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Board establishes tax levy

At the October 23rd meeting, the Board of Education acted on final approval of the local tax levy. After the annual meeting in July, three pieces of information were still needed before the final budget and tax levy could be approved: enrollment, state aid, and property values.

The Board of Education adopted a tax levy of $24,348,435 to support students and district operations of DASD. This tax levy results in a mill rate reduction from the previous year. The 2017-18 mill rate is $10.10, compared to $10.96 and $11.18 over the previous two years.

The equalized value of each municipality will determine the effect on an individual’s property taxes. The current budget approval reflects the following:

• no increase in the per pupil revenue limit which is controlled by state legislation (the last increase was for $75 per pupil in 2014-15)
• a decrease in state aid from the prior year ($2,181,044)
• An increase in per pupil aid over the prior year ($725,450)
• increase in property value (8%)

More: www.deforest.k12.wi.us/district/boe-budget.cfm
Referendum & Construction Update

Windsor Elementary School
- 43,927 square-foot renovation
- 59,040 square-foot addition
- Separate bus and parent traffic areas
- Secure main entry and doors
- Flexible classrooms, “family rooms” and breakout areas
- WIAA regulation gymnasium
- Full service kitchen and cafeteria
- Updated library with maker spaces
- Natural light throughout the building

Eagle Point Elementary School
- 91,260 square-foot building
- Separate bus and parent traffic areas
- Flexible main entry and doors
- Flexible classrooms, “family rooms” and breakout areas
- Full service kitchen and cafeteria
- WIAA regulation gymnasium
- Updated library with maker spaces
- Natural light throughout the building

Yahara Elementary School
- Relocation of main office to better monitor and control visitor access
- New road for improved traffic flow and pedestrian safety

“We love everything about our new and remodeled school!”
~ Roy Bernards, WES Principal

DeForest Area Middle School
- Remodeled learning space to support students in 7th and 8th grade with Project Lead the Way courses such as Design & Modeling and Automation & Robotics

“The remodeled space provides middle school students with enhanced collaborative learning opportunities in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math).”
~ Kim Bannigan, Learning Information Systems Department Coordinator

DeForest Area High School
- 15,396 square-foot addition
- Renovation of existing Technology Education and Agriculture classrooms and “shops”
- Learning spaces that support new Project Lead the Way and traditional trade courses

“The addition and renovation has opened up incredible new opportunities for teaching and learning.”
~ Alan Ligocki, DAHS Technology Education Teacher

Thank you to our vendors!

In addition to our general contractor, J H Findorff & Son Inc, and architectural firm, Bray Architects, we thank the over 140 vendors who worked with DASD in providing services and materials for the five construction projects. An alphabetical listing of all vendors is available on the DASD website.
Projects completed on schedule and on budget

Thanks to the efforts of our construction partners and district staff, all projects were completed on time, with two ahead of schedule. The chart below shows the timeline for design and bidding, as well as planned and actual construction and move in dates. Click on the image of the chart to view in PDF format. The schedule is also available on the DASD website.

According to Director of Business & Auxiliary Services, Kathy Davis, the total cost of the projects was $43.1 million. The additional revenue above the $41 million approved in the referendum came from interest on the referendum bond, the district’s capital project fund, and from the food service fund (for new kitchen equipment). A breakdown of each project is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Budget September 2015</th>
<th>Actual Expenditures November 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eagle Point Elementary School</td>
<td>$18,802,496</td>
<td>$18,501,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor Elementary School</td>
<td>$18,295,453</td>
<td>$19,076,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeForest Area High School</td>
<td>$5,491,811</td>
<td>$4,884,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeForest Area Middle School</td>
<td>$448,466</td>
<td>$377,872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahara Elementary School</td>
<td>$272,270</td>
<td>$270,217</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Sources</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referendum Bonds</td>
<td>$41,000,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Referendum Bond Interest</td>
<td>$219,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Project Fund</td>
<td>$1,307,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Food Service Fund</td>
<td>$583,320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$43,110,497
Support world class STEAM opportunities!

Local business and industry partners have the opportunity to partner with DASD in creating a world-class STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, & Math) program! Help students to develop in-demand knowledge and transportable skills—like creative thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration—to succeed in all career paths and thrive in our rapidly advancing world. Our new STEAM program offers countless ways for individuals and companies to support students, teachers, and our local community.

- **Make an investment of funds** to support program implementation.
- **Provide in-kind services, software, technology, or equipment** to enhance the in-class experience for students and teachers.
- **Give a gift of your time** with direct engagement activities with students and teachers.

More information about these opportunities is available at [https://goo.gl/lhMk73](https://goo.gl/lhMk73).

Boundary changes maximize elementary school capacity

Last spring, the DASD Board of Education approved changing elementary school boundaries based on recommendations from a 40-person advisory committee.

The committee, which included a representative group of elementary school parents, pre-school parents, teachers, and district administrators, met from November 2016 to February 2017.

With the help of parents, district staff also developed a transition plan for students and families affected by the changes.

More about the committee’s work can be found on the [DASD website](http://www.deforestschools.org).

DASD seeks parent input

Survey to be sent to parents/guardians of 4th, 8th, and 12th grade parents

From December 1 to 31, the DeForest Area School District’s administrative staff is conducting a survey of 4th, 8th, and 12th grade parents/guardians. The survey results will help gain insight into what parents see as our district’s strengths and weaknesses, understand our families’ priorities, learn how best to communicate with parents/guardians, and identify areas for improvement.

The three grade levels were chosen as sample groups because they reflect key transition times in our current system -- at the end of elementary school, middle school, and high school. Staff plan on surveying parents at these grades each year to collect feedback and monitor trend data.

“As we continue planning for the long-term, our strategies must reflect the goals and priorities of our parents,” said Superintendent Eric Runez.

“In order to accomplish this goal, we need parents’ help and feedback through the survey.”

The district has hired School Perceptions, an independent educational research firm, to conduct the survey and ensure all responses are kept confidential.

On December 1, all parents/guardians who are identified in Skyward Family Access (Family 1 and 2) will receive an invitation to complete the survey. Those Parents/Guardians who do not receive an email invitation to complete the survey should check their “spam/junk” folder, or contact Debbie Brewster, School/Community Relations Coordinator, at dbrewster@deforestschools.org.
Snow Days 101

While it seems hard to think about snow right now, winter will be upon us sooner than we know it. School district staff take decisions to delay, close, or dismiss school due to inclement weather conditions very seriously. As with most decisions that affect literally thousands of people, it will impact individuals differently. You may be interested in knowing what goes into the decision.

The most important consideration in the decision is children’s safety. Can we safely transport children to and from school – and at what point in time is it the safest? Many people and factors are involved. The process begins as early as 4:00 a.m. The manager of Kobussen and Superintendent Eric Runez confer about weather conditions with information from national and local weather services. County and municipal road crews are contacted to assess road conditions and the extent to which they will be safe to travel at the time students are to be transported. A professional driver travels a rural route and is consulted for his/her input as to the safety of travel on the road. If plows are able to have snow removed from the majority of bus routes, and there is no concern for high winds or a rate of snowfall that would prohibit keeping the roads clear, busses can operate safely.

Few vehicles are safer than busses with professional drivers in winter driving conditions. If it is determined we cannot safely transport children to school, or cannot safely transport children home from school, then schools will be delayed, dismissed early, or closed. Our District policy is that the final decision to close or delay school will be made by 6:30 a.m.

A decision to dismiss school early depends on additional criteria. This decision requires that notice go out to the public at approximately 11:00 a.m. in order to provide reasonable notice to parents. Their safety from early dismissal to the point at which parental supervision is available is considered. In addition, we have excellent county and municipal road crews. Normal dismissal schedules allow more time for them to do their work clearing all roads in our 100 square mile district and improving conditions for safe travel.

While district staff have the responsibility to alter the school day due to weather, no decision of ours overrides the judgment as a parent. If parents have sincere concern for the safety of their child, they can certainly keep him/her home or remove them from school early.

In the end, please rest assured that the ability to safely move our nearly 3,700 students to and from school is the primary determinant for closing, delaying, or dismissing school early. That safety is determined with input from many professionals who are committed to the safety of children - a responsibility that is not taken lightly.

Bergeron and Love-Jackson named 2018 National Merit Scholarship Commended Students

Machell Schwarz, Principal of DeForest Area High School, announced recently that Sidney Bergeron and Benjamin Love-Jackson have been named Commended Students in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program.

About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2018 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, Commended Students placed among the top 50,000 scorers of more than 1.6 million students who entered the 2018 competition by taking the 2016 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®).

“The young men and women being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success,” commented a spokesperson for NMSC. “These students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of education excellence in our nation. We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success.”

More about school closing and delays is available on our district website.

www.deforestschools.org
> District
> School Closings/Bus Delays
> Look for Snow Days 101 on the right side

Or use this link directly to Snow Days 101
Student Spotlight

Back-to-back-to-back!

For the third year in a row, the DeForest Area High School Yearbook was chosen as a Gallery of Excellence yearbook for their 2016-17 edition.

The Gallery of Excellence is awarded by the Walsworth Publishing Company and is an honor, because each yearbook inducted must feature superior examples of coverage, design, photography and copy.

“I am really proud of all the hard work my co-editors and the rest of the yearbook staff put into last year’s yearbook; and I’m really proud that I helped produce three Gallery of Excellence yearbooks!” exclaimed Abi Gardiner. According to Gardiner, last year’s yearbook staff was a mix of new and returning staff members, but their goal was to win another Gallery of Excellence Award.

“There was a ton of hard work and dedication put into that yearbook, and it is an amazing feeling to be a part of such an amazing group who worked hard to accomplish a common goal,” proclaimed Brooke Yocum, who has been a part of the yearbook team for two years. “The 2017-18 yearbook staff is largely made up of new members again, but this staff is motivated to continue DeForest Area High School’s streak of producing award winning yearbooks,” said Yocum.

The DAHS Yearbook Advisor is Mr. Alan Ligocki.

By: DAHS student, Jocelyn Reneau

Students discover their future through Academic & Career Plans

College | Career | Life

by Kerry Johnson, kjohnson@deforestschools.org

Beginning with this school year, each student in grades 6 thru 12 in the State of Wisconsin must have an Academic & Career Plan, or ACP. It is “intended to equip students and their families with the tools necessary to make more informed choices about postsecondary education and training as it leads to careers.” (Department of Public Instruction DPI, Why ACP?)

An ACP is a student-driven, adult-supported process in which students create their own unique and information-based visions for post secondary success, obtained through self-exploration, career exploration, career planning, and skills development. It encompasses services and program activities, as well as the individual student plan.

DeForest Area School District has been implementing several ACP components for years, beginning at the elementary school level, where students begin their career awareness and exploration. The elementary school life skills curriculum, the adopt-a-classroom program, field trips, and guest speakers all contribute to students developing an understanding of his or her self.

Examples of ACP activities in middle school include: career exploration unit in their Consumer Literacy classes, Project Lead the

ACP, continued on page 7

“Happiness lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort.”

— Franklin D. Roosevelt
Way courses, guest speakers, career days, and individual ACPs beginning in 8th grade.

In high school, students continue their ACP work individually and in classes/advisory, and have opportunities for work-based learning, dual credit courses with post-secondary institutions, career fairs, co-curricular organizations, and more.

Parents are also included in individual ACP meetings with their student and counselor in 8th and 10th grade.

Efforts continue to improve the ACP process so that every student can create a vision for his or her future, develop individual goals, and prepare a personal plan for achieving their vision and goals.

A district-wide ACP Development Team has been formed to review and revise the current program structure, fine tune the scope and sequence of curriculum, and identify accountability measures for success.

**Career Cruising and Inspire**

DASD has been using two electronic tools, Career Cruising and Inspire, to assist students in exploring careers and developing their academic and career plan.

Career Cruising is a comprehensive web-based career exploration and portfolio program used throughout Wisconsin.

Inspire virtually connects area businesses to their future talent pool through online profiles, virtual career coaches, and career-based learning activities for high school students and educators.

This past September, Career Cruising rebranded and introduced all-new future readiness software. Say hello to Xello! See the article at right for more.

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**Hello Xello!**

*by Erin Smith, erins@xello.world*

Designed to help students in grades 6-12 build their very own plan for a successful future, Xello takes students on a journey of self-discovery. Through investigative activities that encourage rating, reflection, and critical thinking, students gain valuable insights that help them discover the careers, schools and programs right for them.

They can then engage with original content, stunning photos and real-world interviews to learn more about their options, and build a personalized roadmap for a successful future. As they gain new experiences, they can easily update that roadmap, and share with others.

“In every nook and cranny we could find, we’ve integrated the student into our software,” said Xello CEO, Matt McQuillen. “This program is for all students—not just the self-motivated achievers and forward-thinking planners. We want to reach the discouraged students, the ones who are neutral about school and their next steps. We want them all to be able to create a plan for their future.”

Along with in-depth assessments and a comprehensive database of careers, schools, and programs, Xello also includes built-in curriculum support via interactive lessons, course-planning, and easy-to-use tools to help educators and administrators identify student pathways and make data-driven decisions about their readiness programs. The program was built to meet strict accessibility standards and compatibility with any device.
Fine Arts Performances in December

December 7  DAHS Winter Band Concert, 7:00 pm
December 12 DAMS 6th/7th/8th/Jazz Band Concert, 5:45/7:00/8:00 pm
December 14 DAHS Winter Choir Concert, 7:00 pm
December 18 DAHS Songs & Stories, Holiday A Cappella, 7:00 pm
December 19 DAMS 6th/7th/8th Grade Winter Choir Concert, 6/7/8 pm
December 21-23  A Christmas Carol, 7:00 pm

All performances in the DeForest Area High School Performing Arts Center

More Dates to Remember

November 22-24  No School (Thanksgiving)
December 1  End of 1st Trimester for elementary schools
December 25 - January 1  No School (Winter Break)
January 15  No School for Students
January 23  Early Release (End of Semester for middle and high school)

More at www.deforestschool.org

Winterfest
December 2
www.deforestarea.com

Several school-related groups will be sponsoring activities, such as:

- DeForest Area High School National Honor Society students will host Bingo at the DeForest Area Community & Senior Center, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm
- DAHS Music Parents will host their annual Craft Fair at DeForest Area Middle School, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

All activities for December 2nd are listed on the DeForest Area Chamber of Commerce website.

A tentative 2018-19 academic calendar is posted on the DASD website. This calendar will be finalized by December 22.

Upcoming events in the Madison area

Warner Family Fun Nights
Fridays thru June 2018
Warner Park Community Recreation Center
www.cityofmadison.com/parks/wpcregions/FamilyFunNights.cfm

Free Family Night
January 3, 2018
Madison Children’s Museum
http://madisonchildrensmuseum.org/events

Cure Cabin Fever Series
January 6, 13, 20, 2018
Wisconsin Historical Museum
https://historicalmuseum.wisconsinhistory.org/events/

25th Annual Wisconsin Garden Expo
February 9-11, 2018
Alliant Energy Center of Dane County
www.wigardenexpo.com

Mad City Model Railroad Show & Sale
February 17, 2018
Alliant Energy Center
www.nmra-scwd.org

Wisconsin Fishing Expo
February 23-25, 2018
Alliant Energy Center of Dane County
wifishingexpo.com

International Festival
February 23-24, 2018
Overture Center for the Arts
http://www.overture.org/programs/international-fest