



Barrington High School students practice their instruments during orchestra class. Photo: Jeff Doles.



REFERENDUM 220

Our Kids. Our Community. Our Future.

Barrington 220's Bridge to the Future

AS ONE OF the highest rated school districts in the entire state, Barrington 220 inspires all learners to achieve excellence. Here are some of the highlights about our students and the school district that serves them.

Our students receive the highest quality public education, which is why our school district is a destination for students and families. We were named the best school district in Illinois by 24/7 Wall St., Barrington High School was named one of America's Best High Schools in a 2019 US News & World Report, and we are consistently ranked in the top 10 school districts in Illinois by Niche, with our elementary schools taking seven of the top 34 spots in Niche's statewide rankings.

Our graduation rate is 97%, which is one of the highest in Illinois, and

our high school students perform in the top 5% in Illinois on their SATs. Our district is 1 of just 250 school districts nationwide to earn a spot on the College Board's 10th Annual Advanced Placement (AP) District Honor Roll, with 73% of our juniors and seniors enrolled in AP courses. Our boy's athletic program has been named the top program in the Mid Suburban League Conference 12 times since 2003, and our girl's athletic program has been ranked the top program 11 times since 2001. In November 2019, Barrington 220 was named a Top Workplace by the Chicago Tribune.

Our community takes pride in our school district. These are our schools, preparing our children for their bright futures. We have a unique "hometown feel" because we are one unit district. We align our curriculum and technology across our students' K-12 years, which reduces learning

gaps, eliminates redundancies, and gives our students consistency so they can focus on learning. We are better able to provide professional development for our teachers. We are also able to minimize our administrative spending so we can maximize our investment in the classrooms.

We are continuing to evolve as we strive for the same excellence we expect from our students. We are a front-runner nationwide in education innovation, winning multiple awards. We provide all our students with the technology they need to be successful in today's modern learning environments. We are providing blended learning classes in our high school, giving students choice in their education and teaching them to take responsibility for their learning. We are investing in social and emotional learning (SEL) because we know that "happy kids achieve at higher levels".

We are teaching our students grit and perseverance, helping them learn how to respond to failure and grow to be successful. We have been investing in safety and security, both at our facilities and in our procedures, to ensure our educational environments are safe and our kids can come to school and learn.

We've achieved all this while remaining one of the most fiscally responsible school districts in Illinois. Our residents entrust us with significant resources, and they expect us to use those resources as conservatively as possible. That is why our Board and administration are extremely diligent about keeping our administrative spending low, so we can direct as much money as possible into our classrooms. In fact, our administrative costs are under the state average. We've reduced administrative headcount, streamlined operations, and significantly increased our energy efficiency. This allows our district to have the 2nd lowest tax rate of all peer school districts.

We are one of only 93 school districts nationwide to achieve a AAA bond rating from S&P, a designation we've maintained the past 11 years, and we are in our 22nd consecutive year with a balanced budget. We maintain an appropriate operating fund balance and never deficit spend. Our fiscal responsibility has earned Barrington 220 the highest financial rating from Illinois.

However, some of our buildings are showing their age. Many choose to live in our communities because of our excellent school district, with our schools being a key contributor to the value of their homes. With this comes an expectation that our schools continue achieving and our facilities be maintained at a high level. But it has been 20 years since any of our buildings have seen significant renovations, and many are aging, including Barrington High School which reached 70 years old in 2019. Unlike many districts that levy additional taxes to their residents to build up a reserve fund balance to pay for infrastructure needs so they never have to go to referendum, our Board maintains a conservative fund balance to ensure large facility investments must be approved by the community via referendum.

To achieve the improvements needed in our schools, our community collaborated on a plan for the future of our district. Hundreds of community members collaborated throughout this two-year community-driven process, ultimately leading to the development of



A Grove Avenue Elementary student participates in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) lesson.



Roslyn Road Elementary students enjoying recess on their playground



BMS-Station students use their iPads to work on a science lesson.



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Barrington High School students get ready to receive their diplomas at the May 2019 graduation ceremony.

a master plan for our schools called Blueprint 220. Based on this \$600 million plan, we placed a \$185 million referendum question on the April 2019 ballot. The community narrowly voted down the measure, while making it clear they wished to see changes. We listened to the community’s feedback, reducing the number of projects and lowering the referendum’s cost by nearly \$40 million. This new \$147 million referendum will appear on the March 17, 2020 ballot.

If successful, this referendum would:

- Improve Safety and Security at Our Schools
- Better Prepare Our Students for their Bright Futures
- Protect the Community’s Investment in Our Buildings

We will be able to significantly improve safety and security at our schools by eliminating mobile classrooms, enhancing exterior building security, upgrading safety in interior classrooms and hallways, and improving traffic flow. We will better prepare our students for their bright futures by creating dedicated STEM labs, modernizing our students’ learning environments, providing additional physical education and wellness spaces, and updating educational and community spaces for arts and athletics. And we will protect the community’s investment in our buildings by repairing and renovating our aging building conditions at all schools, including heating, air conditioning, electrical, plumbing, roofs, and windows.

With our previous bond debt being paid off, we have a unique opportunity to fund these investments while lowering property taxes. The average homeowner in the district currently pays approximately \$602 per year for referendum debt from the previous capital campaign in the late 1990s. As that debt rolls off in 2020 and 2021, property taxes will go down. The cost of the current referendum is approximately \$527 per year, which means that if the public approves this referendum their property taxes will decrease an average of \$75 per year, while still providing additional funding to improve our schools.

The time to invest in our schools is now. Our buildings continue to age, and costs continue to rise. In fact, all our construction costs went up more than 5% just since last year’s referendum. If we defer these infrastructure investments any longer, we will be able to do even less with the same amount of funding, which does not meet our community’s directive of fiscal responsibility. To continue providing a 21st century education for our students while improving our property values and maintaining our thriving community, we must continue to strive for excellence. For more information, visit: www.barrington220.org/referendum.

Samantha Ptashkin is the Director of Communications for Barrington 220.