



2025 Annual Report

BOLD STEPS



West40 student as Film Director at Rush Nursing School Capstone Project

Our Vision

We will transform every student in West Cook County – regardless of their past or circumstances – into a powerful, influential member of their community.

Our Mission

We will meet you where you are.
We will be what you need.
We will walk further with you.
We will stand strong with you.



A NOTE FROM DR. MARK KLAISNER

Hello friends,

This year, we've taken bold steps forward because student success doesn't stop at graduation. West40 anticipates and listens closely to what students, educators, and communities need. We respond with real solutions to help students thrive today and in the future. We've also expanded our work across West Cook County and beyond to advocate for education and safe learning environments.

As Executive Director of West40, I hereby submit the annual report of the activities of this office from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

This report is an overview and is not inclusive of all the services and collaborative partnerships the Intermediate Service Center provides as an educational leader for the benefit of the schools, students and community members of West Cook County.

This report uses information from end-of-year reports of our programs and services and from the state's education budget to make this Annual Report as comprehensive as possible.

This report is intended to help you better understand the work of West40 in serving students and educators across West Cook County – and in making schools safe and nurturing places.

Dr. Mark A. Klaisner
Executive Director





Table of Contents

6	WHO WE SERVE
8	ALOP
10	SAFE SCHOOL
12	REMOTE SCHOOL
14	TRUANCY AND TEEN PARENT
16	SENIORS PLUS
18	PROFESSIONAL LEARNING
24	COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
28	SCHOOL SAFETY AND THREAT ASSESMENT
30	LICENSURE & TESTING
32	COMMUNITY SUPPORT
36	LEGISLATIVE
37	GRANTS
38	ST. JOSEPH
40	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
43	FINANCIAL

Students with ALOP advocate at Elmwood Elementary



WHO WE SERVE

West Suburban Cook County

38 Districts and 3 Co-Ops

152 Schools

100,000 + Students

Additionally, West40 serves entities outside our geographic region, including the Philip J. Rock Center & School in Glen Ellyn and many nonpublic schools across Illinois.



Student and ALOP advocate at Morton East High School

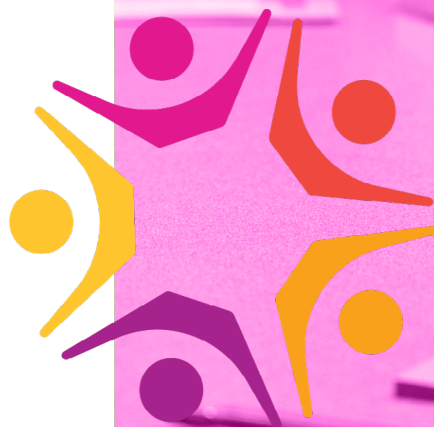
ALOP



K-3 ALOP at Lincoln Elementary

BEING THERE

The West40 Alternative Learning Opportunities Program (ALOP) supports thousands of elementary, middle, and high school students within their home schools across the West40 region. Student advocates provide a support system to help students stay on track toward success, which we interpret as continued improvement in academics, attendance, and behavior. The 2024-25 school year brought yet another rise in the number of students reached, along with further confirmation that West40's ALOP serves as a model for other regional offices of education across Illinois.



51

Participating Schools

3,869

Total Students Served

78

Successfully Transitioned Back to Home School

599

Graduates

6,167

Credits Earned



Safe School Program

MEANINGFUL STRIDES

The West40 Regional Safe School provides structure and encouragement to students in a safe learning environment. We blend restorative practices with academics as we help students believe in themselves and their abilities to work toward graduation and life readiness.

72%

Of Middle and High School Students Enrolled in Career Education

100%

Middle School Students Transitioned to Their High School

89%

Of High School Seniors Graduated on Time

67%

Of High School Students Ended The Year on Track with Credits (37% increase from intake)



West40 student production at The Royal Group in Cicero



16

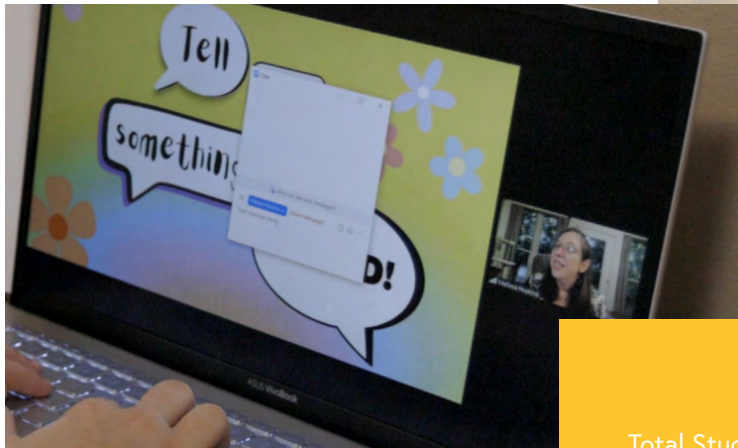
Districts Served

74

Students Served



Remote School



87

Total Students Served

519

Courses Completed

16 OF 17

Seniors Graduated on Time

CONNECTED FOR SUCCESS

The West40 Remote School combines small classes, advocacy support, and enrichment activities to help students who may otherwise struggle in a traditional school setting. Our online setting offers a chance for students in grades 6-12 to progress academically, build lasting confidence, and navigate life with greater independence.

90

Min./Day Advocate Facilitated
SEL Aligned Curriculum

250

Synchronous Min./Day
with Teachers and Advocates

19

Partners in West, North, and
South Cook County Districts

Truancy and Teen Parent



CLEAR PATHWAYS

West40 sets attendance goals and creates personalized success plans for students who are experiencing chronic absenteeism so they can become graduates. Additionally, our advocates remove barriers for teen parents so they can chart a path toward earning their diplomas.

Truancy

827

Total Truant
Students Served

66.8%

of Referrals Exhibited
Improved Attendance

552

Home Visits

Teen Parent

44

Total Teen
Parents Served

100%

Graduation Rate
(15 students eligible)

Home Visit by a West40 Truancy Liaison

Seniors Plus

GOALS ACHIEVED

Our Seniors Plus program supports students ages 17-21 who have not yet earned their high school diploma. West40 teachers and advocates guide students through credit recovery and help them overcome challenges on their journey to graduation.



Morton College serves as a host location for Seniors Plus



Recent Seniors Plus Graduate at Morton College

243

Total Students Served

89

Students Graduated (High School & Seniors Plus)

547

Online Credits Recovered

Professional Learning

ELEVATING EDUCATION

Our growing West40 Professional Learning team builds systems of support for students, educators, and administrators to help them achieve their goals. Through listening, coaching, and collaborating, we help transform our district partners' visions into focus and action.

RELATIONSHIPS & SUPPORT

1,586

Hours Coaching/Facilitation

493

Hours Co-Planning

REACH & ACCESS

100%

of West40 Districts
Connected with Our Team

14

Active Networks Created
for Job-Alike Roles across
the Region

15

New Administrator Academies
Approved for 2025-2026



Professional Learning Specialist Dr. Kennedi Strickland-Dixon at a
West40 Professional Learning session

525

Hours Statewide &
National Initiatives

Supported

156

CPS schools on Their Continuous
Improvement Efforts

STATEWIDE & NATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Provided 1:1 Coaching,
Co-Planning and
Thought Partnership in

4 Additional
Regions Beyond
West40

7

Team Members
involved in Statewide
and National Work

WHERE WE'RE CONNECTED

- Bloomboard (Micro-Credentials)
- Grand Canyon University (Grow Your Own)
- Illinois Holocaust Museum
- Illinois Safe Schools Alliance (Advocacy for LGBTQIA+ Youth)
- MCMI (Mathematics)
- Morton College (Community Partner)
- Mobile Museum of Tolerance (MMOT)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- NWEA/MAP (Assessment)
- North Central College (Continuing Education)
- SEL HUB (Social Emotional Learning Support)
- Griffin Museum of Science and Industry
- Brookfield Zoo Chicago
- DuPage Children's Museum (Early Childhood Education)
- University of St. Francis
- New Leaders (Leadership Development)
- Data-Informed Leadership for Equity (DILE)

Professional Learning Specialist Demian LaPointe at a
West40 Professional Learning session.



Professional Learning team with Bill Daggett, Ed.D.

Professional Learning



INVESTMENT IN EQUITY

- Delivered \$26,700 in Grant Supported PD for Paraprofessional Training and SEL School-Based Mental Health Resources
- Delivered \$35,700 in Grant Supported Services for District Data Analysis on State Assessments and 5 Essentials
- Delivered \$54,500 in Grant Supported Services for Early Childhood Program Compliance Readiness
- Empower ED, launching in 2025-2026, aims to elevate, underrepresented educators such as special education, staff, paraprofessionals, early childhood, fine arts and physical education teachers, by expanding access to high-quality professional learning



INSPIRE Teachers Video filming at Hollywood Elementary

INSPIRATION & IMPACT

12 TEACHERS=
429 MINUTES

Produced INSPIRE (Instructional Network for Supporting Professional, Inspirational and Reflective Educators) Teachers Video Project

Videos will be used to launch a Danielson 2022-aligned calibration library

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Dedicated Special Education Staff that Focuses on PL Work in Tiers 1, 2, and 3, Coaching, and Classroom Ecology Supports

622

Hours Tier 3

218

Hours Tiers 1 & 2



Comprehensive Educational Services

The West40 Comprehensive Educational Services team ensures that schools meet or exceed the requirements to keep students and staff safe. This includes visiting schools and assessing them against all known codes and providing administrators tools and guidance to help them meet requirements.

Comprehensive Educational Services Team at Westdale Elementary School



152

School Inspections

117

Non Public School Recognition Visits

69

Building Permits

770+

Compliance Items Verified
at Partner Districts

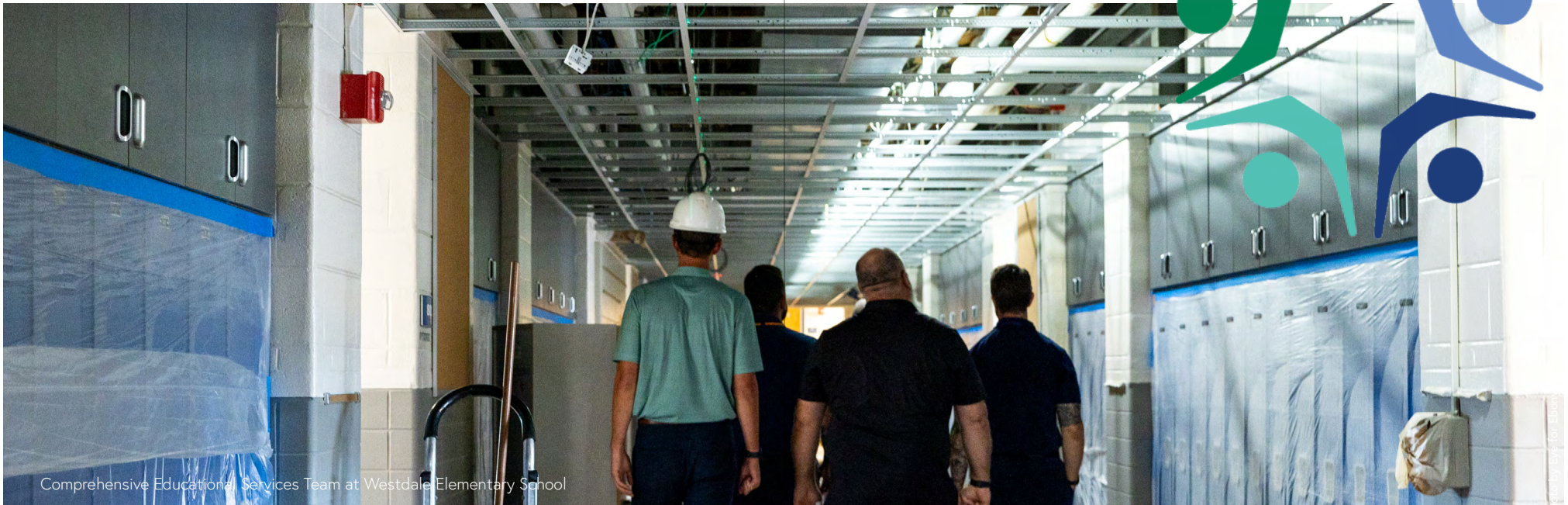
\$133,184,145

Total Projected Cost of Building Permits Issued

HOW WE SUPPORT

- Collect SSDA (School Safety Drills Act) for 38 districts and 3 co-ops
- Log Annual Safety Reports for 38 districts and 3 co-ops
- Approve school calendars for 38 districts and 3 co-ops
- Conduct on-site visits and issue building and occupancy permits
- Verify eLearning plans
- Collect and approve Annual Financial Reports
- Collect surety bond affidavits from districts
- Approve the submission of District Threat Assessment Plans and Team Members
- Submit Health Life Safety (HLS) Annual Reports
- Collect and approve district institute applications
- Approve and log 10-year Health Life Safety survey/amendments

- Collect and maintain log of students who are no longer enrolled from all districts
- ISBE school recognition for 152 schools
- 411 and 911 Support
 - Refer youth and families in transitional living situations for support
 - Home schooling needs
 - FOIA requests
 - Parental concerns
 - Residency & Truancy assistance
 - Office of State Fire Marshal Reports



Comprehensive Educational Services Team at Westdale Elementary School

School Safety and Threat Assessment Team (STAT)

186 Hours of STAT training

66 STAT + TVTP (Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention Grant) Contracts

610 Attendees of Illinois School Safety Conference

160 Participants of "I Love U Guys" Reunification Training



HOW WE SUPPORT

- Independent Physical Security Assessments
- Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Development and Flip Charts
- Behavioral Threat Assessment
- Assembling an Effective Threat Assessment Team
- Threat Assessment Plan Assistance
- Behavioral Warning Signs of Violence
- Suicide and Violence Prevention through Social Media Awareness
- Training on Security Awareness, Emergency Preparedness, Crisis Response, and Security Operations
- Incident Command System (ICS) Training/Certification
- Tabletop and Full-Scale Exercises to Test Functional Roles Expected in Real-Time Events
- Evaluation of Staffing Requirements Needed to Address Security
- Assistance with School Safety Related Investigations and Conducting Interviews
- SRO and Law Enforcement Partnership Support



Licensure and Testing

RELIABLE EDUCATOR SUPPORT

The West40 Educator Licensure Team supports teachers, paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, school support personnel and administrators with navigating the sometimes complex landscape of licensure. The team responds to thousands of inquiries which can include questions from educators and retirees relocating to Illinois from other states or countries.

10,800

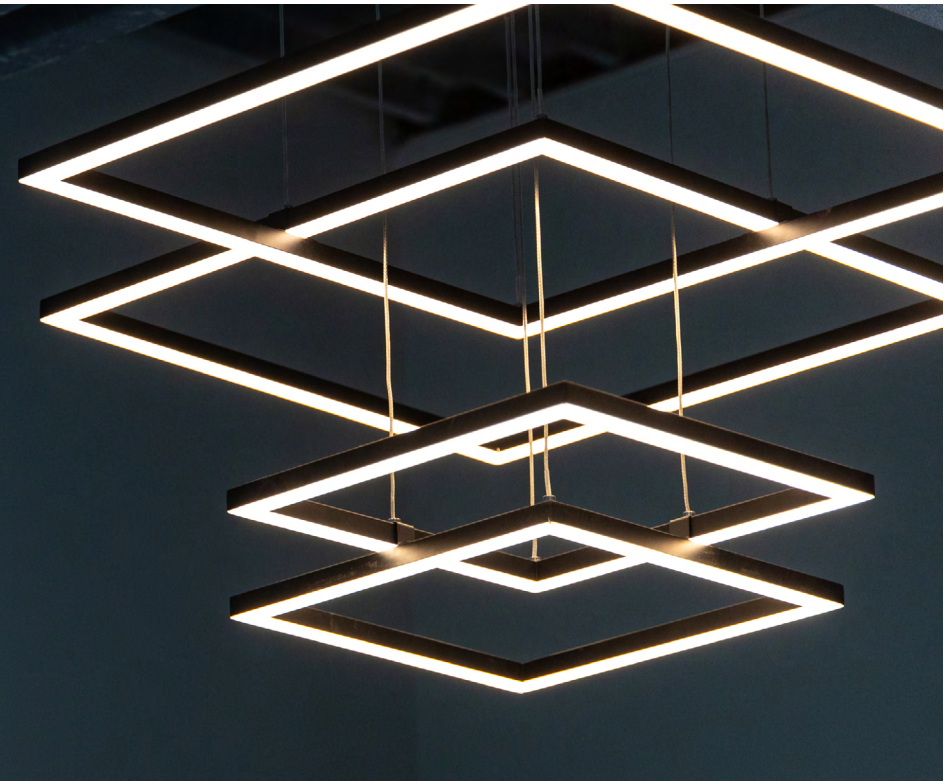
Email Inquiries Addressed

7,000

Phone Calls Serviced

West40 hosts an annual Educator Job Fair that connects the West40 school districts with prospective educators seeking job opportunities.

West40 also hosts a monthly HR Network meeting for all West40 school district HR personnel, fostering collaboration and sharing resources relating to licensure and employment.



The West40 testing center is equipped with modern technology to support educators needing to take licensure exams and content tests in addition to the ACT WorkKeys test for prospective paraprofessionals.

1,042

Education Certification/
Licensure Exams

238

Paraprofessional Exams

We also conduct fingerprinting and background checks for pre-employment screening and other authorized purposes for educators, business professionals, and community members.

934

Fingerprinting and Background Checks



Community Support



MEETING FAMILIES WHERE THEY ARE

West40 supports the health and well-being of students, their families and community members by connecting them to vital life resources, including food, clothing, medical care, and housing. We partner with local organizations to make this happen and our team regularly attends, supports, or organizes community events across the West40 region. Our team also hosts academic and student celebration events and this year saw the opening of our new Food Mart, in which we partnered with the Greater Chicago Food Depository.

Held Academic Decathlon,
Speech & Drama Competition,
and Spelling Bee

3,250

(approx.) Backpacks Distributed
at Backpack GiveBack and other
school events.

5,200

Hot Meals Served

140

Thanksgiving Turkeys and Meals
Distributed

147

Students Honored at School Citizen of
the Year (SCOTY) Awards

136

Community Events

300

Families Served by
Heart 2 Heart Store

Heart 2 Heart

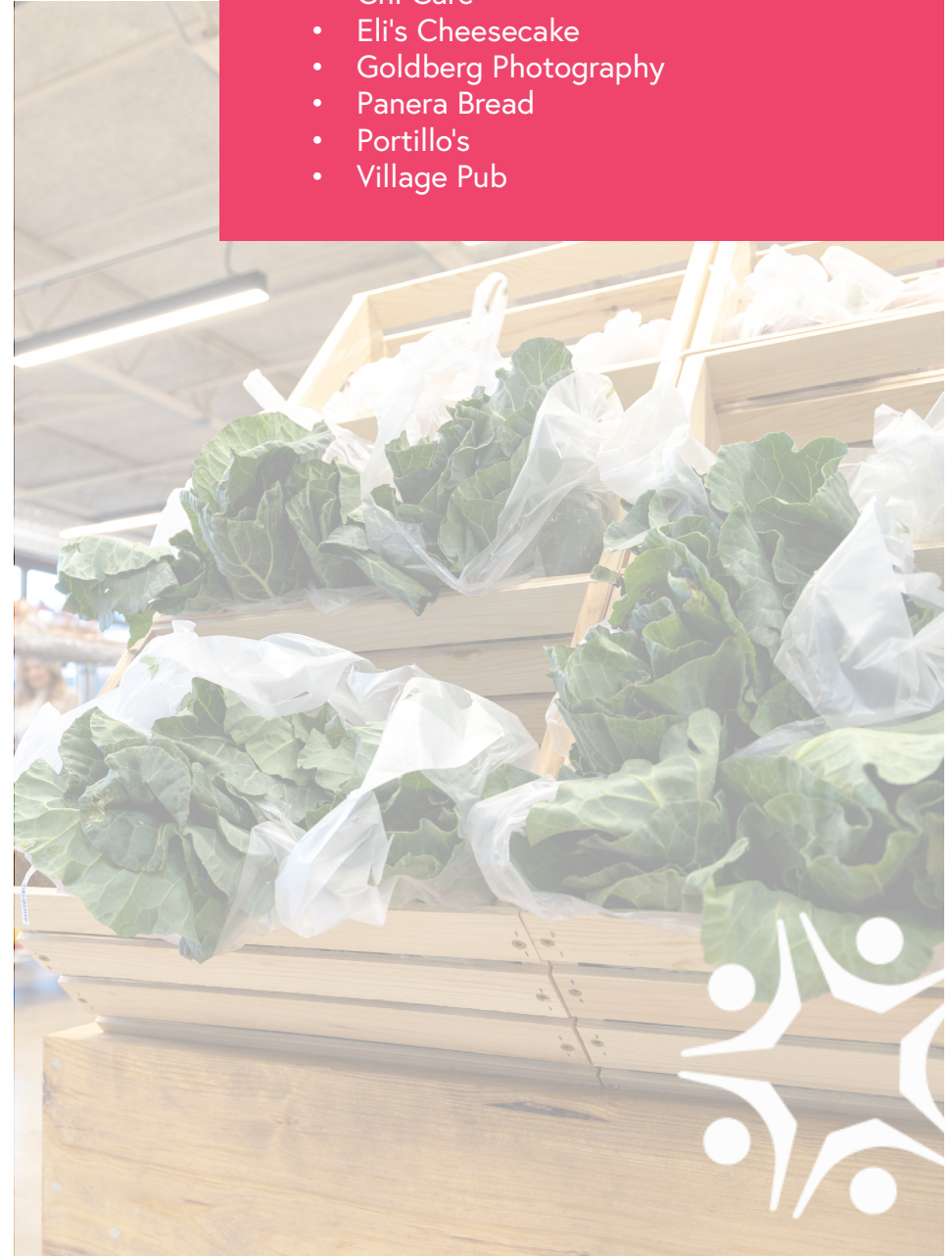
HEART 2 HEART DONORS

- CC's Wish List
- Chicago Furniture Bank
- Federal Express
- Janie and Jack
- Koeckritz Rugs
- Luther Village
- Mattress Firm
- Operation Warm
- Period Collective
- World Vision

Heart 2 Heart
our ♥ to yours

FOOD PROGRAM DONORS

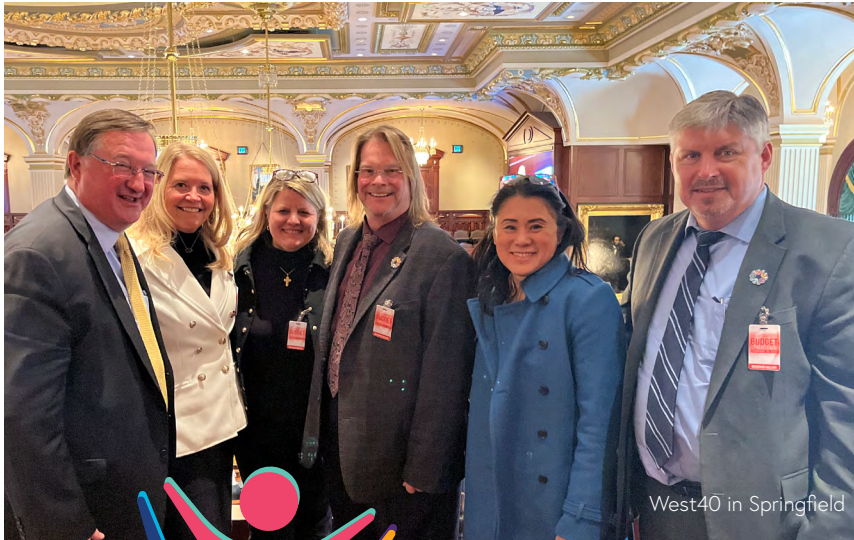
- Chi Care
- Eli's Cheesecake
- Goldberg Photography
- Panera Bread
- Portillo's
- Village Pub



Legislative Info

STANDING FOR STUDENTS IN SPRINGFIELD

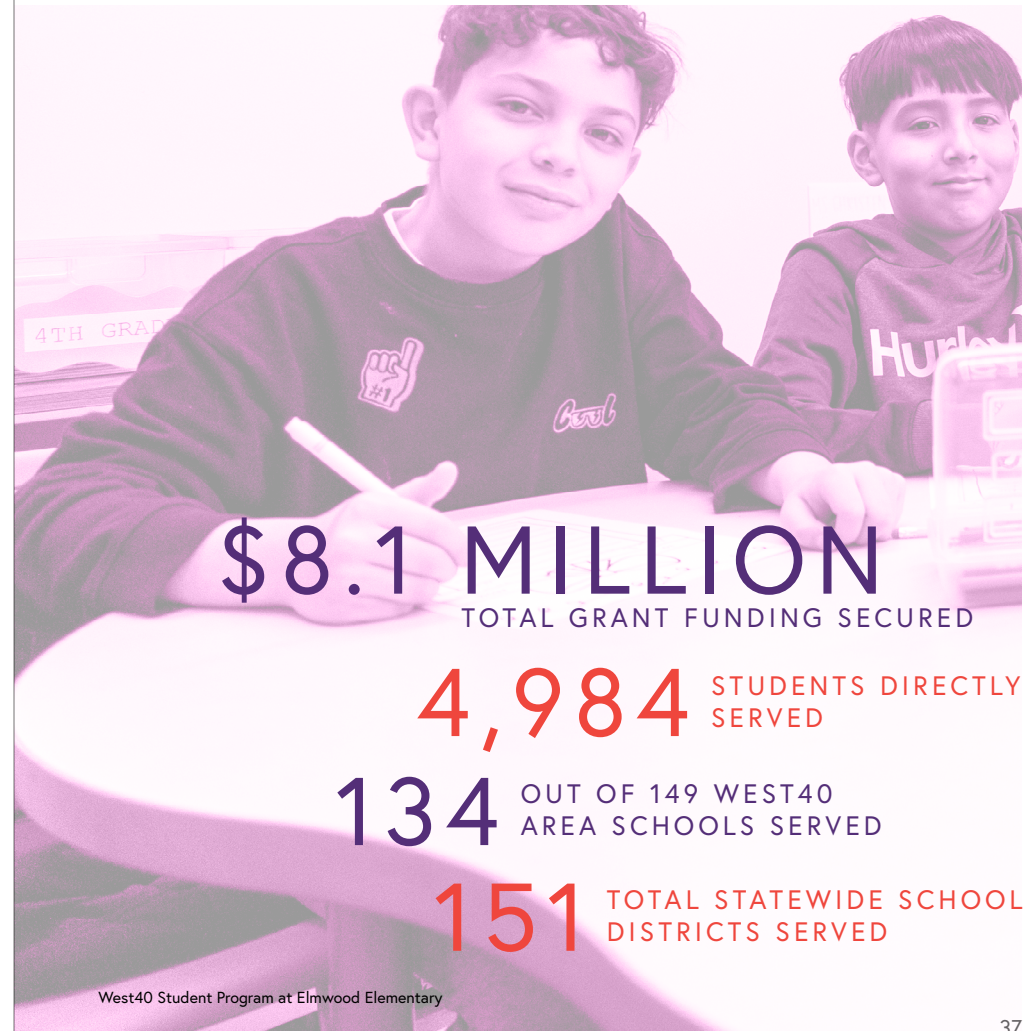
West40's legislative efforts continued in Springfield during the 2024-25 school year. This included advocating for increased Evidence-Based Funding and seeing the approval of a bill we championed two years ago to streamline the process for ROEs and ISCs to become learning partners in the Statewide System of Support. Our efforts to expand K-3 ALOPs statewide nearly passed but was shelved at the last moment. While West40 was able to secure a School Code waiver which allows us to provide K-3 ALOP services, we are hopeful that the bill will come up again in a future legislative session so that all regions of the state can offer this service.



Grants

FUNDING FUTURES

The West40 Grants Team explores the complex world of grants opportunities to secure valuable funding resources for the organization and its partners. We ensure fiscal responsibility through transparency to all stakeholders. Highlights from the 2024-25 fiscal year include securing grants to fund afterschool programs, paid student internships, school safety training, professional development opportunities, and more!



OFFERING HOPE

Transformation of the former St. Joseph High School into a state-of-the-art residential program for youth-in-care continued in 2024-25. While we explore funding opportunities to complete renovations, we have forged partnerships with various organizations to bring services to the West40 community at our St. Joseph facility. These partnerships have resulted in a community food pantry and allowing a youth soccer club access to our fields. Over the last year, we have been learning from the best by visiting model programs, listening deeply to lived experiences, and building on proven foundations. Each visit, conversation, and evidence-based practice has given us another piece of the puzzle.

THE
FUTURE
IS GOOD



ACCOMPLISHMENTS OVER THE PAST YEAR:

- 3 National/International Conferences Attended
- 4 Site Visits to Exemplar Residential Programs
- Networking, Webinars, Trauma Training, Affinity Groups through ACRC (Association of Children's Residential and Community Services)
- Created Preliminary Documents for Accreditation through CARF
- Partnership with Cornell's CARE Program for Credentialing
- Partnership with iCARE4 Adoptive and Foster Families
- Comprehensive Programming Proposal (619 pages) Submitted to DCFS, the Governor's Office, CARE, and Chapin Hall

Other Ways We Support

Have a mind that is open
to everything, and attached
to nothing

Quote by Wayne W. Dyer

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Throughout the 2024-25 school year, West40's Communications Team contracted with five educational and non-profit partners to produce multi-video projects. The team also coordinated all of West40's internal and external communications, social media, and marketing campaigns and was honored for its creativity by the National School Public Relations Association. Additionally, we kicked off a series of workshops designed specifically for area school communications professionals, district administrators and non-profit organizations. Topics included the importance of building partnerships with local first responders and effective crisis communications with the media.

FISCAL AGENT FOR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

West40 is the fiscal agent for Philip J. Rock Center & School in Glen Ellyn and this year we oversaw nearly \$5.4 million in funds. Additionally, West40 processed \$6.1 million from the funds we oversee for 600+ nonpublic schools in the EANS (Emergency Assistance to Nonpublic Schools) program and more than \$2.3 million for the Midwest Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Network.

EMPLOYABILITY

Our Employability Program helps students build confidence, discover purpose, and prepare for what's next. A total of 12 middle and high school students from the West40 Safe School and Remote School completed internships this past year and we also created experiences that let students see careers they may not have imagined for themselves. This included field trips and on-site visits to colleges, internships, and work placements so students can connect what they're learning to the real world.

PAINTED LADY BUTTERFLIES

West40 distributed 866 Painted Lady Butterfly kits to school districts, private schools and day cares throughout the region. This tradition started 36 years ago and provides a way for students and families to enjoy and learn about natural sciences.





Our Financials

West40 receives revenue from Federal and State grants as well as from contracts with the State of Illinois. Our Professional Development, Communications, and Comprehensive Educational Services teams contract with the school districts and communities we serve to provide services and training. Additionally, West40 collects fees for testing services, background checks, and licensure. The West40 Grants Team successfully secured \$8.1 million in state and federal funding for FY25. This total includes four new competitive awards, reinforcing West40's leadership in advancing innovative, equity-driven educational initiatives across the region.

Our largest source of revenue comes from Evidence-Based Funding (EBF) for Alternative Learning Opportunities Programs (ALOP) and our Regional Safe School. Our ALOP program continues to grow in enrollment from year to year. This growth in enrollment increases our EBF funding, allowing us to serve more students designated by our districts as being at-risk of not graduating. The increase in student population as well as a significant increase in local and state contracts has necessitated growth in our staff and for FY26 we will employ close to 275 employees.

The \$9M debt certificate issued in May 2023 to fund renovations at both our Lexington campus and St. Joseph has been paid in full as of May 2025. Despite this large payment made in FY25 (\$9.8M in principal and interest), our ending fund balance increased by 13%. Facility projects will continue in FY26 with a complete tear-out and replacement of our Lexington parking lot that will include new fencing, a student drop-off lane, and an ADA compliant main entrance. New classroom doors are being installed in the safe school, partially funded by the School Maintenance Grant. Planning continues for the St. Joseph property, with construction projects completed as funding becomes available.

FISCAL YEAR 2025 (UNAUDITED)

\$4,000,428

FY25 Beginning Fund Balance

\$41,604,538

FY25 Revenue

\$41,078,054

FY25 Expenditure

\$4,586,911

FY25 Ending Fund Balance



west40.org | [@west40isc](https://twitter.com/west40isc)



West40
connecting communities