



Dimmick Community Consolidated School District #175

"Expect Excellence in Character, Achievement and Leadership"

Superintendent: Mr. Ryan Linnig

February 6, 2019

SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

Dear Dimmick Community,

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some of the great things going on at Dimmick School. Communication and transparency are essential to building strong school-community relations and we want to be sure that our stakeholders are informed. One of the best sources of up to date information is the District website, www.dimmick175.com. In addition, we continue to collect emails from those interested in receiving updates throughout the year. If you know someone who would be interested, please have them contact Mr. Ryan Linnig, Superintendent at rlinnig@dimmick175.com to get added to the list. I also want to encourage you to contact me if you have any questions so that I can provide you with accurate information regarding District operations.

DISTRICT FINANCES: In December, the Board approved a tax levy that will once again result in a reduction in the total property tax rate for the 4th straight year. The total 2018 tax rate is estimated to be \$1.53, down 14.5 cents from 2015. The chart to the right indicates the historical tax rate. Dimmick's tax rate is approximately half of the area elementary school district average of \$3.07.



The consolidation of Dimmick and Cherry Grade Schools, which was overwhelmingly approved by voters in November of 2016, has provided additional revenue sources some of which allowed the District to abate \$232,113 for the bond levy associated with the construction of the current facility. This equates to a savings of nearly 19 cents on the tax rate.

In addition, the District has worked to increase reserves and then invest those funds in order to ensure long term financial solvency that is responsible and considerate of our tax payers.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICTS: TIF's continue to be a significant issue with a total of 8 now impacting the District (3 in Peru and 5 in LaSalle). To date, despite having agreements in place for all 8, the District has lost nearly \$580,000 in revenue over the last 25 years. This past year we testified in Springfield before the TIF Reform Commission in an effort to seek reasonable reforms that would protect the interests of schools districts and other taxing bodies while continuing to allow TIF to be used as an economic development tool. We remain committed to doing what is necessary to protect our tax base and ensure that property owners are not overly burdened by TIF's which divert revenues from the District and into the municipalities TIF funds

ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROJECTS: We have been working to increase energy efficiency by replacing lighting with LED fixtures. The hallways and the office have been updated. The estimated payback for phase one is 3.7 years and we expect to save more than \$1,300 annually.

SCHOOL BOARD CONVENTION: We are proud to inform you that Dimmick School was selected to present on the topic of "Engaging Students with Low Cost and No Cost STEM Experiences" at the School Board Convention in Chicago. The conference is attended by school board members, administrators and legislators from all over Illinois. Mrs. Rossman, Science/STEM Instructor & Principal, Mr. Haas, Vice President of the School Board and Mr. Linnig, Superintendent represented Dimmick on the presentation panel. We pride ourselves on being an area leader in education and want to do our part to share with others the great things that are happening at Dimmick School. We want to congratulate Mrs. Rossman on an outstanding job presenting and sharing the many great STEM opportunities that Dimmick has to offer its students at the conference.

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ENROLLMENT: We currently have 157 students. This is down from a high of 175 in the 2015-16 school year. The average class size is 17.5 students with the largest class at 24 and the smallest at 10. Based on the current information, we anticipate a slight decline over the next few years.

ANNUAL BRIDGE BUILDING COMPETITION: This year Dimmick will host the 2nd annual Regional Bridge Busting Competition on Friday, March 29. Last year, the competition included 7 local schools, 62 bridges and over 100 students in grades ranging from 5th-8th grade. This year we anticipate an even bigger turnout as we look to add more schools. We want to thank Richard Fast, Dimmick Parent and Pipe Vision Products Inc. owner, for sponsoring this event. As a result of his generous donation, all schools are able to receive their project materials at no cost. Thanks for your support Rick!

STUDENT RECOGNITION: Congratulations to Coach Arteaga, Coach Lamps and the 8th Grade Boys' Basketball Team for winning the Prairie Conference Championship over Trinity Catholic Academy. The 7th Grade Boys' Team finished 4th. The boys had an outstanding season and did an excellent job representing Dimmick School both on and off the court. We also want to give a shout out to Coach Pietrowski, Coach Moriarty and the 7th and 8th Grade Girls' Basketball Teams for finishing 3rd in the Prairie Conference Tournament. They worked hard and improved all season. Well done girls!

Grace Eitutis (Trumpet) earned 4th Chair honors at the ILMEA All District Honor Band Competition on Saturday, November 10th. Well done!

The District Spelling Bee took place on Friday, February 1. After an hour and a half of competing, Easton Moncrief (8th Grade) was pronounced Champion and Morgan Hosceid (6th Grade) Runner Up. Morgan will represent Dimmick at the LaSalle County Spelling Bee on Saturday, February 9 at Ottawa High School. Congratulations and good luck!

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS: Dimmick School has a reputation of academic excellence and remains an area educational leader. We are committed to seeking ways to improve the educational opportunities we offer our students each year. This year we expanded K-8 Spanish from 2 to 3 days and hired Mr. Areaga to lead our program. The curriculum emphasizes communication, culture and communities as well as incorporating interdisciplinary connections and comparisons. Our goal is to ensure that Dimmick students develop foreign language proficiency necessary to have a competitive advantage as they move on to high school and beyond.

The District also has adopted Wonders, a new K-5 Reading Series. The new program will provide teachers and students with the resources necessary to support the learning needs of all students. Training will take place in February and the program will be fully implemented at the start of the 2019-20 school year. I want to thank Mrs. Petersen, the District RtI/Title I Instructor for leading this effort. The investment of time as well as her knowledge and commitment to improving our program is greatly appreciated.

STEM learning continues to be an area of emphasis. This year we expanded the learning experiences offered to include; hydroponics, designing and constructing dragsters, rolling robots, flight dynamics, body blueprint, engineering rockets, natural and synthetic polymers and their uses and designing and marketing time systems. STEM learning also supports our newly adopted Career Exploration Program. The goal of this program is to get students to explore career pathways in 7th and 8th grade in order to develop a better understanding of job opportunities they may be interested in as they move on to high school and beyond.

PTO EVENTS: Please be sure to come out and support the upcoming Dimmick PTO Fundraisers. Please be sure to check out our website for details.

- Sunday, February 24 Annual Spaghetti Dinner at Dimmick School
- Saturday, March 30 Beer and Wine Tasting at Celebrations in Utica

Thank you for your continued support of our school, staff and students. Together we will continue to improve and carry on our tradition of excellence!

Mr. Ryan Linnig
Superintendent
Dimmick C.C.S.D. 175