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A MESSAGE FROM MARK

Hello Colleagues, Friends, Family Members.

It is no surprise that ALL of our districts are experiencing the challenges of the Educator Shortage Crisis in our region, state and country! This dilemma has expanded from teachers and substitutes to literally every role across our school systems. It also won't surprise you that I receive calls and emails from administrators, teachers, parents and colleagues about what to do.



You might be aware that the Regional Superintendents across Illinois conduct an annual survey related to the Educator Shortage. We have been doing this work for several years. Our response rate this year is over 80%! These data have been used to inform decision makers and legislators across the state. I am very proud of this work as it has resulted in a large number of improvements and waivers.

All in all, our greatest work related to the educator shortage has been to be a never ending resource to our administrators, teachers, support staff and the community. We will forever champion the causes that assist in developing and maintaining the best learning environments for our students and families.

All the best, and happy fall!

Dr. Mark A. Klaisner
President, IARSS
Executive Director, West40 ISC #2



Schools across Illinois are anxiously awaiting the release of their summative designations on their state report cards after a three year hiatus. The designation is based on multiple indicators of student performance and growth. And for the first time, equity will be a key factor in a school's report card.

Some area school districts that slowed their long-term improvement planning during the pandemic may be in for a wake up call when the Illinois Report Cards are released later this month. Still, other districts continued to focus on their strategic improvement goals with the help of West40 through co-planning, professional development and using data to see where schools need support.

Suzy Dees, West40 Senior Director of Professional Learning, points to Cicero District 99's continuous improvement planning as a model for optimism.

"When the pandemic hit, they kept going. They've kept layering in the supports around continuous improvement and wherever the needs are and the Professional Learning team is with them along the way," Dees said. "We are working with them behind the scenes and sometimes we are a cheerleader. The common denominator is co-planning and support. We share the workload."

Additionally, West40 shares open source data with school districts so they can be strategic about how to have more students be proficient on the state assessment.

"When teachers get quality feedback, then teachers can improve. When you do continuous improvement work, it impacts student test scores."

Dr. Sonya Spaulding, West40 Director of Professional Learning

PERSISTENCE THROUGH SUPPLY CHAIN DELAYS



Supply chain disruptions can impact everything from the food we eat to the education of our children. However, West40 is supporting its partner school districts to help them get through the sting of critical parts delays.

West40 works with 152 schools in West Cook County that undergo a state-mandated permitting process and almost all schools reported supply chain-related complications, including backordered parts, delayed shipments, and inflated costs.

Elmwood Park District 401 assistant superintendent Jim Jennings said delays involving roofing materials, concrete and cabinetry have impacted the renovation of two district elementary schools. But Jennings said West40 provided permitting assistance and offered safety advice that District 401 followed to keep classrooms open.

"West40 has worked with me and the contractors to make sure that the educational process continued along with the construction."

Jim Jennings, Elmwood Park District 401

While West40 cannot do anything to expedite the shipping process, the Health/Life Safety and Compliance Team makes itself fully accessible to answer questions from school districts and offer suggestions on how it can help.

"Many schools were not able to be provided full occupancy due to these delays, but we were able to work with our districts to provide partial occupancy permits in order to keep kids and staff safe while they were allowed to continue finishing up certain projects safely and securely," said Phil Abraham, West40's Director of Comprehensive Educational Services.

ASSISTING ASYLUM SEEKERS



Images of asylum seekers arriving in Chicago by the busload have captured the nation's attention. Large groups of men, women and children from Latin America recently found themselves in an unfamiliar environment and many were driven to the western suburbs at the direction of government officials. But West40 and its partners reacted quickly to provide essential items for dozens of newly-arrived refugees from Venezuela.

West40 delivered winter coats, diapers, baby formula, flash drives, and backpacks to a donation event coordinated by LaGrange District 105.

"As District 105 determines what our new families need, they are able to reach out to West40 for assistance to meet their needs," said West40 Director of Support Services John Milosovic. "West40 and our partners are ready to help."

Superintendent Dr. Brian Ganan says seventeen students between the ages of 5 and 14 are now enrolled in District 105 schools.

"They've really been very successfully integrated into our systems," said Ganan. "They are speaking to me with the English they've learned. I think the experience has been great for the kids coming into the school system and for the families and I'm proud of how our district has handled this."

West40 has also offered to send advocates to the schools to support the students.

West40 partners World Vision, Morton College and McKinney Vento supplied new items for the donation drive.

Ganan said District 105 has collected enough essential items for the refugees "for now", but items such as store gift cards would still be accepted.



- **STUDENT VOICE AT OUR NEW SCHOOL**
 - The gym floor design and banners have been voted on by our kids at the new Regional Safe School at Lexington
- **OTHER LEXINGTON UPDATES**
 - Gym lights have been replaced
 - Construction continues on the second floor
 - Projected move in date for the main office is September 2023
- **WEST40 STUDENT ADVOCATES BUILD RELATIONSHIPS FOR SUCCESS**
 - The West40 ALOP team of advocates has stepped up to support students, families and our community more than ever. Administrators tell us our advocates are an unmatched resource.
 - Currently, there are 1,530 students receiving advocate support across the West40 network of schools
- **WEST40 HIGHLIGHT VIDEOS**

Take a look at these short videos on our YouTube channel that explain how we serve students, educators and our communities. Feel free to share!

 - [Remote Learning](#)
 - [ALOP \(Student Advocates\)](#)
 - [Professional Learning](#)
 - [Health/Life Safety](#)
 - [Fingerprinting & Testing](#)



- **SHORT-TERM SUBSTITUTE TEACHER TRAINING**
 - The next training via Zoom is on Nov. 8th from 9 am-12 pm
 - \$25 fee
 - [Register now](#)
- **VIRTUAL TEACHER EVALUATION TRAINING (AA2001)**
 - A two-day academy designed for individuals seeking initial training qualification for teacher evaluation.
 - Thursday, Dec. 1, 2022 and Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022 from 8:30 am-4:30 pm
 - [Register now](#)
- **35TH ANNUAL WEST40 SPEECH & DRAMA FESTIVAL**
 - Saturday, Feb. 24, 2023, from 8 am to Noon
 - Elmwood Park High School
 - Individuals and teams welcome
 - Submission sheets due Feb. 10, 2023
 - [Register now](#)

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.](#)



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