

Westfield History

It started with a vision to provide an elementary and middle school for residents of District 300 yet not put too much of a burden on the taxpayers. The result is Westfield Community School, a K-8 building housing nearly 1,800 students in Algonquin.

In July of 1994, before the first shovel full of dirt was moved, Russell Ballard was appointed principal of the yet-to-be-built Westfield Community School. At the time, Ballard had been with District 300 for 28 years and served as principal of Carpentersville Middle School. Ballard immediately set up a parent school improvement team to discuss the criteria of the building and the staff. This group also helped in the interview process for the first 9 teachers –two primary grade teachers, two intermediate grade teachers and five middle school teachers. The first nine teachers were Renee Buhrow, Cindy Bumbales, Vince Calendo, Carole Disparti, Dori Harp-Petersen, Sue Johnson, Donna Sarich, Kathy Smith and Ann Spears.

The name Westfield Community School was adopted by the school board during its Feb. 13, 1995 meeting. The name was chosen out of 60 possible names. Westfield was chosen because it is a geographic name and Community represents the K-8 structure as well as the communities of Algonquin, Lake in the Hills and Carpentersville.

In March, all students who would be attending Westfield Community School were asked to vote on a mascot and colors. The color choices were dark green and gold; navy and gold; and dark green and white. The mascot choices were hawks, wolves or falcons. The wolves logo and the navy/gold color scheme were ultimately chosen.

March 24, 1995, was a dark and overcast day, but the sun broke through just as the groundbreaking ceremony began. Two months later, Cindy Jackson and Barbara Dubow were named assistant principals for the school. The administrative staff would be a K-8 staff and there would be no division of duties between the elementary and middle school students.

As work continued on the building itself, those hoping to make a school community continued to work hard with duties such as hiring a secretary (Helen Watters), setting up community committees (Teacher Assistance Program, Room/Team Parents, Parent Organization and Playground Equipment), and setting up five design teams to deal with technology, textbooks, middle level exploratories, scheduling and library/media center. Meanwhile, weather played a factor in construction as bad weather appeared during critical construction times.

In the school, teams were formed, teachers hired and parents were informed of what was happening at Westfield. The first year, it was decided that mail-in registration would be necessary because the building would not be accessible until August. Parents of seventh-graders at Algonquin Middle School were given the option of having students begin eighth-grade at Westfield.

The hard work of the staff, community and builders came together as school opened on time and on budget in August 1996, allowing students to enter the school. Teachers and staff were on hand giving directions and helping out with lockers and lost classrooms.

Ballard was principal until 2004 when Dr. Brenda Satchel took over the reins. She served as principal for one year and was replaced by Dr. William Doran, who currently serves as principal.

The area continued to grow, causing officials to fill and shuffle classrooms to accommodate the nearly 1,900 students. Finally, there was just no more room. Construction on additional classrooms, a multipurpose room and an expanded kitchen began in the spring of 2008, expected to be done by the beginning of the 2009 school year.