

# F 303 C U S

A Newsletter for the District 303 Community

## In This Issue

District 303 Administration has developed four Facilities Options that are scheduled for presentation to the Board of Education in December.

These options address declining enrollment and potential actions by the State of Illinois that could affect District finances.

**Option 1:**

Maintain Status Quo

**Option 2:**

Close Lincoln and Wasco schools

**Option 3:**

Close Haines Middle School, move 6th grade to elementary schools, \$20 million retrofit of Thompson Middle School

**Option 4:**

Close Lincoln, Wasco, and Haines, keep 6th grade in middle schools, \$45 million Thompson retrofit.

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## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

### Administration Proposes Four Options for Facilities Efficiency

Just over ten years ago, the student population of District 303 was marching upward toward 14,000 students. Three brand new elementary schools were opened to serve students in the new subdivisions of Cornerstone Lakes, Fox Mill and Thornwood.

Things changed when the economy turned down in 2008 and residential construction essentially came to a halt. The District 303 student population leveled out and then began to decline as families stayed in their homes as their children progressed through the schools.

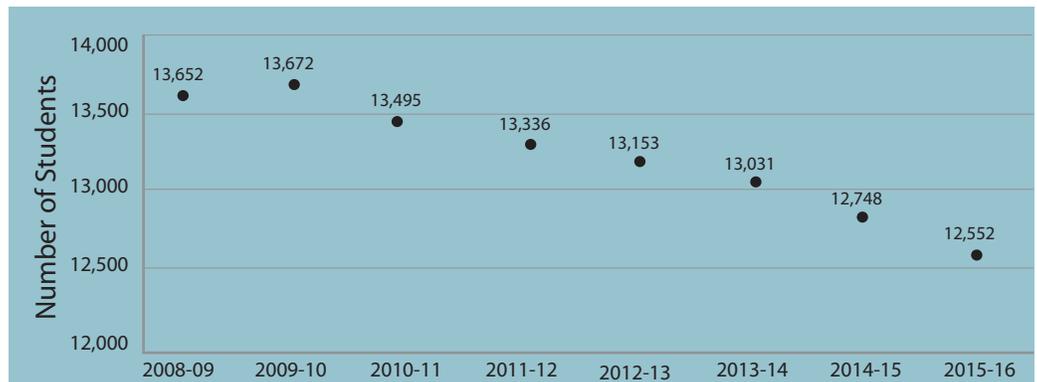
Four years ago, District 303 Administration began to notice a large difference between the number of high school seniors and incoming kindergarten students. The question asked at that time was, "Is this decline temporary, or is it the new normal?"

One year ago, District 303 formed a citizen's committee to study the potential for growth in the District. Another question the committee investigated was, "Would existing homes turn over quickly leading to a new surge in enrollment?"

The Growth Committee concluded future growth will be more gradual than the growth that occurred in the late 1990's. The Growth Committee's conclusion is that in ten years, the District 303 student population will be between 10,000 and 12,000 students. (See page 4 for more details on the Growth Committee findings.)

At the high end of the range, District 303 enrollment would reflect a decrease of approximately 2,000 students from the highest enrollment in 2009-10.

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# A Message from the Superintendent

## We Can Either be Proactive, or Reactive

By now I am sure most of you have heard about the four Facilities Options that are being offered by District Administration. These options are based on a very simple question that I want every community member to consider.

The question is this, "Does our declining student enrollment create an opportunity for us to lessen the impact of financial changes that could come our way from the State of Illinois?"

I consider myself fortunate to work in a community where the taxpayers provide the resources that allow us to prepare students for the next part of their journey that lies beyond high school.

Our Board of Education has worked very hard in recent years to create a top educational experience for students at a cost near the state average. The Board has been able to do this while operating on a balanced budget and abating about \$6 million back to taxpayers over the last four years. At the same time, if the State does change our financial obligations, our taxpayers expect us to find efficiencies to balance the budget.

As I see it, there are four questions related to the four Facilities Options that when answered, can help you determine which option addresses your beliefs.

The first question is, "Do you agree with the Growth Committee's projection that in ten years, the District 303 student population will be 10-12,000 students?"

The next question, "Do you believe the State of Illinois will change school funding, shift teacher pension funding to the school Districts, or pass a Property Tax Freeze?"

The third question, "Should District 303 keep Kindergarten through 5th grade elementary schools or move 6th grade from the middle schools to elementary schools?"

And finally, "Is it time to upgrade Haines and Thompson with newer science labs, add air conditioning, improve food service areas and eliminate mobile classrooms?"

For example, if you believe the Growth Committee is wrong and believe our state legislators will not do anything to impact us, Option 1 (maintain the status quo) is the option that most likely fits your beliefs.

Through mid-November, I will be visiting individual schools to present the Facilities Options and answer your questions. We have also set up a feedback page on the District website [www.d303.org/facilities](http://www.d303.org/facilities). On that page is a video of an earlier presentation, videos with answers to frequently asked questions, and a chance for you to provide feedback on the Facilities Options. That feedback will be presented to the Board of Education to assist them in their decision making.

That's what I think, let me know what you think.

**Donald D. Schlomann, Ph.D.**

District 303 Superintendent of Schools

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## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

### ...Continued from Page 1

Add into the mix discussions in Springfield about changes in school funding for Districts such as St. Charles CUSD 303, shifting the funding of teacher pensions to school districts, and a proposed property tax freeze. This led to District Administration investigating how the drop in student enrollment might allow for more efficient use of facilities, leading to cost savings. These proposed changes might lessen the impact of changes made in Springfield while maintaining the educational experience for students in District 303 thanks to the resources provided by District 303 taxpayers.

After conducting an architectural review of all District 303 facilities, including a review of building capacities, District Administration has developed four options. These options will be presented around the community in November and presented to the Board of Education in December with a vote by the Board expected in January 2016.

Details of the four Facilities Options can be found on page 3.

# 2015 District 303 Facilities Options

District 303 Administration has developed four Facilities Options for consideration by the community. These options will be presented to the Board of Education in December.

## Option 1



### Maintain Status Quo

- Maintain status quo of 17 school buildings
- No cost savings
- Does not create financial flexibility
- Does not address middle school building needs (science labs, air conditioning, small food service areas)

## Option 2



### Close Lincoln and Wasco Schools

- More efficient in elementary schools
- Saves \$1.7 million per year
- Middle school building issues remain
- Leaves empty buildings
- Continues K-5 learning environment

## Option 3



### Close Haines Middle School

- K-6 elementary schools
- Saves \$2.8 million per year
- Addresses middle school building issues
- \$20 million cost to retrofit Thompson
- Leaves empty building
- Changes 6th grade learning environment

## Option 4



### Close Lincoln, Wasco and Haines Middle School

- Addresses middle school building issues
- Expands TMS capacity to 1,300 students
- \$45 million cost to retrofit TMS (would require a referendum)
- Saves \$4.5 million per year
- Leaves three empty buildings
- Maintains 6th grade learning environment

For More Information on Facilities Options Visit

[www.d303.org/facilities](http://www.d303.org/facilities)

Go to [www.d303.org/facilities](http://www.d303.org/facilities) to watch a video of Dr. Schlomann's presentation of the 2015 District 303 Facilities Options. The page also provides an opportunity to provide feedback on the Facilities Plan. Additional videos with answers to commonly asked questions about the Facilities Options will be posted.

At [www.d303.org/facilities](http://www.d303.org/facilities) the remaining schedule of community meetings for the entire District are posted. Feel free to attend any meeting.

## Schedule of Community Meetings

### Community Meetings at School Sites – 7:00 p.m.

Date	Site
Tuesday, November 3	Corron
Wednesday, November 4	Davis
Thursday, November 5	Richmond
Tuesday, November 10	Wild Rose
Wednesday, November 11	Norton Creek
Thursday, November 12	Anderson
Tuesday, November 17	Fox Ridge



# What Will the State Do?

There are three initiatives being discussed by the state legislature that, if passed into law, could have a significant financial impact on District 303.

**Change in the State Funding Formula for Schools-** Known as Senate Bill 16 in the last session, this initiative would reallocate revenue from property wealthy districts such as District 303 to other districts.

**Pension Reform-** All of the responsibility for funding pensions would be shifted from the State, to local school districts.

**Property Tax Freeze-** Both parties in Springfield have proposed a property tax freeze, but the proposals differ on aid to property poor school districts.

## Findings of the D303 Growth Committee

### 10,000 — 12,000 Students by 2024-25

The District 303 Growth Committee presented their findings to the District 303 Board of Education in August. Based on discussions with planners for the municipalities in District 303 and demographer Dr. Charles Kofron, the Committee projects District 303's student population to be 10,000 – 12,000 students by the 2024-25 school year. Current District 303 student population is 12,552.

Here is a summary of the presentations by the municipalities.

**Campton Hills** has very limited growth opportunities due to the village's approach to preserve open space along with significant infrastructure costs for water and sewer.



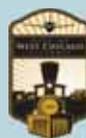
**Kane County** projects the majority of their future growth is in the center of the county (Kaneland and Burlington), an area that is not in District 303.



**South Elgin** desires residential growth, but options to do so in District 303 remain limited.



No growth in the **West Chicago** portion of District 303. There is no open land zoned for residential housing.



**St. Charles** has limited open space available for growth; measured residential growth is likely over the next decade.



# District 303 Facilities Options Quick Reference Guide

For detailed information including a video of Dr. Schlomann's presentation and to give your feedback, go to [www.d303.org/facilities](http://www.d303.org/facilities).

District 303 Class Sizes 2015-16



## Growth Committee Findings

**D303 student enrollment between 10,000 and 12,000 in 10 years**

- 12,000 = 923 per grade level
- 10,000 = 770 per grade level
- Our current enrollment - 12,552

D303 Municipalities & County Input:  
**Limited growth options in D303**



For additional information see page 4

## Facilities Options

- Option 1:** Maintain status quo
- Option 2:** Close 2 elementary schools, elementaries remain K-5, save \$1.7 million per year
- Option 3:** Close 1 middle school, elementaries become K-6, save \$2.8 million per year, cost \$20 million to retrofit Thompson Middle School
- Option 4:** Close 2 elementary schools and 1 middle school, elementaries remain K-5, save \$4.5 million per year, cost \$45 million to retrofit Thompson Middle School (would require a referendum)



## Key Questions

- 1) Is the Growth Committee's enrollment projection accurate?
- 2) Will there be a change in funding from the State?
- 3) Should D303 go to K-6 elementary schools or remain K-5?
- 4) Is it time to address some needs at the older middle schools?

## Important Dates



November 3 through November 17 - Remaining Community Meetings (see page 3 for dates and sites)

December- Administration presents options to Board of Education

January (Tentative)- Board makes a decision on course of action

February (Tentative)- Depending on Board action, administration recommendation on boundary changes

# BOE Update

## Notable Recent Actions by the Board of Education

### Approval of the 2015-16 District 303 Budget-

The 2015-16 budget shows the increase in revenue of 0.72% is greater than the increase in expenditures of 0.52%. As the Board has directed, the budget is balanced and the District maintains its' top financial rating. The Board continues its' commitment to provide an above average educational experience for students at an average cost by abating a portion of the tax levy allowed by law. At the Board's direction, District 303 has abated \$6 million in taxes over the last four years.

### High School Food Service Removed from

**Federal School Lunch Program-** In May the Board approved a one-year food service contract with Aramark to provide food service at the two District 303 high schools outside of the regulations of the Federal School Lunch Program. By doing so, the District forgoes Federal financial support. However, taking the high school food service out of the Program allows greater menu choices while still providing nutritional options for students and staff.

**2016 High School Graduation-** The Board approved a one-year contract with the Sears Centre in Hoffman Estates to conduct District 303 high school graduation ceremonies on Sunday, May 29, 2016.

## What's happening in D303?



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# Eight D303 Students Named National Merit Semifinalists

## Eight Students Earn Commended Status

St. Charles East High School students Yudesh Basavaraj, John Born, Ryan Chimienti, Andrew Park, Kelvin Wang and Carson Zhang, along with St. Charles North High School students Catherine Prendergast and Emma Spellman have been named as semifinalists in the 2016 National Merit Scholarship Program. These eight District 303 students are among 16,000 students nationwide who have been selected for this honor.

The next phase of the National Merit Scholarship Program (NMSP) takes place in February when the finalists are notified. The Finalists of the NMSP are notified in February and National Merit Scholarship winners are notified beginning in March.

District 303 has eight additional students who have earned Commended Status in the National Merit Program.

St. Charles East High School – Kayla Gephart, Meagan Gramatikov, Timothy Hommowun, and Callie Rukavina.

St. Charles North High School - Garrett Allamian, Brittany Allen, James Fleck, and Kevin Thompson.

### North High School Students



*Pictured left to right: Emma Spellman, Catherine Prendergast, Brittany Allen, Kevin Thompson, James Fleck, and Garrett Allamian*

### East High School Students



*Pictured left to right; Back row: Kelvin Wang, Carson Zhang, John Born, Andrew Park, Ryan Chimienti, Timothy Hommowun Front Row: Yudesh Basavaraj, Kayla Gephart, Meagan Gramatikov, Callie Rukavina*

# D303 Seeking Nominations for Distinguished Alumni Award

## Winners to Be Honored at SCEF Jazz Event on February 20

District 303, in conjunction with the Distinguished Alumni Award Committee and the St. Charles Education Foundation, is accepting nominations for the 2016 District 303 Distinguished Alumni Award. The award will be given to selected nominees who have graduated from District 303 and have demonstrated a high level of achievement in their field of endeavor, or in their contributions to their community.

Nominations for the 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award are being accepted through November 15. Nominations should include the nominee's name, the nominating person's name, current address, phone, e-mail, which high school the nominee graduated from and what year, along with a letter detailing the achievements and accomplishments of the nominee. Those making a nomination should also include any materials in support of their nominee.

The 2016 recipients will be recognized at the St. Charles Education Foundation's Jazz Event which will be held on February 20 at St. Charles Country Club. Nominations can be mailed to Distinguished Alumni Award Committee, Attn: Jim Blaney, 201 S. 7th Street, St. Charles IL 60174, or emailed to [Jim.Blaney@d303.org](mailto:Jim.Blaney@d303.org).

### 2015 Recipients

- Stephen P. Full
- Julie Mann
- Capt. Edward Warford

### 2014 Recipients

- Dan Marshall
- Col. Michael Miller MD
- Karen Page

### 2013 Recipients

- Donald DeWitte
- Michael Hood
- Dr. Jon Miller

## A Word from the St. Charles Education Foundation

### "Keeping Up with the Times"

It's little wonder that St. Charles is a wonderful place to raise children. While the world is racing forward in the realm of information and technology, our schools and the education provided are keeping up!

The St. Charles Education Foundation and the Distinguished Alumni continue to augment our schools' programs for the benefit of our children. This past year the SCEF awarded \$35,000 in scholarships and grants to be used for 3D printers (at the high school level), technology to enhance physical education, and robotics challenges, to name a few.

What's more, in the explosion of social media, bullying has sadly become a common topic of conversation. The Foundation has been able to help fund a curriculum program that teaches bullying prevention, which is an important tool to secure an even better place for our students to learn.

We can each do our part. Please join in the Foundation's annual fundraising Jazz Event on Saturday, February 20, 2016 at the St. Charles Country Club. It's a delightful celebration featuring a live and silent auction, dinner and dancing, and performances by the high school jazz bands.



*Garrett Allamian and Mary Chernov work on a 3-D printer that has been provided to St. Charles North High School through the Education Foundation Grant Program.*

For more information contact:  
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St Charles Education Foundation  
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"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

-- Nelson Mandela

## ECRWSS Postal Patron

Please note: Because District 303 mails its publications by postal route, some individuals who do not live in District 303 may receive this mailing.

### Calendar of Events

**Monday, November 9**

Board of Education Meeting- Ferson Creek Elementary

**November 23-24**

Parent-Teacher Conferences

**November 25-27**

Thanksgiving Break

**Monday, December 14**

Board of Education Meeting- Administration Building

**December 21-January 1**

Winter Break

**Monday, January 11**

Board of Education Meeting- Corron Elementary

**Monday, February 8**

Board of Education Meeting- Administration Building

**Monday, March 14**

Board of Education Meeting- Davis Elementary

**Monday, March 28 - April 1**

Spring Break

**Sunday, May 29**

High School Graduation

**Friday, May 27**

Last Day for Students if no "Emergency Days" used

