

[View this email in your browser](#)



A MESSAGE FROM MARK



WEST40 EXPANDS SERVICES TO ENSURE SCHOOL SAFETY

The West40 Comprehensive Educational Services team works every day to ensure that our partner schools meet or exceed the requirements to keep kids safe. This includes assessing schools against every known code and providing the tools, guidance, and support to help them meet those requirements and expectations.

We recently expanded to assist districts in their threat assessment and emergency response protocols. We know that if we fail, we become a barrier to our kids' success, and we will not let that happen.

But our approach to school safety is more than just having physical security measures in place. It's about making sure kids have adults whom they trust.

"A lot of schools believe that 'hardening' the school with cameras and metal detectors is the best way to make schools safe. But the other piece that is most important is 'heartening' the schools," said West40 Director of Comprehensive Educational Services Phil Abraham. "It's what you're doing to build relationships and build connections and making people feel that they belong, that they have a voice, and that they feel safe and that they feel connected to adults."

SERVICES AND SUPPORT WEST40 CAN PROVIDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- Create Emergency Response Plans
- Physical Security Assessment
- Behavioral Threat Assessment
- Identifying Warning Signs of Violence
- Averted Attack Training
- School and Student Safety/Emergency Protocols
- Assembling an Effective Threat Assessment Team
- Threat Assessment Document/Plan Assistance
- Digital Threat Assessment
- Assistance with School/Safety Related Investigations and Interviewing SRO Training
- Assisting with SRO and Law Enforcement Partnerships

Contact the Comprehensive Educational Services Team for more information.
Senior Director, Steve Bogren, sbogren@west40.org
Director, Phillip Abraham, pabraham@west40.org.

WEST40 HOSTS 2023 ILLINOIS SCHOOL SAFETY CONFERENCE

West40 hosted more than 500 school administrators, law enforcement personnel, and first responders at the annual Illinois School Safety Conference in Niles on October 4th. The conference empowers attendees with knowledge and tools needed to help them create safer educational environments.

West40's Randy Braverman organized the all-day event, which featured vendors that specialize in school safety technologies. Additionally, guest speakers shared stories of survival and lessons learned when responding to crisis situations.

"We have such great partnerships with local, state, federal agencies, including the top vendors and speakers in the school safety field to ensure the schools, police and fire departments have the best training for free," Braverman said.

Click [here](#) for a video recap of the Illinois School Safety Conference.



WEST40 PEACE AND SENIORS PLUS STUDENTS VISIT LAKE KATHERINE IN PALOS HEIGHTS



LET WEST40 HELP BRING YOUR GOOD DISTRICT STORIES TO VIDEO

At West40, we believe in celebrating small acts of kindness and wins. Our goal is to change the conversation around education by highlighting your school district's continuous support in student growth and success.

During the past year, our communications department has recorded, written, and edited video projects for some of our partner districts, including Pleasantdale School District 107, Riverside School District 96, Ridgewood High School District 234, Mannheim School District 83, and Norridge School District 80.

Here's an example of a video we recently created for Pleasantdale Elementary, which is celebrating a National Blue Ribbon Award! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrc9aFPa85g>



Interested? Connect with our communications team by emailing Heidi Bellm (hbellm@west40.org) or Chris Coffey (ccoffey@west40.org).

WEST40 INNOVATION TEAM

West40's new Innovation Team specializes in inspiring and empowering educators to explore "what's possible" in education. Innovation is not just about technology. It's also about doing things differently. Connect with the team at <https://tinyurl.com/575x9cmv> to learn more.

Innovation Coordinator Angela Gonzales and Innovation Specialist Justin Gonzalez recently discussed the idea behind their team and innovative education techniques on the Shift Everything podcast: <https://tinyurl.com/47z3jin8>.

SUPERINTENDENTS INVITED TO WEST40 & GCU EVENT ADDRESSING POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR TEACHER SHORTAGE

West40 and its premier university partner, Grand Canyon University, invite area superintendents to West40's Lexington building (415 Lexington St., Maywood, IL 60153) on November 10th to learn about two powerful pathways for addressing the teacher shortage.

One solution includes growing members into approved teacher prep programs through a partnership with GCU. Another pathway involves offering high-quality professional learning opportunities to teachers and access to free and robust, live virtual lessons from GCU staff, especially for hard-to-fill matters impacted by the shortage, including science and math.

The event runs from 10am to 1pm on November 10th. Lunch will be provided. To RSVP, email Karla Chavez at kchavez@west40.org (Note: Please RSVP even if you did so for the last month's event that was rescheduled for Nov. 10).

NEWCOMER RESOURCE AND NETWORK EVENT

West40 partnered with DuPage ROE's SEL Hub earlier this month to host a statewide Newcomer Resource and Network Event to bring education and advocacy professionals together to learn, network, and share best practices to support our newcomers and educators.

We are beyond grateful to the expert presenters from across the country who contributed to the success of our event. Dr. Carmen Ayala, recently retired State Superintendent, and Dr. Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro, VP of Education, Policy, and Research at the Latino Policy Forum, kicked off the event by highlighting the need for statewide collaboration from all stakeholders to support our new neighbors.

We were proud to have such a passionate group of educators, leaders, and policymakers to join us to help lead this event. In the end, we had 280 people representing 38 different regions across the state attend all or part of the event. The participants' responses continue to confirm that this event was beneficial and valuable.

ST. JOSEPH UPDATE

West40 is in the initial stages of the zoning process that the Village of Westchester is requiring us to complete prior to opening our program. Additionally, we have applied for several grants that could accelerate the renovation process.

We remain committed to creating a school that will serve approximately 40 youth-in-need at a time, including foster students and those with social-emotional concerns. The school will be funded by state agencies such as the Department of Children and Family Services and the Department of Human Services in support of Governor Pritzker's commitment to providing behavioral health services to youth.

Meanwhile, NBC Chicago recently reported on our plans for the St. Joseph High School Campus. Here is a link to their report: <https://www.nbcchicago.com/news/health/health-wellness-science-news/shuttered-westchester-facility-finds-new-life-as-alternative-school/3249600/>.



We love sharing stories of how lives have been changed in partnership with your school or district. Want to join us in inspiring others? [Please send your story our way.](#)

