

# Williamsville C.U.S.D. #15

## April/May 2011 Newsletter

### School Board Meetings

The Board of Education will meet on April 25 and May 16. These meetings will begin at 7:00 PM, and will be held at the district office.

### School District's Financial Progress Continues despite State Funding Crisis

Since freezing the budget in July of 2007, the Board has been steadfast in addressing a plan to stabilize the financial shortfalls the district has been experiencing dating back to 2001-2002, when our school district was first listed on the State's Financial Watch List. As many of you are now aware, the district has had to borrow money from 2005 through 2008 in order to cover a cash flow problem created by deficit spending and the utilization of early tax money (next year's tax money) to cover the current year's expenses.

The plan the Board instituted four years ago outlined a strategy to address this problem, comprised of several key aspects which included the controlling of expenditures, the rebidding and restructuring of "big ticket" items, and seeking out alternate forms of new revenue. Unfortunately, in our current economy, this is an extremely tough time to try to make financial headway. As you know, our country is still in the midst of one of the worst financial times in our history and the financial crisis continues to be felt all across our nation. The State of Illinois is reportedly \$14 billion in debt and funding for our schools is unpredictable. Therefore, we have had no choice but to take the responsibility of our financial security into our own hands and face the difficult task of not only balancing a budget, but to begin to establish some form of financial progress.

It continues to be a tough order to fill, but as a collective team with the Board, staff, parents, and the community, I am happy to continue to report that our goals for this fiscal year are again on course and we continue to see financial growth. In creating our deficit reduction plan we established four progressive financial goals to accomplish:

- Stop deficit spending
- Discontinue borrowing to pay bills until we get the early tax money
- Be able to make it through the fiscal year without using early tax money (next year's money received early), which is essentially finishing the year with a \$0 fund balance.
- Begin to have a carryover balance from year to year to stabilize the district's financial footing.

Fortunately, we have met all of our short-term goals and are now working to find a balance between reducing student fees and adding positions back with our staff. This coming year, we have stair-stepped the fees down and are now back to full staff with new needed positions being slowly added. It is imperative that this process is done with strong fiscal stewardship, while keeping our priorities focused on maintaining and improving the educational integrity of the school district.

As an example of our progress, the chart below (termed the Williamsville Index), illustrates the district's financial improvement in a comparative cash flow chart, outlining a snap shot of the end of the month balance in February over the past seven (7) years. The total fund balance is essentially every dime the district has in all funds combined; and, of that money, the operating funds are the main funds utilized to pay the basic operating costs in the Education, Transportation, Building Fund and Working Cash. (Numbers in parenthesis indicate negative dollars).

### WILLIAMSVILLE INDEX

	All Funds	Operating
Feb-05	\$1,634,884	\$564,417
Feb-06	\$865,990	(\$105,651)
Feb-07	\$732,970	(\$178,809)
Feb-08	\$523,681	\$325,680
Feb-09	\$1,786,841	\$1,615,291
Feb-10	\$2,947,262	\$2,791,565
Feb-11	\$3,864,077	\$3,740,233

As you can see, the district is making substantial progress, but we have a long way to go in order to be financially stable. Moreover, the next few years will be extremely difficult for the State to meet its monetary obligations with its financial condition, regardless of the income tax increase. To compound the problem, our district's EAV (Equalized Assessed Valuation), which is the key component of our tax base, is slowing down due to the economy - which results in less tax revenue for the district.

Make no mistake about it, times will continue to be tight for our district, but with continued diligence, transparency, and teamwork among our Board, staff, and community, it is a certainty that we will ensure the financial stability of our school district for years to come.

For more information, please visit our website at [www.wcusd15.org](http://www.wcusd15.org) and view my latest financial podcast. In addition, if you have further questions or would like to schedule an appointment with me, I can always be reached at the district office at 566-2014. As always, thank you for your continued support.

Yours for Better Schools,

Dave Root,  
Superintendent

## **Last Week of School**

**Monday, June 6:** early dismissal – Sherman 1:45PM, Williamsville 2:15PM; **Tuesday, June 7:** no school – teachers' institute; **Wednesday, June 8:** report card day

## **'Senior Prom'**

Williamsville High School jazz band and sociology class present their eleventh 'Senior' Prom for senior citizens on June 4 at the Williamsville Junior High School from 6:00-9:30PM. The 'Senior' Prom will be held in the new, air-conditioned gym. Ample parking is provided behind the junior high on Pine Street. Please use the Athletics entrance. The jazz band will perform along with Jane Hartman, Don Udey, Steve Thorne, Gene Haas and Jenny Carter Brennan. 'Seniors' can expect a night of incredible dance music. We will be honoring all our veterans, along with some special guests. Call Dave Carter or Dave Pruitt at WHS (566-3361) for information or call the following Williamsville State Bank and Trust locations to make a reservation: Williamsville (566-3387); Sherman (496-2383); Springfield (698-6355). Reservations are not required for attendance but do assist us in planning.

## **Pesticide Spraying**

Williamsville Schools will be spraying pesticides at Sherman Elementary School during the week of April 18 through April 21.

## **HIGH SCHOOL NEWS**

### **Youth and Government**

Williamsville High School students once again experienced democracy in a hands-on setting at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Illinois YMCA Youth and Government Assembly on March 18-20. The Williamsville delegation was represented by 32 students who took on a variety of roles as they helped fulfill the Youth and Government motto: "Democracy must be learned by each generation". Significant achievements for the weekend include: The bill group consisting of legislators Taylor Kovacevich, Courtney Leka, Sam Pensabene, and Paul Priester, assisted by lobbyist Skylar Woods, saw their bill (requiring Illinois high schools to provide free ACT prep classes as part of the curriculum) passed and signed by the Youth Governor. Emily Mordacq served as Co-Editor-in-Chief of the Y & G newspaper, the Observer, Dan Nerone served as committee chair, Abby Withrow was chosen as Chaplin of the Senate, Taylor Joerger served as Sergeant-at-Arms of the House, and Allie Wilson was voted "Most Effective Lobbyist" in her committee. Congratulations to all the Youth and Government participants on what has truly been our best year yet! You should be very proud of the way you represented WHS and our whole community. WHS Y&G would like to thank the parents and communities of Sherman and Williamsville, as well as the township and village boards and Williamsville Village President Tom Yokley, for their generous help with fundraising to provide scholarships and campaign materials for the students. Thanks also to volunteer sponsors Mike Gudwien, who runs the newspaper program, WJHS teacher Verna Stallone, and WHS alumna Molly McLay for all their hard work. If anyone would like more information about the program, which is open to 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders, please contact Tonia Faloon-Sullivan at 566-3361 or [faloon@wcusd15.org](mailto:faloon@wcusd15.org).

### **Prairie State Achievement Exams**

The Prairie State Achievement Exams will be held on April 27 and 28, for all juniors. Please do not schedule vacations or doctor appointments on these days.

### **Advanced Placement Exams**

Advanced Placement Exams will be held on May 4th, 5th, 6th, and 9th from 8:00AM -12:00PM, each day. The A.P. calculus exam will be held on May 4th, the A.P. literature exam will be held on May 5th, the A.P. U.S. history exam will be held on May 6th, and the A.P. biology exam will be held on May 9th. The fee for each exam is \$87. Registration has closed for taking these tests, but all students who registered must have their exam fees paid prior to taking the tests.

### **Senior Awards Night**

Senior Awards Night will be held on Thursday, May 11, at 7:00PM, in the high school gym. PSAE Achievement Awards and Illinois State Scholar Awards will be presented in addition to numerous other awards. Scholarship recipients and The Williamsville State Bank Student of the Year will be announced. All seniors and their families are encouraged to attend.

### **Upcoming College Fairs**

Riverton High School will host a college fair in the fine arts wing on Wednesday, April 6, from 6:30-8:00PM. Around 30 area colleges have been invited to attend. For more information, contact Nancy Penk at 629-6003 ext 52. Sacred Heart-Griffin High School is hosting a college fair on Monday, April 18, from 5:30-8:30PM. For more information, contact Karen Rapacz at 787-1595 ext 112.

### **National Honor Society**

The faculty and staff of Williamsville High School are proud to announce the 25 students who were selected for membership in the Williamsville Chapter of the National Honor Society. Selection of students is based on four criteria, which include scholarship, service, leadership, and character. Four new juniors earned recognition and membership, and they include Jen-Luc Abeln, Jordan Oshesky, Ellen Swinford, and Jonathon (J.J.) Watson. Twenty-one sophomores also were selected, and they include Curtis Clark, Nathan Cox, Anneliese Darow, Harrison Galusha, Taylor Hardy, Daniel Heidorn, Brooke Keenan, Leah Levin, Charlotte Lipp, Jessica Mast, Mackenzie McCall, Olivia Partlow, Abigail Penk, Benjamin Schutzbach, Sarah Stover, Connor Thompson, Sephra Urbas, Kathryn Waugh, Jacob Weiss, Alexandria Wilson, and Skylar Woods.

### **Scholastic Bowl News**

Both the junior varsity and varsity scholastic bowl teams ended their seasons, part of which included play in a new league with many larger AA schools in the area, with winning records. The junior varsity squad, made up of all freshmen, finished with a 21-17 record, and varsity finished with a 34-31 season. The varsity team also racked up several honors, placing second at the PORTA Class A Tournament, fourth at the Sangamon County Tournament and Masonic Sectionals, winning at IHSA Regionals and placing second at IHSA Sectionals. Allison Rump, captain of the varsity team, received top honors for individual play at two of this year's tournaments and was named by the Illinois High School Scholastic Bowl Coaches' Association to Second Team, All-State, for Class A Schools.

## **2011 Prom**

Diamonds are Forever is the theme for this year's prom hosted by the Williamsville High School Class of 2012. The event will be on Saturday, May 7, 2011 at the Illinois Building on the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield. The dance begins at 8:00 p.m. and ends at 11:00 p.m. The public is invited to attend promenade for this year's prom at Williamsville High School at 4:30 p.m. Coronation will take place at the conclusion of promenade. Doors will open at 3:30.

## **JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL NEWS**

### **Sangamon County Spelling Bee**

Congratulations to our grade level spelling bee winners and alternates. These students represented our school at the Sangamon County Spelling Bee on February 23: 6<sup>th</sup> grade – Andrew Roberts, Haley Mierzejewski, and Cydne Ratliff (alternate); 7<sup>th</sup> grade – Eric Reed, Josh Laughhunn, and Kirsten Parr (alternate); 8<sup>th</sup> grade – Noah Horton, Robbie Krebs, and Alex Fishel (alternate). Andrew Roberts and Josh Laughhunn were county winners and advanced to the regional spelling bee held on March 19 at the West Side Christian Church in Springfield. Josh finished third in the regional spelling bee for the second consecutive year. Great job, Josh! WJHS teachers, staff, and students are proud of our county and regional spellers!

### **Scholar Attitude Award Nominees and Winner from WJHS**

Congratulations to Austin Tuttle, Maddie Reter, Cole Courson, Mitchel Owens, and Brad Neale for their nominations for this year's award. Based upon established criteria, Austin Tuttle was selected as our school's representative. Only one student per school may be nominated.

Austin will now compete against students from schools in our region, and one winner will be announced. Thank you to everyone who took the time to submit an application.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation**

May 27, 2010 is the graduation date for eighth graders. The ceremony will take place at 7:30PM in the junior high gym. A letter with more information and your graduation tickets will be mailed home to parents during the first week of April.

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWS**

### **Sangamon County Regional Office of Education Announces Winner of Poetry Contest**

The Sangamon County Regional Office of Education announced the winners of the "Poetry for a President" contest celebrating the Centennial birthday of President Ronald Reagan. Students from Sangamon County were asked to write a poem about the life/work of President Ronald Reagan. Students competed in the elementary, middle school or high school division. Winners of the local competition were awarded a \$25 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble and their poetry was forwarded to the area-wide competition. Winners of the area-wide competition will receive a \$50 gift certificate to Barnes and Noble and have their poetry forwarded to the statewide competition. First and second place winners statewide will attend an award ceremony at the Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield on April 8, 2011, and be awarded an IPAD from the Illinois Press Association. **Congratulations to third grader, Arielle Fisher, for winning both the local and area-wide elementary competition!**

### **Pre-Kindergarten Screenings**

Pre-kindergarten screenings will be held for children ages 3 and 4 years old on Tuesday, April 19, from 8:30AM-2:00PM and Wednesday, April 20, from 8:30AM-12:00PM at Sherman Elementary School. Children must be 3 years old or turn 3 by March 31, 2011. Screenings will last 30-45 minutes. Children will be screened on fine/gross motor skills, speech/language skills, developmental concepts, and vision/hearing. To schedule an appointment for your child, please call Sherman Elementary at 496-2021 or email Lauren Hammel at [hammel@wcusd15.org](mailto:hammel@wcusd15.org). Questions regarding the pre-kindergarten program or screenings may be addressed to Lauren Hammel via email. Screening for children who turn 3 after March 31 will be held in August.

### **Sherman Elementary PTO**

SES parents are reminded that they are invited to the monthly PTO meetings. Meetings will be held in the SES library at 6:30PM on April 12 and May 10.

### **Market Day**

Market Day is a monthly food program that has been very beneficial to the PTO in the past. Help support the Sherman Elementary PTO by going to [marketday.com](http://marketday.com) to place an order. You may also stop by the elementary school office to pick up a flier. Market day dates for the remainder of the school year are May 2 and June 1.

### **Boxtops for Education**

Please remember to clip, save and send your General Mills boxtops to school. If you do not have a child at Sherman Elementary School, feel free to mail them to Cheryl Coontz, Boxtop Coordinator, at 312 South Street, Sherman, IL 62684. Visit [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com) to get up to date information on products and bonus programs. Thanks for your support.

## **FINE ARTS NEWS**

### **IHSA Solo & Ensemble Contest**

On March 5, the high school band and choir students participated in the 2011 IHSA Solo and Ensemble Contest held at Porta High School. All 11 band entries received Division I Superior ratings. The choir entries received 24 Division I Superior ratings and 4 Division II ratings. In addition, our choir students received 6 of the 8 Best-of-the-Day honors awarded to vocalists! Best of the Day honors went to: Elizabeth Choat – vocal solo; Mary Walden, Elizabeth Choat, Alayna Currie and Alyssa Currie – treble ensemble; Jessica Miller, Chantel Jennings, Jacob Laughhunn, and Payton Jeffers – mixed ensemble; Jacob Laughhunn, Tanner Smith, Jonathan Miller and Logan Edwards – bass ensemble; Abby Clark, Abby Withrow, Allison Rump, Chantel Jennings, Jessica Miller, Alayna Currie, Allie Wilson, Brooke Keenan, Elizabeth Choat, Mackenzie McCall, Rebecca Szabo, Kathryn Spenn, Bo Bennett, Jacob Laughhunn, Jacob Payne, Jonathan Miller, Logan Edwards, Payton Jeffers and Tanner Smith – madrigal ensemble.

### **Upcoming WHS Band & Choir Events**

April 15 – IHSA State Organizational Contest at PORTA High School

April 26 – WHS jazz band performs at Central Illinois RSVP dinner/banquet in Springfield at 5:00PM

May 5 – WHS Fine Arts Night featuring bands, choirs and senior art show; this will be Mr. Pruitt's last concert. There will be a retirement reception in the high school cafeteria from 6:00-7:15PM. Band parents will be serving cake and punch.

May 11 – piano recital in high school cafeteria at 6:00PM

May 13 – Cabaret Night featuring WHS vocal jazz and Best-of-the-Day ensembles

May 29 – senior choir students and high school concert band perform at high school graduation at Sangamon Auditorium

### **WJHS Chorus News**

March 28 – Pease's Easter egg sale begins

April 7 – Pease's Easter egg forms and money are due

April 7 – Spring Fine Arts Night – doors open at 5:30PM for the art show in the cafeteria, the band will perform at 6:00PM, and the chorus will perform at 7:30PM in the Fine Arts Center; students should dress nice (no jeans, shorts, or tennis shoes); all choruses and Boppin' Bee Bees will perform

April 12 – Pease's Easter egg delivery until 5:00PM in the WJHS cafeteria

April 29 – Organizational contest for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade chorus with the performance time to be announced later; we will be taking a bus to Our Savior Jr. High School in Jacksonville for this event. Students MUST wear black on bottom (pants, skirt, etc) and white on top. Boys should wear a tie (color does not matter). Shoes should be black as well if possible. This is our "uniform" and judges do take off points for not following protocol. The public may attend the performance, which is held in the auditorium. The IESA does charge admission.

May 9 – Boppin' Bee Bees perform at 5<sup>th</sup> grade concert