

**DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION
Wilmette Public Schools**

INFORMATION ITEM

Date: June 18, 2018

To: Members, Board of Education

**From: Building Principals
Assistant Principals**

Gail Buscemi, Business Manager

Katie Lee, Administrator for Curriculum & Instruction

Subject: Kindergarten Enrichment

BACKGROUND

On October 23, 2017, the Board of Education approved the implementation of the 2017-2018 District 39 Strategic Plan. Kindergarten Enrichment, a New Strategic Initiative, is in year 1 of the developing phase. Although full-day Kindergarten is not part of the 2017-2018 Strategic Plan, a fee-based Kindergarten Enrichment program will serve as a step toward a long-term goal of full-day Kindergarten. Therefore, District 39 initiated a study regarding the feasibility of a fee-based Kindergarten Enrichment program.

First, STR Architects conducted an elementary schools' space study revealing an estimated cost for construction to be \$5,681,600; space available by 2020-2021 school year. Based on STR's findings, administration surveyed families to gather information regarding utilization of a \$6,500 tuition-based half-day Kindergarten Enrichment Program. Since the D39 Kindergarten Enrichment Survey results indicated much support for a fee-based kindergarten enrichment program, the Board of Education requested more space and funding options.

Administration presented the first Kindergarten Enrichment update¹ on study to the Board of Education on March 19, 2018. The board report provided detailed, background information for board members to consider on the following topics:

- Illinois State Board of Education Mandates and School Codes
- Prior Exploration of Kindergarten Options
- Factors that Influenced Past Decisions
- First Kindergarten Enrichment Survey Results
- Space and Funding Options
 - To address space, administration presented two possible scenarios: build classrooms OR build modular units.

¹ March 2018 Report to the Board of Education: "Kindergarten Enrichment" <https://bit.ly/2H3mSJp>

- To address funding, administration presented two possible options: District 39 assumes all construction costs while parents assume all program costs OR parents assume all construction and program costs.

Administration presented additional space and funding options at the Committee of the Whole on April 9, 2018 and at the April 23, 2018 Board of Education meeting. This board report² also included the potential impact on fund balances for each space and funding option. At the May 21, 2018 Board of Education meeting, a board report³ shared results from a second, follow-up survey. The same population of families were resurveyed in order to draw comparisons from both survey data. In addition, further clarification on the impact on fund balances were provided.

SPACE AND FUNDING UPDATE

The administration provided a second option of modular units to Board members because the budget projections suggested fiscal prudence. As a result, Board members and administration scheduled a tour of District 34's modular units to become better informed. Additionally, District 39 solicited feedback from four other districts who had purchased modular units: Prospect Heights, Mount Prospect District 57, Decatur District 61 and Tinley Park District 46. The pictures and feedback were presented to the full Committee of the Whole on June 11, 2018. The additional information sparked a thoughtful and critical discussion regarding modular units and classroom construction.

The third proposed option focuses on constructing classrooms. Rather than constructing modular units, District 39 could consider a two phase plan. In the first phase, classrooms would be constructed at two schools. The remaining two schools would be considered in phase two. During the first phase of offering the enrichment program, families district-wide would have the opportunity to participate with the use of a lottery system. The tuition would remain \$6,500 per student.

This new phased option indicates a few benefits. First, it has the potential to soften the impact on fund balances. By implementing a phased approach to construction (completing two elementary buildings at a time), the cost of construction is spread over four years. The \$6,500 tuition per student would be applied to offset the program and construction costs. This will help maintain the operating fund balance above the 30% threshold. Another benefit is that the phases provide time for District 39 to review program effectiveness as well as measure sufficient parent interest.

NEXT STEPS

STR Architects will create a proposal for building classrooms. They will recommend two schools to Facilities Development Committee (FDC) and administration. The Board members could authorize the bidding process for a two classroom option in November 2018. If successful, final board approval could initiate work as early as January 2019.

² April 2018 Report to the Board of Education: "Kindergarten Enrichment" <https://bit.ly/2FcQ7rps>

³ May 2018 Report to the Board of Education: "Kindergarten Enrichment" <https://bit.ly/21DmXbs>

RECOMMENDATION

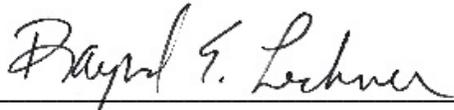
District 39 administration recommends a phased implementation of Kindergarten Enrichment Program. The enrichment offering proposed would be self-sustaining with no (or minimal) impact on tax dollars.

Phased Implementation of Kindergarten Enrichment Program

- **Construction Phases**
 - **Phase 1:** Classroom construction planning begins in 2019-2020 at two elementary schools. (Available for use in 2020 - 2021)
 - **Phase 2:** Classroom construction planning begins in 2020-2021 at the remaining two elementary schools. (Available for use in 2021 - 2022)

- **Half-Day Kindergarten Enrichment Program Implementation Phases**
 - **Phase 1:** Half-Day Kindergarten Enrichment Program offered to District 39 families as an optional fee-based program at two elementary schools starting fall 2020.
 - Tuition established at \$6,500 per student.
 - Lottery-based enrollment would allow for families across the district to participate.
 - **Phase 2:** Half-Day Kindergarten Enrichment Program offered to District 39 families as an optional fee-based program at four elementary schools starting fall 2021.
 - Tuition established at \$6,500 per student.

Recommended for presentation to the Board of Education,



Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D., Superintendent