



News from our Schools

December 4, 2001

Mission Statement

The Mission of School District 15 is to produce world-class learners by building a connected learning community.

Our Core Values are:

- Student- and Constituent-Driven Quality
- Public Responsibility and Citizenship
- Management by Fact
- Continuous Improvement and Learning
- Results Focus

Our Key Goals are:

- Students and the Community Acquire 21st Century Skills
- World-Class Achievement
- Connected Learning Community
- Caring, Safe, and Orderly Learning Environment
- High-Performing Staff
- Aligned and Integrated Management System

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Twenty-one District 15 teachers earn National Board certification

Twenty-one elementary and junior high school teachers from Community Consolidated School District 15 have been notified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) that they have earned National Board Certification, the highest teaching credential available.

“We are delighted that so many District 15 teachers have earned this prestigious credential this year,” stated Dr. John G. Conyers, superintendent of District 15. “National board certification clearly demonstrates that they are among the best and most dedicated teachers, and we are fortunate to have them. District 15 is committed to continuous improvement, and the certification process is a powerful self-evaluation tool that helps teachers find ways to improve their own competence.”

NBPTS certification is a voluntary, performance-based assessment that takes nearly a year to complete. The assessment process requires candidates to document their subject matter knowledge, provide evidence that they know how to teach students effectively, and demonstrate their ability to manage and measure student learning. Throughout the school year, certification candidates assemble a portfolio that includes videotapes of classroom interactions, samples of student work, and reflective commentary on the evidence. Candidates also document their education-related work outside the classroom. Trained NBPTS evaluators who teach in the same field as the candidates judge all components of the assessments.



“Research has shown that a quality teacher is the most significant factor on how well a child learns,” notes NBPTS President Betty Castor. “Our new cadre of national board certified teachers tells us we’re making excellent progress when it comes to ensuring top quality teaching for our students in every school in the country.”

The accomplishment of these 21 teachers brings the total number of board-certified teachers in District 15 to 31, giving the district one of the highest numbers of board-certified teachers anywhere in the state of Illinois. They were among just 163 teachers in Illinois to earn certification this year, bringing the Illinois total to 352. Nationwide, 6,500 teachers earned certification this year, bringing the national total to 16,035.

- Paul Behen, Winston Campus
- Amy Berry, Pleasant Hill
- Stewart Bond, Plum Grove Junior High
- Jennifer Buehler, Sundling Junior High
- Valentina Butzky, Kimball Hill
- Kristie Charles, Hunting Ridge

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National Board certification

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- Beth Cooper, Winston Campus
- Lindsey Dahl, Marion Jordan
- Lori Durchslag, Jane Addams
- Pam DuSold, Pleasant Hill
- Barb Grisaffe, Willow Bend
- Connie Heavey, Plum Grove Junior High
- Christy Jensby, Pleasant Hill
- Jessie Kalinowski, on loan to the Illinois State Board of Education
- Lyn Kuehnel, Thomas Jefferson
- Karen Larson, Plum Grove Junior High
- Jeanne Marino, Hunting Ridge
- Kathy Mix, Frank C. Whiteley
- Adrienne Myers, Marion Jordan
- Mary Salsinger, Pleasant Hill
- Jake Schlender, Winston Campus

School District 15 to host 'Space Symposium' for teachers

Former NASA astronaut Alan Bean will be the keynote speaker for a "Space Symposium 2002" for educators hosted by Community Consolidated School District 15 on Friday, March 8, 2002.

Bean, a retired U.S. Navy captain who resigned from NASA in 1981, was the lunar pilot of Apollo 12 in 1969, spacecraft commander of Skylab Mission II in 1973, and backup commander for the American-Russian Apollo-Soyuz test project.

Joining Bean for the symposium will be other noted space experts including Dr. Paul Sipiera, president and founder of the Palatine-based Planetary Studies Foundation and professor of geology and astronomy at William Rainey Harper College, and NASA aerospace educational specialist Marge Lehky, who's based at the NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, Ohio, along with members of District 15's own science teaching staff.

"Teachers who are looking for a way to infuse student excitement and enthusiasm into a science curriculum should consider including space studies in their programs," said Nancy Hayes, coordinator of science programs for District 15. "We are pleased to host Space Symposium 2002 because it offers an important opportunity to focus on the integration of



space sciences in Grades 3-8 and exchanging ideas with colleagues."

Attendees can choose from sessions on rockets, space shuttle simulation (including a tour of District 15's David Hill Mission Control and Discover 15 Space Shuttle), geology and space, Mars rovers, Starlab, Moonlink, space stations, and how teachers can obtain certification to allow them to bring lunar rocks into their classrooms.

Cost for the one-day conference is \$50 for teachers outside District 15. A speaker-only registration to hear Captain Bean is \$25.

Walter R. Sundling students to participate in NASA experiment

Eighth-grade gifted/talented students from Walter R. Sundling Junior High will create solutions which will be used to grow crystals on the Space Shuttle during a special science lab on Wednesday, December 5.

Two National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) payload specialists from the Marshall Space Center in Huntsville, Ala., will be at the school to supervise the experiment and take the resulting crystalline solutions back to the space center. Also on hand will be Mike Kersjes, president of the Space is Special Foundation, an organization that has created a partnership with the U.S. Space Camp to offer programs and opportunities for special needs students.

“Experiments that involve growing crystals in zero gravity environment are done on almost every Space Shuttle mission,” explained Kevin Keehn, science teacher at Sundling. “NASA is getting students involved by allowing them to create the solutions used to grow the crystals.” The project, coordinated

by the University of California-Irvine, is actually designed for high school students. This will be the first time junior high students have been allowed to participate.

The Sundling students are doing their own research and conducting experiments with different salt concentrations to determine the best solution for growing the crystals. On December 5, they will mix the appropriate chemicals to create the optimal solution which will then will be flash-frozen using liquid nitrogen.

The Sundling-created solution is expected to be aboard the Space Shuttle Atlantis, now scheduled for a March 24, 2002, launch. In space, the solution will be thawed and used to grow crystals in zero gravity. The completed crystals will be brought back to Earth to be used in research and to create specialized drugs to treat a variety of diseases including cystic fibrosis, AIDs, sickle cell anemia, and others.

Plum Grove lays ‘Wreath of Remembrance’

A “Wreath of Remembrance,” in memory of the victims and in honor of the heroes of September 11 was laid at the flagpole in front of Plum Grove Junior High School on November 21. The ceremony was sponsored by the Parent Teacher

Student Association (PTSA). The wreath was placed by representatives from local police and fire departments, and Student Council officers led the student body in singing “God Bless America.”



To protect the privacy of District 15 students, this photograph has intentionally been removed from this web-version newsletter.

Around the Schools

- Two **Thomas Jefferson** students were among 3,400 nationwide recently honored by the 2001 Young Inventors Award Program sponsored by Craftsman. The contest is open to students in Grades 2-8, and awards are presented in two divisions (Grades 2-5 and Grades 6-8) from six regions around the country.

Thomas Jefferson fifth grader Peter Badovinac was named a third-place regional winner in his division for his invention "Wastenopaste," a dispenser that conserves toothpaste and eliminates messy tubes. Sixth grader James Kuo was also named a third-place regional winner in his division for his invention, "Supported Shovel," featuring a hollow elliptical hump in the shovel spade adds more leverage and space.

- **Pleasant Hill** teacher Amy Berry and third-grade students participated in Project Starshine 2. This is a project where classrooms around the world polish aluminum mirrors and send them to NASA. The mirrors were assembled into a satellite that was launched from the Kennedy

Space Center in Florida and then will be deployed from the Endeavor sometime in December.

- During November, students from **Kimball Hill** collected food for the Rolling Meadows Food Pantry as a part of the school's "Thanksgiving Program." The Kimball Hill "family" assembled 28 bags of groceries, sent an additional 13 boxes of food, and collected \$160 for hams and turkeys.
- Twenty-six students from District 15 schools were among more than 450 students representing the entire Northern Illinois region who performed for an enthusiastic crowd of approximately 1,300 at the recent **Illinois Music Educators Association (IMEA) Music Festival**. Participants included students from band, chorus, and orchestra. "It was wonderful watching young people working diligently to create this musical experience," said Mary Herzog, District 15 music facilitator.

Thomas Jefferson celebrates Blue Ribbon designation

Students from Thomas Jefferson School gather to form the school letters as part of a year-long celebration for winning a Blue Ribbon Award from the U.S. Department of Education.

(Photo courtesy of Brian Kaminski of Visions Photography.)

