



Two educators join administrative team

District 68 welcomes two new administrators to the staff.

Barbara Marler is taking on a half-time role as Director of English Learner (EL) Services. She explained that the EL director advocates for students and parents from diverse language and cultural backgrounds, and serves as an information and resources broker for the teachers and administrators who work with those students.



Barbara Marler

“I was drawn to Skokie School District 68 because of its rich diversity,” Ms. Marler said. “In my 30-plus years of experience in the field of ESL/bilingual education, I have always dreamed of working in a community that acknowledges and realizes the benefits that linguistic and cultural diversity bring to every resident and to the village as a whole. I am grateful for an opportunity to work in District 68.”

For the last 16 years, Ms. Marler worked at the Illinois Resource Center teaching coursework in partnership

with National Louis University for teachers earning their bilingual and ESL endorsements. Earlier, she was a bilingual and ESL teacher before becoming Director of ELL and Second Language Programs in Palatine.

With the Illinois Resource Center, Ms. Marler worked with school districts all over the state to improve their programs. She was part of a team that conducted a compliance review of District 68’s EL program in 2007.

Ms. Marler is a recognized name in education, a co-author of several books and the president of an educational consulting firm.

In her first year in District 68, Ms. Marler will conduct a qualitative review of the EL program and recommend program changes needed to ensure that EL students are receiving the best services possible.

“When I rode the buses on the first few days of school, I had the opportunity to meet some parents, and I hope to meet more parents and work with them to enhance their children’s school experience,” Ms. Marler said. “I have begun weekly visits to schools to meet with teachers and I look forward to supporting them as they work to provide the community’s children with an excellent educational experience.”

Karen Bradley, Ed.D., is the new principal of Highland Elementary School. She graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a B.S. in biology. Upon graduation, she joined the Peace Corps and served for two years in Kenya, where much

of her work involved teaching biology and chemistry at a rural village school. That experience helped her realize she wanted to be a teacher.

After the Peace Corps she returned to school to earn a teaching certificate and a master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction, followed by an administrative certificate. In 2014, she received a doctorate in Educational



Karen Bradley

Leadership from DePaul University.

Dr. Bradley worked for 10 years in the Chicago Public Schools as an assistant principal and a 4th and 5th grade teacher. For the past 13

years, she was the principal of Dawes Elementary School in Evanston/Skokie District 65.

After 13 years, Dr. Bradley said, “It was time to look for some new experiences that would help me continue to grow as an educator and where I could help another community move to its next level in educating its children. Working in a diverse community is extremely important to me and Skokie meets that criterion for certain. I also wanted to work somewhere that has a reputation for collaboration between administration, teachers, parents and community, and Skokie 68 has that reputation.”

Her experience so far has been “wonderful,” Dr. Bradley added.

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Welcome, new staff members

Anna Fehsenfeld is the new school social worker at Old Orchard Jr. High. She served in the same capacity for the last four years at Pathways in Education in Chicago. She has a B.A. in English literature from the University of Michigan and a master's in social service administration from the University of Chicago, where she also earned her school social worker's endorsement.

Jane Feit is the new art teacher at Jane Stenson Elementary School. She taught art at Westbrook School for Young Learners in District 57 for the past two years. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in art education from the University of Illinois.

Al-Rahim Jiwani is a new math teacher at Old Orchard, where he did his student teaching. He has a bachelor's degree in secondary education with an endorsement in math from DePaul University.

Colleen Kaferly is a new math teacher at Old Orchard. She began her career at Resurrection College Prep High School, and recently filled a long-term leave position in District 63. She has a bachelor's degree in secondary education from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, as well as endorsements in ESL, math, and history.

Alison Kool is a new special education teacher at Old Orchard. She taught for the past 11 years in Chicago Public Schools. She received a bachelor's from Loyola University in Chicago and a master's in special education as well as an ESL endorsement from National Louis University. She is also National Board Certified in early adolescent science.

Julia Milne is the new English Learner (EL) teacher at Devonshire School. She began her career at Andrew Jackson Language Academy as a science and reading teacher, and then taught in South Korea for two years. For the past three years she was a teacher in District 65. She has a B.S. in



New teachers (left to right): Jimmy Turner, Colleen Kaferly, Al-Rahim Jiwani, Julia Milne, Ariane Petyt, and Jane Feit. (Not pictured: Anna Fehsenfeld, Alison Kool)

environmental geosciences from the University of Michigan, a teaching certificate from Northwestern University and an ESL endorsement from Hamline University in Minnesota.

Ariane Petyt is the new French teacher at Old Orchard. She was a senior project management executive with Millward Brown in France before starting her career in education. From 2009 to 2012, she worked for Language Stars as a French teacher and ran her own tutoring business. She has a bachelor's in business administration from France and a master's in secondary education along with a French endorsement from National Louis University.

Jimmy Turner is the new Spanish teacher at Old Orchard. Before relocating to Illinois, he taught Spanish at Gatewood School and Holy Innocents' Episcopal School in Georgia. He earned a bachelor's degree in Spanish from Oglethorpe University in Georgia and holds a teaching certificate from Georgia State University.

Administrative team

—Continued from page 1

"Students, parents and teachers all have such pride in the school, and the administration has been so supportive."

"Highland is a great place for a child to go to school," she said. "It is very child-centered and it's obvious how much the staff care for the children and each other."

HIGHLIGHTS is a community newsletter published three times a year by Skokie School District 68.

District 68 Board of Education

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Board of Education meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month in the Educational Service Center at 9440 Kenton Ave. You are invited to attend.

HIGHLIGHTS is written and produced by Complete Communications, Inc. Skokie, IL.

Briefly...

No cause for worry about lead in schools' water

Following upon the drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan, school officials contracted with Elemental Solutions, LLC, to analyze drinking water in district schools in July.

Samples taken from drinking fountains and sinks in all four schools contained lead levels well below the Environmental Protection Agency's threshold of 15 parts per billion. No sample had a lead level higher than 3 parts per billion, and all but two had lead levels below the detectable limit of 2 parts per billion.

School Board election set for spring

District residents will vote for candidates to fill four school board seats on April 4, 2017. Those elected will hold four-year terms that expire in April 2021.

Candidates must be at least 18 years old, U.S. citizens, a registered voter, and residents of the district for at least one year. Candidates could begin circulating petitions and collecting signatures as of Sept. 20, 2016. Nominating papers must be filed between Dec. 12 and Dec. 19, 2016 with the Cook County Clerk.

Nominating petitions and filing requirements can be obtained from the County Clerk's office at 5600 W. Old Orchard Road, Skokie (telephone 847-470-7233), or downloaded from the Clerk's website (www.cookcountyclerk.com/elections) or the Illinois State Board of Elections (www.elections.il.gov/InfoForCandidates.aspx).

Interested parties may also consult the Illinois Association of School Boards' "2017 Candidate's Guide" (www.elections.il.gov/Downloads/ElectionInformation/PDF/2017CanGuide.pdf).

Candidates and voters can get information about District 68 from the

district's web site (www.skokie68.org), and learn about being a school board member at the Illinois Association of School Boards (www.iasb.com/elections).

Substitute teachers welcome

District 68 is looking for qualified substitute teachers. Substitutes are paid \$110 per day and work in a collaborative, supportive environment.

Candidates must have at least a bachelor's degree and a current substitute teaching license or professional educator license from the Illinois State Board of Education. License information is available at the ISBE website (www.isbe.net/licensure/html/substitute.htm).

Applicants can apply online by clicking on the Employment link at the top right at www.skokie68.org. Qualified candidates will be contacted for an interview.

Veterans Day changes

As is true in many other districts, District 68 schools will be in session on Veterans Day, Nov. 11. The Illinois State Board of Education allows schools to make Veterans Day a day of attendance.

School officials believe that simply giving students the day off does not help them build meaningful connections or learn about sacrifices veterans have made.

District 68 plans to hold school assemblies with veterans who can share their stories with students and be honored by them.

"Our hope is that in doing so we will better educate our students about veterans and the service they have provided," said Supt. James Garwood. "That being said, parents may choose to keep their children home on Veterans Day if they have a family member they wish to honor."

District 68 'doing an outstanding job'

To say that District 68 received a "passing grade" on its most recent compliance evaluation might be an understatement.

The Illinois State Board of Education requires that schools receive a formal evaluation every four years. For four days in March 2016, a team from the North Cook Intermediate Service Center (ISC) visited the district to inspect facilities, records, policies, programs, credentials, test scores and curriculum.

The team found District 68 to be in "Full Compliance," with no areas of concern or noncompliance.

The team commended the district for responding to increasing diversity by making a concerted effort to establish a staff that "looks like the kids." It applauded the school board for updating policy and providing timely guidelines to the administration, staff, and community.

The ISC team noted that students were involved in evaluating and selecting computer tablets for the district's one-to-one initiative. It highlighted the emphasis schools have placed on students' social-emotional development. And it called attention to partnerships forged with the Chicago Philharmonic Orchestra, Skokie Public Library and DePaul University.

Here are a few of the comments from the evaluation summary:

- "We experienced first-hand the enthusiasm everyone had for 'meeting the needs of ALL kids.'"
- "We heard many great ideas from staff members to expand on current successes."
- "The new website is very user friendly and has a clear and uncluttered appearance. ...The desire to be transparent is evident throughout."
- "All the enthusiasm and changes mentioned in the report could not exist without the right leadership at the top."
- "Congratulations, you are doing an outstanding job."

HIGHLIGHTS

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Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Community Members,

Have you ever thought of serving your community by becoming a school board member?

An effective school board plays an invaluable role in maintaining the quality of education in your local schools. The board sets the vision and goals for the district, allocates resources, and monitors progress. Each board member contributes his or her unique talents while collaborating with other members and the superintendent.

A typical school board meeting includes a variety of business items, such as approving the school calendar, adopting curriculum, overseeing construction, and approving contracts. A successful board looks after the mundane business of running the district while paying close attention to its priorities for student learning.

Board members come from all walks of life. The ability to function as part of a seven-member governing board is not determined by gender, occupation, race, income, or social standing. Effective school board members have:

- The capacity to work on a team, with an open mind and an ability to engage in give-and-take to arrive at a consensus.
- The willingness to become informed and do the homework needed to take part in effective meetings.
- The desire to serve children and the community, along with a strong belief in the value of public schools.
- Respect for the needs and feelings of others and a well-developed sense of fair play.
- A recognition that the school district is probably one of the

largest “businesses” in town and that the board is responsible for seeing that it is run by highly skilled professionals.

Effective school board members are often those who have proved successful in their own right and have demonstrated a genuine concern for community improvement.

Residents of Skokie School District 68 will elect four members to the board of education in spring 2017 (*see page 3 for details*). Anyone thinking about running should know that District 68 has a School Board Nominating Committee organized and run by parents and community members. It provides an important forum for candidates to learn about serving on the board.

The committee interviews individual candidates and offers endorsements. While receiving an endorsement is a not required to run for a board seat or to be elected, it is an excellent pathway to prepare for candidacy.

Potential candidates who wish to be interviewed can download an application from the District 68 website (www.skokie68.org/boe/School-Board-Election-2017.cfm) or pick one up at the Educational Service Center, 9440 Kenton Ave. The last day to submit applications is Friday, Oct. 14. Candidates who apply will be contacted for an interview. Again, endorsement is not required to run and is a separate process from getting on the ballot.

Being a school board member requires time and energy. But it is a rewarding way to give back to your community.

Sincerely,
James E. Garwood, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Our mission is to develop children who are confident and creative learners. We provide a rigorous curriculum and a supportive school environment that promotes high achievement, encourages personal growth, and meets the unique needs of each child.