

Flora CUSD #35 Newsletter

Children are our most precious possession.

July 2016

Building for Efficiency

Recently, the building trades house was sold and we are exploring utilizing the building trades classes next school year to assist in the construction of a small, more efficient unit office. The current unit office once housed a large number of staff-the maintenance director, special education coordinator, special education secretary, food service director, technology coordinator, bookkeeper, administrative secretary, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. With the elimination of the assistant superintendent position several years ago and the relocation of other staff to various buildings including the new elementary school, the current aging unit office now houses only the superintendent, bookkeeper, and administrative secretary.

While the current unit office has served a great purpose within the district, it is inefficient to operate and will now require significant money to repair and maintain. We have addressed and will need to continue to address asbestos issues, water and mold issues, roof problems, and HVAC issues. Ensuring that the issues are addressed and the building is safe for staff in the future will require ongoing and significant money in the future.

Our plan is to utilize our building trades classes to construct a single level, handicap accessible, smaller, more efficient unit office. With this construction, the building trades classes will get the same training and education as they do when building houses as well as making the construction more economical for the district. The construction of the unit office will be completed without a need to add any additional money to the budget from the building trades construction from last year. We are excited about the new construction and continually exploring ways to efficiently provide services and the best possible education to our students. Please contact us at 618-662-2412 or jhackney@floraschools.com with any input, suggestions, questions, or concerns.

State Budget Implications

As you may know, legislators and the governor failed to reach agreement on a state budget and the budget impasse continues in Illinois. There has been much speculation across the state about whether schools will open in the fall.

The lack of state appropriation for K-12 education in the upcoming school year will result in dire consequences for many districts. For Flora, state funding comprises nearly 56% of our revenue. Thanks to the fiscal efficiency of prior Boards and administration, Flora has fund reserves that will allow for the opening of school. These funds however would only sustain the district through part of the school year and the ongoing dysfunction at the capitol ultimately would result in a shift of the cost of educating Illinois' children to local property taxpayers.

As taxpayers, parents, and concerned citizens, this is a great time for engagement. You are encouraged to contact your elected officials and let them know your feelings about the current "state of our state." Your board of education and I will continue to monitor this situation and are committed to opening schools on time and to education our children without interruption.

Thank you for your continued support of our schools.

Important Dates

July 18th-Board of Education Meeting-5:30-Unit Office

July 19th-FAF Sports Physicals-9:00-12:00

July 21st-FAF Sports Physicals-9:00-12:00