



The Insider Newsletter

Spring Lake Park Schools **School District 16** Proudly Serving Blaine, Spring Lake Park & Fridley



October 16, 2006

Right: Woodcrest students, "live" on the school's TV channel, present Marsha Timlin with flowers and congratulations. Below: Marsha, center, with media specialist Caroline King and principal Mike Callahan.



November 18 Staff Folleeez will benefit the Panther Foundation

The District 16 staff has decided to pay back the Panther Foundation for its efforts to support students and student programs.

On **Saturday, November 18**, staff members from District 16 schools, principals, and School Board members as well will present a **Staff Folleeez**, featuring skits, music, and general all-around fun for the entire family.

The limited-seating one-night special event, **open to all**, will begin at **7:00 pm** in the district's **Fine Arts Center**, 8000 Highway 65 NE, Spring Lake Park.

Information about how to obtain tickets will be available shortly. Ticket information will be available November 1 by calling Community Services, 763-786-1338 or by checking the district's website: www.springlakeparkschools.org

All proceeds from the Folleeez will benefit the Panther Foundation. The Foundation awards grants for innovative projects to enrich or supplement teaching and learning efforts that directly benefit students.

Woodcrest Elementary's Marsha Timlin is Minnesota's Media Paraprofessional of the Year

Marsha Timlin, a paraprofessional in Woodcrest Elementary's media center, has been named MediaParaprofessional of the Year by the Minnesota Educational Media Organization (MEMO). Timlin was honored by school and district staff at an after-school reception on October 12, prior to accepting her award at an October 13 banquet.



Fall Athletic Success: Very, very good news...

It is a fun, fall season of success for Spring Lake Park High School Panther sports. Among the highlights:

- *For the 3rd consecutive year, the Spring Lake Park/ St. Anthony girls soccer team won the North Suburban Conference Championship and advance to sectional competition.*
- *For the first time in school history, the Spring Lake Park/ St. Anthony boys soccer team has won the North Suburban Conference Championship. They advance to sectional play as well.*
- *The high school's varsity football team sits atop the North Suburban Conference with its perfect 7-0 record.*

Go Panthers!



Noting the district's upgraded "A" rating from Moody's Investment Service at the October 10 School Board meeting are Jim Westrum, business manager; Kristin Hanson, Ehlers & Associates; Jim Amundson, board chair, Dr. Don Helmstetter, superintendent.

Board Briefs

October 10, 2006 Regular School Board Meeting

New Student Board Member

Chairperson Jim Amundson welcomed Gopika Kartha as the newest student School Board member. She will be an ex officio member of the Board for the first school trimester, joining Erik Bryz-Gornia in that capacity. Kartha is a freshman, active in both school and community activities.

Spring Lake Park Lions/School District 16 Foundation Presents \$32,500 Check for Scholarships

Dick Mans presented the school district with an impressive check from the Spring Lake Park Lions/School District 16 Foundation Scholarship Committee. The check for \$32,500 funded 38 scholarships awarded to Spring Lake Park High School graduating seniors in June. Mans is the organization's president and a former District 16 teacher.

The Spring Lake Park Lions/School District 16 Scholarship Foundation has provided over \$60,000 in scholarship funds in the past two years alone.



Dick Mans, from the Spring Lake Park Lions/School District 16 Foundation, left, presents a check for \$32,500 to Jim Amundson, school board chairperson

Mans said he hopes the Lions are able to continue their efforts to provide scholarships for local high school students. He extended an invitation to the public to consider joining the Lions Club and to learn more about their many civic projects.

Mans said that in addition to the Lions' fund-raising efforts, individuals can contribute donations to the scholarship fund.

Board members thanked Mans, the Scholarship Committee, and the Lions Club for their extraordinary efforts on behalf of students. Dr. Helmstetter congratulated the Spring Lake Park Lions on their 50th Anniversary which was celebrated last week.

October Student Enrollment Update

Dr. Jeff Ronneberg, Assistant Superintendent, reported the following in his October student enrollment report:

Elementary enrollment

Projection for 2006-07	1,955
September 11 actual	1,959

Middle school enrollment

Projection for 2006-07	1,025
September 11 actual	1,031

High school enrollment

Projection for 2006-07	1,260
September 11 actual:	1,334

Learning Alternatives enrollment

September 11 actual	168
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(full-time equivalent students)

Moody's Gives the District an "A" Credit Rating

Dr. Helmstetter, superintendent, and Jim Westrum business manager, recently met with Moody's Investment Services personnel and were informed this week that the district's credit rating has been upgraded by Moody's to "A3."

This is the district's third such upgrade in four years.

Moody's noted the district's new financial management team, improved budgeting procedures, increased reserve, conservative projections, and positive enrollment trends as factors in the steadily improving financial operations.

Kristin Hanson, from Ehlers & Associates, presented the School Board with a certificate acknowledging the achievement.

Preliminary 2005-06 Annual Curriculum Report

Dr. Ronneberg reviewed, and the Board accepted, the draft of the 2005-06 Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Performance.

Highlights of the report include the district's Framework for the Future; teacher training initiatives; the district's comprehensive assessment program; elementary and secondary level highlights, vision and priorities for 2006-07; and community participation on the Strategic Framework Advisory Council and the Systems Improvement Advisory Council.

Minnesota school districts are required to submit an annual report on curriculum, instruction and student performance to the Minnesota Department of Education each fall. The district's annual report exceeds the requirements set by the Department of Education.

The report will be further fine-tuned before being sent to the Department of Education and to the residents of District 16.

Dr. Ronneberg thanked Jerelyne Nemanich and Jim Elert for their efforts in assisting with the production of the report.

The annual report will be printed for distribution to all community members and has been posted on the district's website www.springlakeparkschools.org.

District Receives Small Learning Communities Grant

Dr. Jeff Ronneberg reported the district has been awarded a significant Small Learning Communities grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Continuous improvement effectiveness studies conducted at the high school and middle schools last year resulted in the high school submitting their grant application, and was instrumental in their being one of the few high schools in the country awarded this opportunity, he said.

The secondary study examined how to improve student achievement, how to improve student connectedness, and how we ensure structures throughout our schools are aligned with accomplishments.

The overall goal of the grant, Dr. Ronneberg explained, is to help ensure that all students graduate with the

knowledge and skills necessary for success in post-secondary education, careers, and adult life.

Specific goals of the grant are:

- **Student Achievement** – to maximize the academic potential of all Spring Lake Park High School students.

- **A Climate of Connectedness** – to improve the climate for learning and keep students connected to school until graduation.

- **Systems Change** – to implement the necessary system structures that will support a successful transition to small learning communities to maximize student outcomes.

The grant is for slightly less than \$800,000 over five years. Most of the funds will be used during the first three years of the grant.

The grant will support efforts to implement a system of intervention, provide funds for staff development in areas such as interdisciplinary teaching and personalization strategies, and increase student support through improved freshman transition activities, increased tutoring and mentoring, and the use of adult advocates.

Dr. Ronneberg thanked Barb Zandlo-Hutchinson, MaryAnn Wagner, and others for their work on the grant.

Facilities Improvement Plan Update

Dr. Helmstetter gave an update on Facilities Improvement Plan activities.

- The Community Construction Oversight Group continues to meet. The group received an update on the new elementary school at its last meeting.

- Progress is being made on the design development of the new Phy. Ed. and fine arts areas of the high school and the design development of the new elementary school is nearing completion.

- The district's Technology Department will relocate to the former Health Partners facility, 1415 81st Ave NE, in December 2006.

- The district will accept bids in January or February 2007 for projects currently in the design stage.

- In March 2007, the wing of the Spring Lake Park High School complex housing the district's Early Childhood programs will be torn down. These programs will relocate to the facility at 1415 81st Ave NE.

- In March 2007, some District Office and district-wide services staff will relocate to 1415 81st Ave NE as well.

- Staff and program relocations to the 1415 81st Ave NE site, which is owned by the district, are temporary unless the School Board decides otherwise.

- The Board will discuss facilities plans more in depth at its work session scheduled for Monday, October 16, 5:45 p.m., Board of Education Building.

\$3 million Savings for Local Taxpayers in Sale of School Building Bonds

Kristin Hanson, Ehlers and Associates, the district's financial advisor, reported the results of the second of three sales of bond issues resulting from the February 2006 voter-approved bond referendum. This issue, for \$30.9 million, resulted in six bids, the lowest of which had a true interest rate of 4.4141%.

This is considerably less than the figure used for the estimates prepared prior to the bond referendum election, and even less than the rate of 4.57% from the first bond sale.

This will help to ensure that the total interest cost over the term of all three bond issues will be over \$3 million less than pre-election estimates. The tax impact of the building program for taxes payable in 2007 will be approximately 8% less than the estimates prior to the election.

The Board adopted a resolution awarding the sale of the bond.

Gifts to the District

The Board acknowledged the following gifts and extended the district's thanks and appreciation:

- \$10,000 from the Spring Lake Park Lions for the high school athletic department
- \$1,000 value 1996 Toyota value from Barry and Julie Rice for the high school automotive department
- \$5,060 value CPR equipment from Ann Lilleskov and Unisys for the high school OEC Program
- \$6,500 value office equipment/white boards from Rick Rossi for the middle school
- \$970 for the middle school fundraiser from James and Julie Bayer; Cathy and Kevin Palmer; Ann and James Corrigan; Sharon and Jason Roseke; Shelly and Joel Rushmeyer; Lynne Grigor; Tanya and Dean Sloan; Carol and Jeff Williams; Susan and Thomas Swanson; Tonya Walker-Rootes; Michelle Pagel; Kelli and Richard Jones; Larry and Kimberly Trapp; Laura Wright; Chantelle Sinn; Susan and John Stroebel; Chad Dvorak; Marianne and Richard Matlon; Kerry and Terry Stellmach; Donna Kill; and Stephen Grossman

Total Value of All Gifts \$23,530

Board Briefs

September 26, 2006 Special School Board Meeting and Work Session

Strategic Framework for the Future

The School Board devoted a great deal of time reviewing and revising the district's Framework for the Future.

The one-page document outlines the district's Purpose, Values, Vision for the Future, and Strategic Directions. In addition, it describes a method by which the Success System will be measured.

The Board approved the Framework for the Future which can be found on the last page of this newsletter.

Facilities Improvement Plan Update

Dr. Helmstetter gave an update on district's Facilities Improvement Plan that included the following:

- Construction work, planning, and the budget are all on target. Project engineers and /or architects meet in the district 3-5 times a week.

- Detailed information is being gathered for the high school fine arts center and athletic program projects in preparation for bid approval in January or February.

- Dr. Helmstetter asked the Board to consider having another meeting in October for the sole purpose of discussing construction projects. The School Board agreed to meet on October 16.

- A Construction Standards group also meets regularly. This group assures consistency of standards throughout the district from door frames to lighting to mechanical systems

- Dr. Helmstetter spoke at length about the former HealthPartners building located at 1415 81st Avenue NE.

The original plan was to use the facility, which the district purchased this summer, as a staging area for high school students, early childhood programs, and district-wide services personnel when parts of the high school complex are torn down.

This facility will be used for these purposes, but the district is now considering the possibility of permanently moving district-wide services to this site.

During the year-and-a-half facilities utilization study, one of the primary recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Education was to remove from the high school site any programs that are not related to the high school. District services are currently widely scattered throughout various sections of the Spring Lake Park

High School complex as well as other school sites.

The district's architectural firm, Wold Architects, is now strongly recommending that district-wide services be permanently relocated to the former HealthPartners facility to allow for expansion of the Learning Alternatives Community School at the high school site as well as more efficient use of classroom space elsewhere at the high school.

Dr. Helmstetter told School Board members that part of this site could also be utilized for selected student programs, such as bringing Level 4 EBD Special Education services back to the district. These services are currently offered off-site.

The Board will consider permanently housing districtwide services at this facility at a future meeting after more details are available. Wold Architects is developing a list of deferred maintenance items for the facility which is considered to be in very good condition.

Proposed 2006 Payable 2007 Property Tax Levy

Jim Westrum, business manager, spoke about the school district's payable 2007 proposed tax levy required to be certified by the School Board by September 30, 2006.

- The total proposed levy for taxes payable in 2007 is \$14,516,172. Excluding the effect of the \$95.9 million in bond authority approved by voters in February 2006, the District's total levy is less than the average annual levy for years prior to 2002.

- Much of the change in the district's levy is due to the 2005 legislative session laws that shifted the source of the revenue from state aid to local property tax levy.

The Board approved the preliminary \$14,516,172 levy certification amount. The annual Truth in Taxation Hearing on the levy will take place on Tuesday, December 5, 2006, 7:00 pm, in the Board of Education Building.



Above: This dramatic night-time photograph, courtesy of Birds-Eye View Photography, was taken during the September 29 Spring Lake Park High School Panthers homecoming football game. The Panthers outscored the North Branch Vikings 51-6. Below: scenes from the tailgate party and parade preceding the football game.



Homecoming 2006

***Spring Lake Park
High School***

***Friday, September 29,
2006***



Board Briefs
September 12, 2006
Regular School Board Meeting

Alumni Association gives All-Class Reunion Update

Dawn Schnickels-Johnson, co-chair of the Spring Lake Park High School Alumni Association, talked to the Board about plans to celebrate the school's 50th anniversary activities including next summer's 1957-2007 All-Class Reunion.

She thanked the Board and District 16 staff for their help and support with plans for the All Class Reunion. The Alumni Association celebration begins with Homecoming 2006 and ends with the Homecoming 2007.

Plans are well underway for the All Class Reunion on August 18, 2007. An "affordable" event is being planned for an anticipated attendance of 3,500 to 4,000 at Blaine's National Sports Center.

A DVD that captures the history of the school is being developed and will be given to all who attend the All School Reunion.

Another mailing will be sent within the next few weeks. This mailing will also be posted in the "Alumni" section of the school district's website:

www.springlakeparkschools.org

A contact list for each graduating class is being developed.

The celebration will include all present and former students, staff, administrators, and School Board members. The Alumni Association plans to donate a complete set (1957-2007) of high school yearbooks to the Anoka County Historical Society.

The All Class Reunion and other alumni events is a huge undertaking. Dr. Helmstetter encouraged the community to get involved by donating their time, talent, or funds. Any questions can be referred to members of the Alumni Association at PO Box 49486, Blaine, MN 55449.

Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) Update

Jeanne Kalien, an involved district resident and parent, provided an update on the Heart Safe Communities Program that she and other parents created several years ago. Her presentation included the following:

- The AED program began in 2003 as a result of Kalien's daughter having a cardiac arrest. She was saved by an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).
- In 2004, District 16 Heart Safe Communities was developed. The volunteer organization raised \$22,000 for AEDs to be placed throughout the district's schools and facilities.
- Donations from community groups including the Spring Lake Park Lions, PTA and PAC groups, individual donations, and fund-raisers including an Aerobathon and the Woodcrest Coin Collection which raised \$1,400. Ten AEDs were purchased in 2004.
- AED training began in 2005 with demonstrations in all buildings and some student groups. There was also formalized training in 2005 with funding provided by a grant from Medtronic. Over 500 people were certified in 2005.
- Earlier this year, CPR training was provided to Spring Lake Park High School 10th graders (4-hour training session in Phy. Ed. classes). The training included lectures, hands-on training, and interactive training.
- Half of the high school students have now been trained in CPR and AED. The goal is to have all students receive CPR and AED training before they graduate.
- The program successfully educates students; over 90% passed the certification test.
- The program is considered a Best Practice by Medtronic Foundation.

Kalien is currently advising others who wish to teach CPR/AED to students. She extended her appreciation to Bill Neiss, the high school's OEC Program Director, and OEC student instructors for their time and expertise. She also thanked the school and the Phy. Ed.

faculty for adding the training to the curriculum.

- The school district's AEDs need to be reprogrammed in accordance with new AHA guidelines. Battery packs will need to be replaced after reprogramming.
- More CPR/AED training will be provided to bring people up to speed on new AHA guidelines. Traditional classes will be offered as well as one-hour sessions for individuals who do not want or need certification.
- "CPR Anytime Kits" will be purchased for each school and facility.

School Board members thanked Kalien for the time and effort she has devoted to this outstanding project that provides life-changing opportunities for students. Donations to the project's continuing efforts can be sent to "Heart Safe Communities," Community Services Department, 8000 Highway 65 NE, Spring Lake Park.

September Student Enrollment Report

Dr. Jeff Ronneberg, Assistant Superintendent, reported elementary schools started below class size ceilings with similar class sizes across the district. He noted that elementary enrollment in September 2001 was 1,872, and on September 11, 2006, elementary enrollment was 1,969, a growth of nearly 100 elementary students during the past five years.

Elementary enrollment

Projection for 2006-07	1,985
September 11 actual	1,969

Middle school enrollment

Projection for 2006-07	1,025
September 11 actual	1,033

High school enrollment

Projection for 2006-07	1,260
September 11 actual:	1,337

Learning Alternatives enrollment

September 11 actual	205
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Back-to-School Update

Dr. Helmstetter thanked the staff for a great start to the school year. Jim Westrum, business manager, and Cindy McKay, transportation coordinator, made numerous advance plans to help ensure a smooth start to the new school year. Additional district staff were made available during the first days of school to provide an immediate response to calls from parents.

District representatives also met in advance with representatives from the bus company to assure they would respond quickly and courteously to all calls from parents. School Open Houses were well-attended with many positive reactions.

Facilities Improvement Plan Update

Dr. Helmstetter provided an update of summer construction activities:

- Four new classrooms and three kindergarten classrooms have been added at Park Terrace Elementary. A ribbon cutting ceremony and open house celebration will take place the following week.
- A new media center has been added at Westwood Intermediate School. The former media center was converted into classroom space.
- Panther Stadium has a new track and synthetic field. Prior to the start of the football game last week, a member of the Facilities Task Force and the athletic director dedicated the new track and field and talked about why the improvements were made. Many parents made positive comments.
- The first phase of the high school renovation will begin in March 2007.
- The former Spring Lake Park HealthPartners building, 1415 81st Avenue NE, that was purchased by the district was originally planned to be used as a staging area in conjunction with the demolition of the high school.

-- as early as December 2006, the technology staff will install cable systems at the site (prior to district occupancy).

-- The Early Childhood Program will move to that facility temporarily the last week in January. In September 2007, the program will relocate to its permanent home at Woodcrest where a 10,000-12,000 square foot structure will be constructed for the program at the south end of Woodcrest.

-- In March 2007, many of the District Office staff will move to the 1415 81st Avenue NE site. Kraus-Anderson will then use the District Office space as a project planning area. School Board meetings will continue to be at the District Office as will the district garage.

Dr. Helmstetter will recommend to the Board that the district keep the HealthPartners site as a permanent district facility to house the District Offices, district-wide services, and Community Services for the following reasons:

-- The Minnesota Department of Education stated that based on its guidelines the high school should be on a 65-acre site instead of its existent 40-acre site.

The Facilities Plan was approved by the MN Department of Education with the expectation that Kenneth Hall had to be torn down and programs and offices not related to the high school should be removed from the high school site. The plan also included the relocation of the district garage.

-- If the Board decides to keep the HealthPartners building as a permanent site, the district garage, which must be relocated, could be permanently relocated to that site.

-- Moving the District Offices, district-wide services, and Community Services to the 1415 81st Avenue NE site would provide the high school with additional classroom and parking space as well as enhance safety and security.

-- The Learning Alternatives Community School, which has a moratorium on expansion in place because of space issues, would have additional space for growth.

-- The HealthPartners site could also provide much needed staff development space.

-- Further discussion and additional information, including a cost analysis, will be provided to the Board before it makes a decision.

■ Ninety-nine percent of construction work will be done by trade unions. Dr. Helmstetter said Kraus-Anderson was asked to look into the implications of a possible trades work stoppage on an already tight construction schedule.

The Board may be asked to approve a resolution authorizing Kraus-Anderson to negotiate a Project Labor Agreement with the trade unions to eliminate the risk of a work stoppage. This agreement would not have a negative impact on any non-union contractors.

Sale of School Building Bonds

The Board approved a resolution authorizing the sale of \$30.9 million in building bonds related to the February 2006 voter-approved bond referendum.

Gift to the School District

The Board gratefully accepted the donation of 20 computers for the middle school computer lab, with a value of \$17,000, from Wells Fargo Banking.

2006-07 Our Framework for the Future . . .

SPRING LAKE PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT 16 *SERVING BLAINE, SPRING LAKE PARK, AND FRIDLEY*

The document that drives our continuing—and measurable—focus on and commitment to the needs and emerging needs of all students

Our District Purpose

High Expectations
High Achievement
For all.
No Excuses



Our District Values

These values describe how we will work with our learners and each other:

Accountability

- To fulfill one's roles and responsibilities and be responsive to the results.

Courage

- Doing and saying the right thing at the right time in the right way despite challenge, adversity, or conflicting self interests.

Excellence

- A relentless and intentional effort in continuous improvement.

Innovation

- Purposeful, courageous, continuous improvement through research and action.

Integrity

- Always aligning our actions with our values and beliefs.

Learning

- Continuous, meaningful, and challenging effort that results in student success.

Respect

- Listen to, accept, and value each individual in the Spring Lake Park School District and community.

Shared Responsibility

- Working together interdependently and collaboratively, learning from one another, entrusting one's self interest to another, and taking ownership for our individual and collective actions and decisions.

Our Vision for the Future

How do we want people to describe our district in the future?

The Spring Lake Park School District Is recognized as a world class learning community of choice as demonstrated by:

- Academic rigor and social development for all students, resulting in college-ready graduates
- All students actively participate in school and/or community co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences
- Community pride and commitment to its continuous improvement

Our Strategic Directions

Members of our school community can expect to see the following:

- District 16 will be responsible for the learning and active engagement of all students regardless of race, ethnicity, or socio-economic status in rigorous academic pursuits and co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences
- District 16 will attract, develop, and retain only high-quality staff who demonstrate on-going learning and a commitment to the District's purpose, values, and vision
- District 16 will maintain and enhance strong community connections and communications
- District 16 will have safe, healthy working and learning environments
- District 16 will be financially responsible and healthy



Our Success System

will be measured by . . .

- Student learning and development
- Safe and healthy working and learning environment
- Effective operations and stewardship of resources
- Family and community connections and partnerships
- Attraction and ongoing development of high quality staff