

THE INDEPENDENT

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A message from District 88 Superintendent Dr. Scott Helton

The following message from the District 88 Superintendent Scott Helton was published in a recent newsletter:

As we continue with our Remote Learning/E-learning environment in response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, I would like to thank our staff, students, parents/guardians and community members for their cooperation, understanding, adaptability and support.

Our stakeholders continue to step up and come together to overcome the adversity of this unprecedented situation. We are committed to keeping you up to date with the latest COVID-19 information, and below are recent updates. We will post current content online at www.dupage88.net/Coronavirus.

Next steps and areas of focus Important updates for the class of 2020:

- We will host a virtual commencement ceremony on our scheduled graduation date of May 17. The ceremony will include messages from members of the class of 2020 and the District 88 Board of Education and administration. It also will include the reading of graduate names and will be made available to view on May 17 to honor that scheduled date for the class of 2020. We are looking to host an in-person ceremony at a later date as well, when it is determined we can safely gather for large events.
- We will have a process for seniors

to receive all applicable end-of-year items, including each student's graduation cap and gown, cords, diploma, recognition certificates and yearbook prior to graduation. We will share details and procedures soon.

- We are finalizing plans to provide each senior with a yard sign, free of charge.
- Continue Remote Learning and student engagement through the end of the school year (see details in the section below)
- Support the social and emotional well-being of our students (see a list of available resources at dupage88.net/Coronavirus)
- Maintain and enhance our meal distribution program for families within our communities (see details in the section below)

- Host student recognition and celebration events using virtual formats, or reschedule these events to next fall or winter (and possibly use both strategies to maximize participation)
 - Develop and implement remote summer programming for remediation/enrichment
 - Provide access for students and staff to gather personal belongings
 - Collect materials used during the 2019-20 school year, and distribute materials for the 2020-21 school year
 - Prepare for the transition to the 2020-21 school year, when it is determined we can safely return to school
- We will communicate details about each of these areas as they become finalized.

Willis appointed to legislative working groups General Assembly continues to operate remotely

As the General Assembly continues to address the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, state Rep. Kathleen Willis (D-Northlake) announced her appointment to several newly-established legislative working groups.

"The coronavirus pandemic has fundamentally changed nearly every aspect of our lives in historically unprecedented and troubling ways," Willis said. "I want to assure the public that the General

Assembly is pressing forward to solve these challenging problems remotely. I now serve on four key working groups which are identifying legislative priorities that must be promptly addressed upon our return to Springfield."

Willis has been appointed as co-chair of the Local Government and Corrections and Justice working groups, as well as serving on Access to Health Care and Labor and Unemployment Insurance working

groups. These groups are intended to function similar to House committees, however they do not effectively pass legislation. Instead, they have been tasked with identifying solutions and legislative remedies to address the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic.

"I recognize the challenges that we are facing due to this pandemic are devastating and overwhelming," Willis said. "Our state government is doing everything with-

in its power to halt the spread of COVID-19, and we are determined to reopen the economy and get people back to work as soon as we possibly can."

For more information, contact Rep. Willis' district office at (708) 562-6970 or email repwillis77@gmail.com.

District 88 seeks public input

Local heroes

Do you know an Addison Trail or Willowbrook graduate, parent/guardian or someone else with a connection to District 88 who's making a positive difference in the fight against coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)? If so, please complete the form at dupage88.net/Fight-COVID-19, so District 88 can share the efforts and achievements of these heroes in an upcoming newsletter and on the District 88 website and social media. The feature is scheduled to begin May 1.

Library Media Center COVID-19 Story Project

The Addison Trail and Willowbrook Library Media Centers are asking students and staff members to share their experiences of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic through journal entries, poetry, essays, audio recordings, visual or performance art. The goal is to create a collective record of what life is like for students and staff during this time. The physical distance can make us feel lonely, but by sharing our experiences with one another, we can maintain our connections. Be sure to submit your entries at the links below:

- Addison Trail: dupage88.libguides.com/aths/covidstories
- Willowbrook: dupage88.libguides.com/wbhs/covidstories

Addison Trail awards 'AT's Best' virtually

On April 21, a group of Addison Trail students was named as AT's Best. Because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the event was hosted virtually.

The AT's Best award honors students who have achieved a "personal best."

The following categories have been used to recognize recipients: service, Blazer Pride, cooperation, dependability, initiative, leadership, humanitarian spirit or unique contributions. Students will receive a pin or a T-shirt for their efforts.

AT's Best recipients are:

- Sophomore Selvin Lopez Mares: Nominated by special education teacher Annette Severino

- Junior Konrad Nowak: Nominated by special education teacher Anthony Gebhart

- Junior Emily Stevenson, junior Axel Reyna, junior Katherine O'Brien, sophomore Cami Whitaker, sophomore Angelina Camaci, sophomore Alicia Lloveras and sophomore Maria Martinez: Nominated by social studies teacher Mark Olson

- Junior Jina Patel: Nominated by Guidance Department Administrative Assistant and Key Club Co-Sponsor Karen Grady
- Senior Elizabeth O'Brien: Nominated by social studies teacher Ryan Peronto
- Sophomores Yana Patel and Jasmine Cosio: Nominated by social

studies teacher Laura Magnavite

- Seniors Dakota Zimmermann, Gianfranco Mosny, Marco Castro, Rocco Ciarfaglia, Kay'a Berns, Lucia Fullone, Angel Rodriguez, Emily Madero Diaz and Casey Kosmach: Nominated by English student teacher Megan King

- Junior Juliza Bonilla, senior Yasmine Hernandez, senior Paulina Stachura, senior Victoria Toay and senior Julian Lara: Nominated by social studies teacher Andrea Grossart

- Freshmen Ivan Rodriguez, Peter Sanchez, Andrea Cataquiz and Oscar Meza-Perez: Nominated by special education teacher/freshmen house co-teacher Anna Grice and science teacher Laura Garcia

Gift of Hope's Cookie project honors first responders at hospital

Nothing can lift a person's spirits quite like a good cookie. And during these unprecedented times, no one deserves a sweet token of appreciation more than the hundreds of Illinois frontline healthcare providers caring for COVID-19 patients.

That's why the Gift of Hope Organ and Tissue Donor Network, a not-for-profit organ procurement organization that coordinates organ and tissue donation and provides public education on donation in Illinois and northwest Indiana, has launched the

Cookies for Caregivers campaign, allowing the public to thank these brave healthcare providers with a cookie and a note of gratitude.

Donations can be made by visiting giftofhope.org/cookie-for-caregivers on the Gift of Hope web site. Gifts can be given in any denomination.

In turn, Gift of Hope will use 100% of donations to buy cookies made as much as possible by local bakeries and deliver them to caregivers throughout Illinois. To date,

more than \$4,000 in donations have resulted in cookies being delivered to healthcare workers caring for COVID-19 patients at 25 hospitals throughout Illinois -- including Elmhurst Hospital.

As a side note, April is National Donate Life Month and Gift of Hope is continuing its mission of securing safe and successful organ donations and supporting its network of hospital partners to ensure they are recovering and placing healthy organs during this pandemic.

SPORTS

IHSA makes it official—2020 spring state tournaments are canceled IHSA does allow for the chance of spring teams playing a contest this summer

STAFF REPORT

The Illinois High School Association (IHSA) declared last week its decision to cancel all of its spring state tournaments because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision by the IHSA, which oversees high school athletics in Illinois, ended the slim chance of truncated 2020 high school spring sports seasons in the state.

The IHSA Board of Directors met via a video conference call on April 21. During that meeting, the board announced its decision to cancel all of its spring state tournaments.

The cancellation came four days after Gov. JB Pritzker and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) announced that all K-12 schools in Illinois would be closed to on-site instruction for the rest of the current school year.

"We support the decision by Governor Pritzker and the Illinois State Board of Education, and given the logistics, we simply felt we could not conduct state tournaments that meet the expectations of our member schools this spring," said IHSA Ex-

ecutive Director Craig Anderson in a statement announcing the IHSA's April 21 decision. "As disappointing as it may be for students, it is the right decision for their health and safety, as well as for the health and safety of the general public, as we cope with this unprecedented pandemic."

Glenbard East High School and Willowbrook High School both compete in nine spring sports—girls badminton, boys gymnastics, boys and girls track and field, girls soccer, boys tennis, boys volleyball, baseball and softball.

All of those teams had begun practicing for their spring seasons when Pritzker issued his March 13 order to close all K-12 schools in the state through March 30. Pritzker subsequently extended the closure through April 7, then through April 30. On April 17, he announced that all K-12 schools in the state would be closed for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.

Most of the area's spring sports teams were a few days away from their first competition of the season when Pritzker issued the initial

March 13 order to close schools. Glenbard East and Willowbrook's spring teams held their final practices on March 12. All afterschool activities were canceled after regular classes on March 13.

None of the area's high school spring teams are participating in any practices or competitions while school buildings are closed. The Illinois State Superintendent of Schools stated last month that no IHSA member school should organize any spring sports practices or games while the state's high schools are closed.

The governor's April 17 announcement that all of the state's school buildings would be closed for the rest of the school year all but ended the hopes of salvaging high school spring sports seasons in 2020. In early April, the IHSA announced it was exploring the possibility of truncated spring seasons and extending state tournaments into late June. At the time of that announcement, the IHSA noted that if school buildings didn't open for the rest of the school year, all spring sports would probably be canceled.

The IHSA's 2020 state badminton tournament was scheduled to take place May 15-16. The state tournament in boys gymnastics was also scheduled for May 15-16. The girls track and field state tournament was supposed to be held May 21-23, while the track and field state tournament for boys was scheduled for the following week—May 28-30. The state tournament in boys tennis was supposed to take place May 28-30.

The IHSA's Class 2A and Class 3A state tournaments in girls soccer were supposed to be held June 5-6. The state tournament in boys volleyball was also scheduled for the weekend of June 5-6. The Class 3A and Class 4A state tournaments in both baseball and softball were supposed to take place the weekend of June 12-13.

Pritzker's April 17 announcement that school buildings would be closed for the rest of the school year essentially eliminated the hopes for shortened spring seasons that included state tournaments and ended by the end of June.

The IHSA's April 21 announcement canceling its spring tourna-

ments did refer to the possibility of opportunities for schools to "conduct some kind of spring athletic events" once state government and medical leaders announce that it would be safe to return to those events.

"The possibility of playing a spring sport game this summer is about closure," said Anderson in last week's statement from the IHSA.

A spring athletic event—even one contest—may give athletic programs an opportunity to recognize their senior student-athletes.

"Our thoughts right now are with all the impacted students, coaches and communities," Anderson added in last week's statement. "Especially the seniors. It will be difficult for them to find a silver lining in all of this, but we stress that even if they don't get the chance to compete again at the high school level, they are better for having been a part of their respective high school teams. By participating in high school sports and activities, they were exposed to life lessons in teamwork, leadership and overcoming adversity that are difficult to replicate elsewhere."



CHRIS FOX FILE PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

A spring without a season

The Willowbrook girls soccer team was looking forward to the 2020 season, but the COVID-19 pandemic has kept the Warriors on the sidelines. The Willowbrook team had about two weeks of practice before Gov. JB Pritzker issued his March 13 order to close all K-12 schools in Illinois through March 30. The closures were then extended through April 7, and April 30. Pritzker recently ordered the closure to continue through the rest of the current school year. Last week, the IHSA announced that it was canceling all of its 2020 spring state tournaments. "It's a shame," said Willowbrook coach Julio Del Real of the lack of a typical season. "It's breaking my heart." The Warriors last practiced on March 12—five days before they were supposed to play their first match of the season.

This year's team includes seven seniors, six of whom have been on the varsity since they were freshmen. Those four-year seniors are Erinn Bell (above left-No. 23), Sara Fitzgibbon (above middle-No. 31), Lizzy Florey, Emy Hayes, Julianna Paulsen (above right-No. 9) and Jenna Vittorio. Senior Alli Cameron was preparing to begin her third season on the varsity. "When I think of what they are missing, it hurts a lot," Del Real added. "These girls deserved to experience their senior season." In announcing the cancellation of its spring tournaments last week, the IHSA did mention the chance of spring teams playing a contest in the summer. "The possibility of playing a spring sport game this summer is about closure," said IHSA Executive Director Craig Anderson.



I'm always hearing about how many new cases of COVID-19 are in Illinois and how many people have died. It's heartbreaking, don't get me wrong. But what about the unemployment numbers? You've had over 26 million people filing for unemployment across the country in five weeks, and that's even with all the stimulus from the federal government. I looked up that Illinois has processed more than 750,000 unemployment claims and the real time unemployment rate is 20 percent. What about the people who are likely going to die from suicide, drug overdoses, alcohol abuse and other stress-related ailments due to unemployment? I also read that domestic violence cases are going up. Will the media keep track of deaths related to unemployment like they do with the coronavirus? Let me answer that for you. Of course not!

Students and staff members are issued identification at local high schools. Students and staff are expected to carry their identification, if not wear it around their necks, while they are at school. Has anyone ever claimed it's racist to make kids and staff members have ID at school? Of course not. That's ridiculous. But leftists keep pushing the nonsense that requiring voter ID is somehow racist.

You know, I'm really glad to know that US Waterproofing and Darwin Fur-

niture are there for me in these difficult times. I rest easier at night knowing that American Sales and Weathertech got my back in this time of need. At least it means that creative writers, actors and production staff are still at work making new commercials even though they may seem a little tacky and self-serving.

Gosh, I kind of hate to say it, but there has been very good thing from this COVID-19 stuff. It has been weeks since I got a spam phone call. Yip-pee! May the tele-marketing industry rest in the same peace they deny everybody else.

The governor first ordered non-essential businesses to shut down on March 21. That was supposed to last until at least April 7, but then he extended to at least April 30, and now until at least May 30. How long is Mr. Pritzker going to keep moving the goal line? Remember the restaurants? They have been closed to dine-in customers since March 16. This state was in terrible shape fiscally before the coronavirus hit. It's going to be that much worse by the time Pritzker decides to start opening things up again.

I am almost amused at how quickly companies have scrambled to make new TV and radio commercials to fit the COVID-19 pandemic narrative. Car floor liners are easier to disinfect

than carpeted floor mats. Investment companies, mortgage brokers, furniture stores, the golden arches, even joint pain centers, all letting us know they are here for us. Then there are the spam emails popping up out of the woodwork selling everything from "medical-grade" masks to hand sanitizer and personal PPE items. Some—not all—are trying to capitalize on this pandemic with these revised commercials and for the most part I appreciate knowing that they are trying to stay in business. I get that advertising is part of doing business, but I find it interesting how quickly they slapped it all together.

Absolutely love last week's comment. It bears repeating: Just wondering if attaching your real name to these comments would limit their stupidity.

In the mind of Democrats, Americans should stay at home indefinitely. They shouldn't go to school. They shouldn't go to church. They shouldn't go to parks. They shouldn't exercise their right to protest. Democrats also believe that it's all right to let in immigrants from all over the world. According to Democrats, any effort to curb that is hateful, racist, xenophobic, etc. What happened to Democrats? What happened to common sense?

DuPage County Board, please put taxpayers first, before the school districts who seem so concerned about getting their money from us. The districts don't want the board to waive late fees because they want their money and they want it now. If nobody ever paid their taxes late, there would

be no late fees, so to me, that money is a bonus; icing on the cake. Other counties are cutting taxpayers a break. Please make those who elected you the priority. We have to wait for any help, from unemployment or the stimulus check. The school districts, which we pay for, needs to do the same.

I'm sure that teachers, principals, administrators and school board members would say that "We are all in this together," regarding the current COVID-19 crisis. If that's the case, will schools be temporarily cutting the pay of their teachers, administrators, and staff members, who have clearly seen their workloads reduced since the middle of March? Will spring coaches be paid in full, even though the seasons have been wiped out? Will homeowners receive some kind of property tax rebate, as schools won't be open to regular classes during the last two-plus months of the school year?

Now that more and more of us in the private sector are either losing our businesses, losing our jobs or getting our pay or hours cut, because of the coronavirus, I think it's about time the public sector and school districts start tightening their belts. Our first property tax installment is due on June 1. Since many businesses have been shut down due to the virus, it seems obvious there will be less tax revenue coming in for the foreseeable future, especially sales taxes. As far as I'm concerned, no more referendums and no more property-tax increases. Villages and school districts have to find ways to start making due with less, just like we do.

District 88 to hold virtual graduation for Willowbrook's Class of 2020 on May 17

Online ceremony will include a reading of graduates' names; an in-person service may be held at a later date

District 88 announced last week it will host a virtual commencement ceremony next month for Willowbrook High School's Class of 2020. The event will take place on Sunday, May 17—the previously scheduled date of this year's ceremony.

The originally scheduled May 17 service, which was supposed to take place in the school's main gymnasium, has been cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The virtual ceremony will include messages from members of Willowbrook's Class of 2020, which includes nearly 500 students. Members of the District 88 Board of Education and district administrators will also provide messages during the virtual service.

The upcoming event will include the reading of graduates' names, and will be made available to view on May 17.

"We are looking to host an in-person ceremony at a later date as well, when it is determined we can safely gather for large events," stated District 88 Superintendent Scott Helton in a message to district families last week.

Helton added that there will be a process for Willowbrook seniors to receive all of their applicable end-of-year items, including graduation caps and gowns, cords, diplomas, recognition certificates and yearbooks, prior to graduation.

District 88 is also finalizing plans to provide each member of Willowbrook's Class of 2020 with a yard sign,

According to the *Washington Post*, Joe Biden was ranked 506th in a class of 688 students when he graduated from the University of Delaware in 1965. He then went on to law school at Syracuse University, where he graduated 76th out of class of 85. While at law school, he earned an "F" in a class for committing plagiarism. He lifted five pages from someone else's published article and used them in his own paper. More than 30 years ago, these allegations forced him to withdraw from the presidential race.

Remember Y2K? The New Year's Eve in 1999 when all the computers would stop working, the electricity would not work and the water wouldn't turn on and the stock market would crash because of predictions by experts. These same experts are now doing predictions about COVID-19 and forcing us all to stay at home.

Time for Illinois to start getting back on track. Wear masks, practice social distancing. The millionaire politicians, who continue to receive full paychecks, won't let us work. If we can't work, we can't pay property taxes, we can't buy things and the state and village lose sales tax. How soon until the village starts laying off employees, including police and fire? This "shutdown" cannot continue. Many businesses that are closed will never reopen. That is a permanent loss of sales tax. People are able to walk and chew gum. We can figure this out. This is not a slam to anyone, but this has never happened before and the politicians don't know what to do or should do. It is all trial and error.

School districts continue to provide free meals to students while school buildings are closed

Five days' worth of food to be provided each Tuesday from 10 a.m. to noon; the next distribution is May 5

District 88 is partnering with District 45, Salt Creek School District 48, Addison School District 4, Arbor Management, Chartwells and Cottage Hill Operating Company to provide meals to students while school buildings are closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The food service program provides meals free of charge to all residents up to the age of 18.

Beginning on April 7, five days' worth of food (five breakfasts and five lunches) were distributed. Five days' worth of food will be provided each Tuesday while school buildings are closed to on-site learning.

The next distribution of five days' worth of food will be provided from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesday, May 5.

The area distribution sites include four Villa Park schools and two Lombard schools. The Villa Park schools are:

- Willowbrook High School, 1250 S. Ardmore Ave.
 - Albright Middle School, 1110 S. Villa Ave.
 - Ardmore Elementary School, 225 S. Harvard Ave.
 - Jefferson Middle School, 255 W. Vermont St.
- The Lombard schools are:
- Stevenson Elementary School, 18W351 15th St.
 - Westmore Elementary School, 340 S. School St.

Obituary

Sister Adrienne Weseman, 90
Former teacher at St. Alexander's School

Sister Adrienne Weseman, Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, died very peacefully on April 24 at the age of 90. She was Co-Director of Religious Education with Sister Joan Shields S.N.D.deN. at Our Lady of the Way-side Church in Arlington Heights until her death. Sister Adrienne was previously Director of Religious Ed-

ucation at St. Alexander School in Villa Park for 29 years. She was preceded in death by her parents, Henry and Adrienne Weseman, Sister Jackie Weseman and Brother Roland Weseman. She is survived by her sister Joan (Paul) Ewan, her niece Noelle (Jeff) Ferguson and great nieces Kristanda and Chloe Ferguson and niece Lili Kirkland. Her immediate family includes Sister Joan Shields S.N.D. deN. Marian and Curt Erandt, nieces Julie

(Eric) Coger, Karen (Jeff) McElroy, nephew Dan Brandt and great nieces Lyla and Emma McElroy.

Service and interment private. Memorials to Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur retirement fund, 701 N. Columbia Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45215. Due to COVID-19 restriction, a Memorial Mass will be held at a later date. Arrangements provided by Steuierle Funeral Home. Info: 630-832-4161.