

THE VISION

AVOCA DISTRICT 37 CHOIR CONCERT

Though the weather outside was frightful with several inches of snow having already fallen, the sound of the children singing inside the Marie Murphy gymnasium earlier this month was thoroughly delightful.

For what we anticipate to be the beginning of a new Avoca tradition, the Marie Murphy Boys and Girls Choirs were joined by the Avoca West Choir for a combined concert performance. Led by Choir Directors Jill von Trebra (MM) and Elizabeth Weismehl (AW), the children performed for approximately an hour singing both as individual choirs and together.



4th & 5th grade boys and girls from the Avoca West Choir enjoyed singing right along side their middle school aged peers.

The children's voices filled the room beautifully, leaving the audience in awe, wondering how such young children could perform so impressively.

The students and staff of the Avoca School District would like to thank New Trier Music Department Chair David Ladd who came out that evening and led the group as guest conductor on two different pieces. Mr. Ladd took a moment near the end of the performance to praise the students and their directors, describing this as a "gem" of a choir program and letting the audience know that they were participating in something truly special.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Every 3 to 5 years the Avoca School District embarks on a strategic planning process in order to stimulate progress and address opportunities for improvement. The last few strategic plans have inspired a great deal of academic growth and led to much success and new opportunities for our students.

In previous years, we gathered data from our parents and staff through satisfaction surveys that requested input about our academic programs and other aspects of the school district. In the language of Jim Collins, the author of the business management best seller *Good to Great*, the information from these surveys allowed us to identify our "current reality" and "confront the brutal facts".

This year we have chosen to expand our quest for information and have decided to ask you, our community members, for your perspective on the Avoca School District. Below, you will find a link to a short on-line survey. We respectfully request that you take a few minutes to share your thoughts with us.
<http://www.avoca37.org/survey>.

To receive a paper copy of the survey, please contact Kim Meier at 847-728-4128. **Survey's must be completed by February 5, 2012.**

Thank you in advance for your partnership in helping us to maximize the unique potential of every child we serve!



Members of Marie Murphy's Roots & Shoots Club take time on a Saturday afternoon to clean-up the beach at Gillson Park in cooperation with The Alliance for the Great Lakes.

PERSONNEL NEWS

After 11 years of outstanding service to this community as the Director of Student Services, Cindy Devin will be retiring at the end of the 2011-2012 school year. At the Board of Education meeting in January, Donna Toops was introduced as Ms. Devin's replacement. Ms. Toops brings over 20 years of experience to the Avoca School District. A former special education teacher, her experience in administration includes Middle School Principal, Early Childhood Coordinator and Director of Student Services.

Another important transition took place during the month of December. Kimberly Meier joined the district office team as the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent on December 1st and spent the month learning the ins and outs of the job from Madeleine McCloskey before she retired at the end of 2011. McCloskey joined the Avoca School District in March 1998 and has served as the executive assistant for three Avoca superintendents. Her contribution to our Community has been greatly appreciated, and we wish her well in retirement.



Kimberly Meier brings over 20 years of experience to the Avoca School District.

Currently district administration is working diligently to find just the right educational leader to replace retiring Marie Murphy Principal, Dr. Deanna Reed. Applications are now being accepted on the Avoca School District website at www.avoca37.org. Dr. Reed retires at the end of the 2011-2012 school year.

PTC FUN FAIR

Coming up on Sunday, February 26, the Avoca Parent Teacher Council (PTC) will host its annual Fun Fair at Avoca West Elementary School, 235 Beech Drive in Glenview. Everyone is welcome to come for food, fun and raffle prizes. The doors open for business at 12:00 o'clock noon, and the fun is scheduled to end at 3:00 o'clock.



Kevin P., Jessica W. and Rachel P. have fun at last year's Fun Fair playing games and competing for prizes.



The new season of iOn Avoca student newscast began last week! Catch the weekly broadcasts at youtube.com/ionavoca or on our new site for news and the arts: The Avoca West News – <https://sites.google.com/a/gavoca37.org/avoca-west-news/>

We know that you will enjoy the incredible work our students are doing. Please listen, read, and share with your children. You and your children can comment on both the newscast and the news site by using the link on the home page of The Avoca West News to create and submit letters to the editors. Please let the students know what you think. They feel proud when they know that people are listening to them and reading their work.

BOARD BRIEFS

2011 ISAT Comparison Presentation

Dr. Clay Graham is a Statistician/consultant who provided to the board his comprehensive analysis of the District's 2011 ISAT test results. The Board was very pleased to hear the growth the District continues to make each year as Avoca School District 37 ranked 3rd in Illinois for 2011 based on the raw scores of all students on all tests at all grade levels.

Tax Levy

The Board approved the adoption of the 2011 Tax Levy. The rate of increase was 2.9% for the 2011 operating levy.

Resolution – Traffic Congestion

The Board of Education Adopted and approved a Resolution to support efforts to ease traffic congestion and increase pedestrian safety around Avoca West Elementary School.

Safety issues stem from the lack of markings and signage at and around the intersection of Beech Drive and Sherwood Road. This creates traffic jams and a very slow rate of flow of traffic for the school buses and cars, creating a very unsafe environment for the families who walk to and from school. Sherwood Road is very narrow and does not have sidewalks on either side of the street.

The Board Resolution will be presented to the Village of Glenview at a future board meeting.

New Director of Pupil Services

The Board of Education approved a one year contract for Mrs. Donna Toops to serve as the Director of Pupil Services for the 2012-2013 school year.

Strategic Plan

JMP Consulting has been selected to be the Strategic Plan facilitator for the Avoca School District. JMP Consulting's plan builds on the district's last two *Good to Great* strategic plans and also incorporates

concepts from two other Jim Collins books, *Built to Last* and *Great by Choice*.

A strategic planning committee consisting of Avoca families, staff, BOE and community members will meet on four consecutive Monday evenings to study data, set goals and develop a multi-year strategic plan for the district.

2012 Summer School Rates

The following approved 2012 Summer School Rates are \$150 per class for Remedial classes and \$95 for bus transportation for District 37.

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

Regular Board meetings are open to the public and are held at Marie Murphy School in the Community Center during the school year and in the Marie Murphy School library during the summer months. The public is invited to share input during the two visitors' comments portions of the meetings. Regular Board meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. on the second to the last Thursday of the month, and Committee of the Whole Board meetings take place at 5:30 p.m. on the first Monday of the month in the Marie Murphy School Library. To confirm the times and locations of the meetings, please contact the Superintendent's office at 847-251-3587. All open session School Board and Committee of the Whole Board meetings are videotaped. A DVD copy of a particular meeting may be requested by the public through the Pupil Services Office (847-251-3138). Please allow a minimum of three business days when requesting a copy. Upcoming Board meeting dates include:

- 2/6 5:30 p.m. – Committee of the Whole
- 2/16 5:30 p.m. – Board Finance Committee
- 2/16 6:30 p.m. – Board of Education
- 3/5 5:30 p.m. – Committee of the Whole
- 3/22 5:30 p.m. – Board Finance Committee
- 3/22 6:30 p.m. – Board of Education
- 4/2 5:30 p.m. – Committee of the Whole
- 4/19 5:30 p.m. – Board Finance Committee
- 4/19 6:30 p.m. – Board of Education
- 5/7 5:30 p.m. – Committee of the Whole
- 5/24 5:30 p.m. – Board Finance Committee
- 5/24 6:30 p.m. – Board of Education



AVOCA BOARD OF EDUCATION
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KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION

Children who turn 5 on or before September 1, 2012 should register at Avoca West Elementary School for the 2012-2013 school year. Parents of incoming kindergarten students are invited to a Kindergarten Orientation on Wednesday, March 14, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. at Avoca West Elementary School. A variety of presenters will share everything a new parent needs to know to successfully navigate through their child's first year of school.

Kindergarten teachers will share information about the kindergarten curriculum and the instructional methods used. Other staff and representatives from the Parent Teacher Council will also be available to help parents orient themselves to the wide variety of services offered at Avoca West. We encourage all prospective kindergarten parents to attend this important and informative event.



Kindergarten students play educational games using an iPad.

"The Mission of the Avoca School District is to maximize the unique potential of each child we serve."