commons construction in all six District 39 schools last year. These spaces transformed each school's library and technology spaces into a place where students can learn by applying critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication skills. District 39 is also committed to finalizing the outdoor learning spaces at Highcrest Middle School.

### *Delivering a Kindergarten Enrichment and Enhancement Program (KEEP39)*

District 39's construction at Central School and Harper School was completed to address the need for additional classroom space, and the program development committee completed designing the enrichment program. District 39 will implement the supplemental program for kindergarten students and seek guidance from the Board of Education on the construction plans for McKenzie School and Romona School.

## Construction Updates

### **Highcrest Middle**

The third phase of construction at Highcrest Middle School was completed this fall. This construction project included the transformation of the old Library Media Center into three new classrooms and a small-group room. Additional spaces were created in the hallways for flexible learning purposes. These additional classrooms have been used since the start of the school year, and will provide opportunities for creative arts classes to gather and for increased digital creation for years to come. In addition to the new classroom space, air conditioning was added to the Highcrest Auditorium. We look forward to welcoming audiences for more comfortable performances in the near future.

### **Harper Elementary**

Construction at Harper Elementary School was completed to address the need for additional kindergarten classroom space to support the implementation of the new KEEP39 program. Phase 1 of the construction project was completed last fall, which was the addition of the new classrooms on the north side of the school. This summer, phase 2 was completed, which created hallways connecting the new classrooms to the original building. Three new classrooms were added in total, as well as a new conference room and two office spaces. Additionally, two special education classrooms were improved with one room adding air conditioning.

### **Central Elementary**

Construction at Central Elementary School was completed to address the need for additional kindergarten classroom space to support the implementation of the new KEEP39 program. Two classrooms were repurposed to accommodate kindergarten students. The scope of the project included relocating a classroom for students with special needs so they could have a learning center "suite" that includes a specialized bathroom. The staff lounge was also relocated to the corner of the cafeteria to allow space for the additional classrooms. Air conditioning was added during construction to all four kindergarten classrooms and the cafeteria.







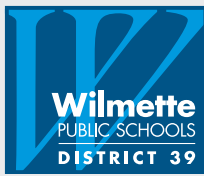
The District 39 Educational Foundation, a 501c(3) non-profit organization, raises funds for projects that expand, enrich, and complement educational opportunities for the students, staff, and community in District 39. Visit us online at [d39foundation.org](http://d39foundation.org) for more information about our organization.

**Special Gift:** The foundation gave \$3,000 in partnership with the District to build a dedicated e-book library for use exclusively by students at all six schools after the brick-and-mortar libraries closed as a COVID-19 precaution.

**Fall Fundraising:** This fall's Annual Appeal sent via email and regular mail is the foundation's largest source of funding in lieu of the beloved annual in-person events such as the "Attire to Inspire" Fashion Show and Family Bingo Night. We were fortunate to partner with businesses at Plaza Del Lago for an outdoor fall fashion show raising \$2,000 and remain hopeful spring events will take place.

**Gripp Grant Applications:** Applications were accepted this fall, and we're continuing to fund last spring's grants as well, thanks to our generous community. Your support is critical to our continued success in funding Gripp Grants twice a year as well as offering our support to the District for unanticipated special needs.

**Donate:** Please consider a tax-deductible contribution by visiting [d39foundation.org](http://d39foundation.org) to make your donation, or mail a check to District 39 Educational Foundation, 615 Locust Road, Wilmette, IL 60091. Thank you for your support to help District 39 schools, teachers and students during these unprecedented times.



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## POSTAL PATRON LOCAL

# Celebrating Our Schools

District 39 successfully opened its schools this fall with a variety of programming options, each focused on building meaningful connections among teachers and students while focusing on targeted growth and rigorous learning for all in safe and supportive learning environments during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Elementary Schools Offer Daily In-Person Instruction



In-person learning is in full swing at all four D39 elementary schools. Students participating in this program attend school daily for a modified full day of instruction. While at school, students engage in academic learning during reading, writing, math, social studies and science while enjoying the outdoors as much as possible for classes such as physical education (PE) and during recess and lunch. Students have art and music while at school and receive supplemental Spanish and library/technology lessons asynchronously. Daily time is also devoted to social-emotional learning and WIN (What I Need) supports.

## Highcrest Middle and Wilmette Junior High Schools Offer Hybrid Learning



On the 5th-8th grade campus, students attend in-person two days each week while participating in synchronous and asynchronous remote learning on alternating days when they are away from school. While in-person and remote, students participate in their full schedule of classes, including all academic courses, PE (outdoors), creative arts, and world languages.

On their remote days, students experience a mix of synchronous and asynchronous work, tuning into Zoom lessons and completing work throughout their daily schedule. Students have been busy learning and growing throughout the first semester of school.

## An Enhanced, Fully Remote Program is Available to All



Students across the district are able to enroll in District 39's Enhanced Fully Remote Program. Approximately 20% of families choose this option for a variety of reasons. This instructional model allows students to engage in their learning remotely with a dedicated team of teachers and professionals to support their learning and growth.

The team utilizes a mix of synchronous and asynchronous instruction and has formed classroom communities to support in-depth connections.

We have been encouraged by the progress our students have been making within each of these learning models and are eager to continue this good work throughout semester two. The District continues to seek feedback and ongoing improvement opportunities while capitalizing on the many successes of students and staff.