

INDIAN RIVER DISTRICT NEWS

INDIAN RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT, 31 HOSIER ST., SELBYVILLE, DELAWARE 19975

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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Referendum Approved

Voters OK two-part initiative

Indian River School District residents generously approved a two-part major capital improvement and current expense referendum on Tuesday, January 29.

The referendum's Major Capital Improvement question was approved by a margin of 2,695 to 1,239, while the Current Expense question passed by a margin of 2,588 to 1,341.

The initiatives will provide funding for the construction of 38 additional classrooms at six school buildings and the hiring of new teaching positions created by large increases in district enrollment.

"We are extremely grateful for the public's support of these important initiatives," Superintendent Susan Bunting said. "The generosity of our parents and community members will provide students with exemplary instructional programs for years to come. A simple 'thank you' doesn't seem sufficient when expressing our gratitude for the interest residents have taken in their public education system. On behalf of students, staff and the Board of Educa-

tion, I would like to express our deepest appreciation to the public for helping shape the future of the Indian River School District."

As the result of the successful Major Capital Improvement initiative, 38 additional classrooms will be constructed at six schools – the Georgetown Elementary/Georgetown Middle School complex, North Georgetown Elementary School, East Millsboro Elementary School, Long Neck Elementary School, Phillip C. Showell Elementary School and Selbyville Middle School. In addition, a new kitchen will be constructed at the Georgetown Elementary/Georgetown Middle School complex.

Complete results...Page 4

Construction projects are as follows:

Georgetown Elementary/Georgetown Middle complex – 8 additional classrooms and a new kitchen

North Georgetown Elementary – 8 additional classrooms

East Millsboro Elementary – 8 additional classrooms

Long Neck Elementary – 8 additional classrooms

Phillip C. Showell Elementary – 4 additional classrooms

Selbyville Middle School – 2 additional classrooms

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SPANISH IMMERSION



John M. Clayton Elementary School Spanish immersion students Katelyn Lasher (left) and Orteise Morris.

Program Readies for Second Year

JMC immersion class to welcome new group of kindergarten students in 13-14

With a successful first year under its belt, John M. Clayton Elementary School's Spanish immersion program will welcome a new class of kindergarten students in 2013-2014.

The program will be offered to all students entering kindergarten in the Indian River School District next year. Parents who are interested in enrolling their child in the Spanish immersion kindergarten class should complete and submit a School Choice application by May 16. Only kindergarten students will be selected for this second year of the program.

Spanish immersion gives young learners the opportunity to acquire a second language

in a developmentally-appropriate format. Students will spend half of each school day learning in English and the other half learning in Spanish.

Immersion is an educational program which involves a distinctive curriculum in English and an identified second language. It integrates academic content and is aligned with the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and mathematics and the Delaware recommended curriculum for all other content areas. There is no other type of instruction, other than living in a second-language environment, that is as successful in

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"A Model of Excellence"

From the Desk of the Superintendent



Dear Parents,

January 29, 2013 was a historic day for the Indian River School District. On that date, district residents generously approved a two-part major capital improvement and current expense referendum that will provide additional teachers, programs and classroom space across the district. We were thrilled not only that the initiatives passed by an overall 2-to-1 margin, but that they were approved at every district polling place. (See chart on Page 4.) We are truly grateful for the public's support of the bond issue and current expense tax increase. The generosity of parents and community members has cleared the way for the construction of 38 new classrooms at six schools, the hiring of new teachers to address increases in enrollment, and the addition of new programs such as full-day kindergarten. The positive impact of the successful referendum will be felt in our district for years to come.

We have already begun working to implement the initiatives proposed in the referendum. The district is moving forward with plans to offer full-day kindergarten at all of our elementary schools in 2013-2014. In recent years, we have been the only district in Delaware not to offer a full-day option. We are excited to finally be able to provide this valuable program to parents. We are also working with state officials to formulate a construction schedule for the classroom additions. A few schools already have "shovel ready" architectural plans in place. Thus, we hope to begin construction at those buildings in early fall. Overall, we expect to have all new classrooms completed and operational in the next two to three years.

As I complete my seventh year as superintendent, I continue to be amazed and extremely gratified by the public's strong and consistent support of our schools. The passage of the referendum makes me immensely proud to work for what I consider to be the finest public school district in Delaware. I can't thank our parents and community members enough for helping us provide every child with a first-class education. As always, your assistance is deeply appreciated!

Sincerely,

Susan S. Bunting
Superintendent

Teaching Future Chefs



Clifton Toomey, district Supervisor of Nutrition Services, conducts a cooking demonstration with students from Southern Delaware School of the Arts on February 12. The demonstration was part of a schoolwide incentive program for students who exhibited good behavior and character during the second marking period. Other incentive activities included arts and crafts, karaoke, sports, computers and iPads.

Immersion Continues at JMC

From Page 1
helping students attain high levels of second language proficiency and well-developed cultural skills. The cognitive, socio-cultural and economic benefits are great.

Kindergarten students currently enrolled in the immersion class will continue the program

in the first grade next year. They are eligible to stay in the program through the fifth grade at JMC Elementary.

"Spanish is the second most spoken language in the United States and the fourth most important international business language after English," JMC Principal Char Hopkins said. "Immersion provides functional proficiency in a second language with no disadvantages in English academic development. Research has shown improved performance on standardized testing and greater cognitive flexibility and problem solving skills. We are excited to see our kindergarten students move to the first grade next year while also welcoming a new kindergarten class."

Students spend half of each school day being taught in an atmosphere of "complete immersion" in which Spanish is the only language spoken in the

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IRSD Students Receive State, National Horatio Alger Association Scholarships

Two Indian River School District students recently received scholarships from the Horatio Alger Association.

Rosemond Dorleans of Sussex Central High School received a National Horatio Alger Scholarship valued at \$20,000, while Austin Roadarmel of Indian River High School was awarded a Delaware Horatio Alger Scholarship valued at \$5,000. Dorleans was the only student from Delaware to be named a 2013 National Scholar.

The Horatio Alger Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to students who have exhibited integrity and perseverance in overcoming personal adversity, and who aspire to pursue higher education. Each year, the Association awards more than 100 national scholarships of \$20,000 each to high school seniors from across the United States. These winners are chosen from more than 40,000 applicants annually. Since its inception in 1984, the program has awarded nearly



Rosemond Dorleans (left) of Sussex Central High School and Austin Roadarmel of Indian River High School.

\$90 million to more than 15,000 students nationwide.

Dorleans, who plans to attend MIT and study civil engineering, is the fifth Sussex Central student in the past 16 years to be named a national scholar.

"Sussex Central High School was ecstatic to learn of Rosemond's tremendous accomplishment," Principal Jay Owens said. "He is very deserving of this honor. His conscientiousness and work ethic in



the classroom are always apparent."

Dorleans will attend the Horatio Alger National Scholars Conference in Washington, D.C. from April 1-7. At the event, he will meet the other 2013 National Scholars along with distinguished members of the Horatio Alger Association.

Roadarmel of Selbyville was one of 14 students from Delaware and five from Sussex County to receive the \$5,000 Horatio Alger State Scholar-

ship.

"Austin Roadarmel is currently one of Indian River High School's top students," Principal Mark Steele said. "His work ethic and character has enabled him to establish a reputation as being a student who will be a successful leader in our community before and after he completes his college education. He is more than deserving of the Horatio Alger Scholarship."

The Delaware scholarship program is sponsored by Michele Rollins and family and is given in honor of late association member John W. Rollins.

"The commitment of the Horatio Alger Association far exceeds the monetary value of the scholarships they provide," said Scholarship Field Director Mary Jo Timmons, who worked as a school counselor in the Indian River School District for 24 years before retiring in 2004. "It's been an honor to work with people who invest so much more than money in the future of America's youth."

RACHEL'S CHALLENGE

MMS Starts FOR Club

As a result of hosting the national Rachel's Challenge program in November, Millsboro Middle School has started a new student organization designed to promote kindness and positive behavior.

The Friends of Rachel's (FOR) Club held its official kick-off on Feb. 22. The mission of the club is to promote the five messages of the Rachel's Challenge program: 1) look for the best in others, 2) treat others the way you want to be treated, 3) choose positive influences, 4) speak words of kindness and 5) forgive yourself and others.

Rachel's Challenge was

created in honor of Rachel Scott, who was killed in the Columbine High School massacre in Colorado in 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion became the foundation for this life-changing program.

Millsboro Middle's FOR Club will implement a variety of positive behavior initiatives, including a "Chain of Kindness." Every classroom will be given a box of blank paper chain links on which students can record acts of kindness that they have committed or have observed others performing. FOR members will then connect the chain links and display them through-



Millsboro Middle School FOR members (from left) Erika Herrera, Lashawn Handy, Gabby Grebe, Tayvon Gibbs, Autumn Flickinger, Kayla Shelton-Reed and Deanna Hudson.

out the school. Members will also distribute "Kindness Cards" with positive messages that students can give to those who commit acts of kindness or who need a positive lift.

Millsboro Middle School would like to thank the Sussex County Federal Credit Union for its generous donation that made the Rachel's Challenge program possible.

Residents Approve Referendum

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Additional classroom space is needed to address a large increase in the district's total enrollment during the past seven years. The current IRSD enrollment is 9,147 students in Grades PreK-12. This represents an increase of 1,262 students since 2005. For the 2012-2013 school year, enrollment increased by 273 students. This increase put a strain on classroom space and led to staffing shortages in several district schools.

In addition, Georgetown Elementary and Georgetown Middle School are located in the same building and share a kitchen and cafeteria. This has resulted in scheduling problems and overcrowded conditions in the cafeteria during lunchtime. Construction of a new kitchen and the conversion of existing elementary school space into a cafeteria will alleviate this problem.

Passage of the Current Expense question will provide funding for the local portion of salaries for new teaching positions generated by the district's student growth. It will also fund supplies, materials, furniture and technology for the new classrooms approved in Question 1, and increased utility and fuel expenses associated with the building expansions.

District enrollment increases have generated 121 additional teaching positions

| Official Voting Results | | |
|--|--------------|----------------|
| Question 1 - Major Capital Improvements | | |
| Polling Place | For | Against |
| Indian River High School | 218 | 181 |
| Lord Baltimore Elementary | 689 | 184 |
| Long Neck Elementary | 441 | 128 |
| Georgetown Elementary | 540 | 364 |
| East Millsboro Elementary | 467 | 210 |
| Selbyville Middle School | 276 | 139 |
| Absentee Ballots | 64 | 33 |
| TOTAL | 2,695 | 1,239 |
| Question 2 - Current Expense | | |
| Polling Place | For | Against |
| Indian River High School | 210 | 190 |
| Lord Baltimore Elementary | 680 | 195 |
| Long Neck Elementary | 397 | 169 |
| Georgetown Elementary | 514 | 385 |
| East Millsboro Elementary | 454 | 224 |
| Selbyville Middle School | 269 | 146 |
| Absentee Ballots | 64 | 32 |
| TOTAL | 2,588 | 1,341 |

during the past seven years. Projections indicate the district will be entitled to at least 20 more new teachers in Fiscal Year 2014. Filling these positions at a cost of approximately \$1,150,000, will improve the quality of instruction and keep class sizes at a desirable level. It will also provide staffing for programs such as STEM, International Baccalaureate, AVID, summer school and full-day kindergarten.

The 38 new classrooms must be outfitted with supplies, furniture and technology, which will cost an average of

\$12,000 per classroom for a total expenditure of \$456,000. Additional funding will also be used for increased utility and fuel expenses related to the building expansions. The estimated cost is \$204,000.

The referendum's total property tax increase will be 14.7 cents per \$100 of assessed value. The average district property owner can expect an increase of \$38.05 in his or her annual tax bill. Even with approval of the referendum, Indian River still has the lowest school property tax rate in Sussex County.

COMMUNITY

EM Partners With Local Landscapers

East Millsboro Elementary School is partnering with a local landscaping company this spring to give second-grade students a unique lesson on soil science.

RSC Landscaping and East Coast Garden Center in Millsboro has provided each of the school's approximately 120 second-grade students with an aloe plant to take home. In addition, every second-grade classroom received an aloe plant to grow and care for as a class. The program connects with the school's second grade unit on soil science.

RSC hosted a kick-off assembly at East Millsboro Elementary on March 1. Employees distributed aloe plants to students and provided the proper care instructions. Students will spend the next two months monitoring and recording the growth of their plants at home and in the classroom. They will compare and analyze these growth rates as part of their soil science lessons. RSC and East Coast Garden will host a closing assembly on May 3 to award prizes to the classrooms and students who did the best job of caring for their aloe plants.

Students Sought for Spanish Immersion Program

From Page 2

classroom. In addition, all handouts, printed materials and displays are printed in Spanish. By the time students complete the fifth grade, they should be able to speak, read and write the language.

"We are offering the lifelong gift of a language," said Audrey Carey, Ed.D., district Supervisor of Elementary Instruction. "No matter what career path students choose to do

in life, they will know another language."

Research has shown that immersion students perform as well or better than their non-immersion peers on standardized tests of English and mathematics. John M. Clayton's immersion program is modeled after a highly-successful program in Utah. District teachers and administrators have visited



Teacher Cristina Cordoba

the Utah program in each of the past two years.

Students who complete the immersion program at John M. Clayton will have the opportunity to continue rigorous Spanish instruction in middle school and take Advanced Placement courses in high school for potential college credit.

Parents who would like information about enrolling their child in the immersion program should contact Char Hopkins, JMC Principal, at (302) 732-3808 or Audrey Carey, Supervisor of Elementary Instruction, at (302) 436-1000.

The program will host open houses for prospective parents on April 17-18. Tours will be given at 9:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. each day. No appointment is necessary.