





An example of a future-ready learning classroom with flexible furniture and spaces, designed by architectural firm DLR Group, for Jordan Middle School in Jordan, Minnesota. Photo Courtesy of Brandon Stengal.

IMAGINING THE POSSIBILITIES FOR **Barrington 220** STORY BY SAMANTHA PTASHKIN

In April 2019 the Barrington 220 Board of Education is considering asking voters a referendum question on the general election ballot. The question could have a far-reaching impact on the future success of Barrington 220 students and all Barrington area residents, whether they have a child enrolled in the school district or not. It stems from a Board of Education initiative called “Blueprint 220”. In short, it’s a long-term master facility plan for the school district, and while that may sound like it is all about bricks and mortar, in reality the initiative is about how we can continue making Barrington 220 a great place to learn.

Opening page: Dr. Brian Harris, Barrington 220 Superintendent of Schools

BLUEPRINT 220

A future-ready facilities plan

TEACHERS ARE NO LONGER THE SOLE PROVIDER OF INFORMATION,
RATHER THEY ARE FACILITATORS OF LEARNING.

Blueprint 220: The Beginning

Barrington 220 Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Brian Harris, vividly recalls his days as a high school student in downstate Tuscola, Illinois. Back then students used pencils and paper, classrooms had chalkboards, and desks were in rows. “It was very traditional,” Dr. Harris said. “I did not touch a computer until I was a senior in high school, when I had the opportunity to take a computer science class. The Radio Shack TRS-80 desktop machine was amazing!”

That was 1983. Fast-forward to 2018 and a lot has changed in the world of education. Dr. Harris says one of the biggest differences is the immediate access to information. Instead of spending hours at the library reading books to write a research paper, today students can often find the information they need with a simple Google search on a mobile device. In Barrington 220 every student has an iPad or a laptop, and the technology is integrated into lessons every day. Teachers are no longer the sole provider of information, rather they are facilitators of learning.

“The addition of technology impacts the instructional environment and our facilities need to evolve to meet that need,” Dr. Harris said.

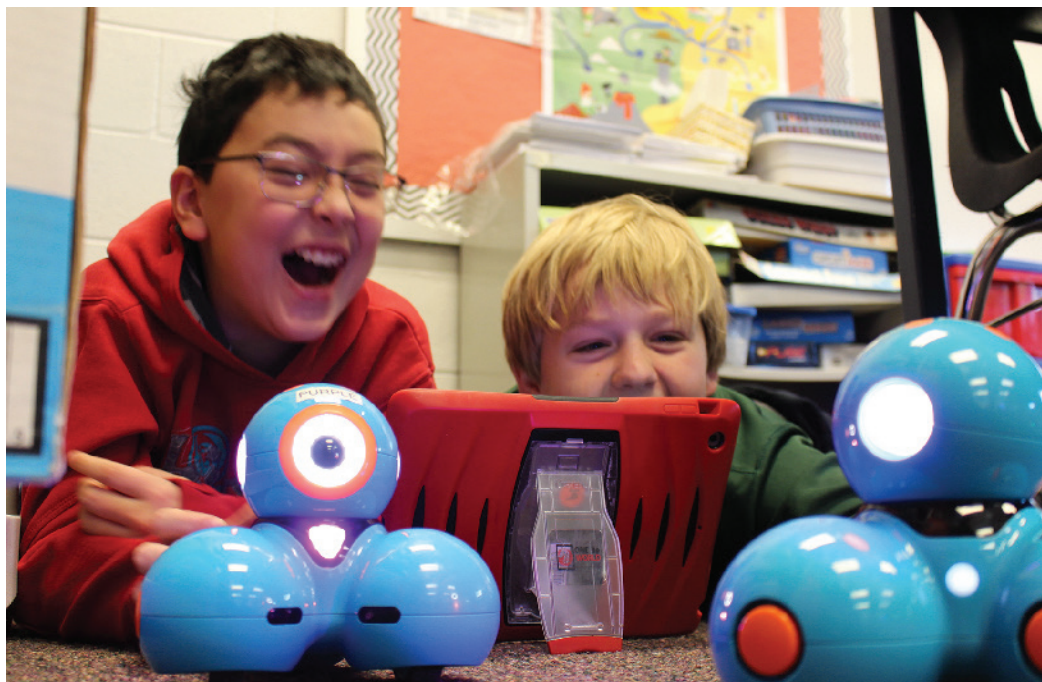
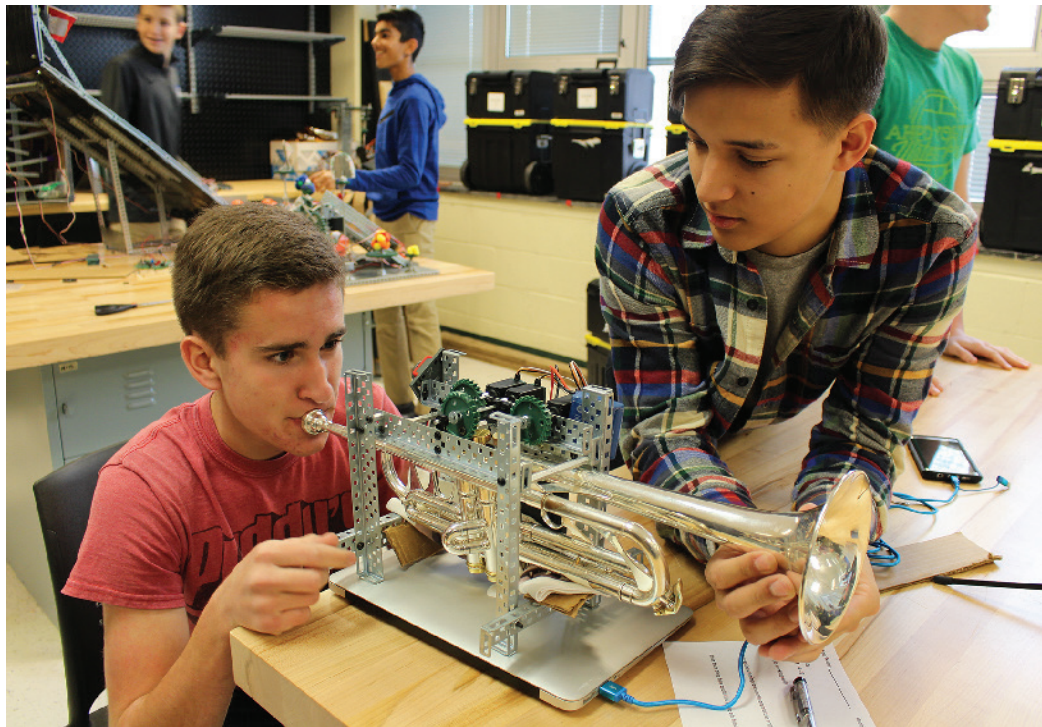
Thus, in January 2017, the Barrington 220 Board of Education introduced the Blueprint 220 initiative. Led by a group of stakeholders consisting of Barrington 220 administrators, teachers, parents, board members, community members, and representatives from architectural firm DLR Group, the goal of this “Blueprint 220 Core Team” was to determine how the district can continue preparing students to be successful after they graduate from Barrington High School. Together, they targeted the following four priority areas and began to consider how changing the design of Barrington 220 schools could improve teaching and learning in each area.

Future-Ready Learning
Fine, Visual & Performing Arts
Physical Health & Wellness
STEM & Career Pathways

STEM & CAREER PATHWAYS

ENGAGE STUDENTS IN INTEGRATED SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICAL PRACTICES THROUGH AUTHENTIC AND REAL-WORLD PROBLEM-SOLVING OPPORTUNITIES ROOTED IN INQUIRY AND INNOVATION.

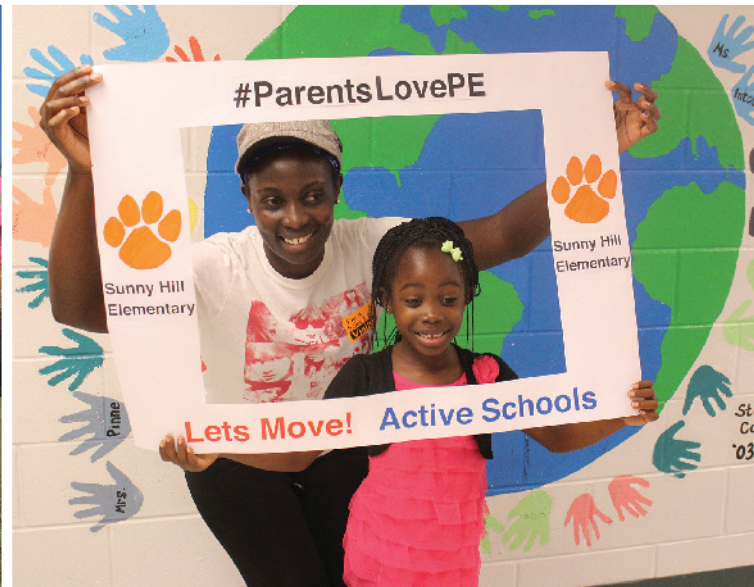
Top: This photo was taken at Roslyn Road Elementary in December 2017 during the “Hour of Code”. The Hour of Code is a global movement which reaches tens of millions of students in more than 180 countries. Every year, the event takes place during Computer Science Education week. Teachers choose an hour to educate their students about computer coding. Right: A STEM lesson at Sunny Hill Elementary in November 2017 shows a student working with Legos and technology to learn coding. Bottom: This photo was taken in a Project Lead the Way Class at BHS in December 2017. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) gives middle and high school students a chance to see a range of STEM-related paths they can take in middle schools, high school, and beyond by engaging in activities in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science.





PHYSICAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

DEVELOP TRAITS TO ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND WELLNESS; AN APPRECIATION FOR PHYSICAL FITNESS; AND PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR CLUBS, INCLUDING INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SPORTS.



Top: Students at Roslyn Road Elementary enjoying some outdoor activity during the school day. Top: Fifth-grade students at Countryside Elementary having fun outside. Above right: A student and parent from Sunny Hill Elementary celebrate “Bring your parent to P.E. Week” in September 2017. Right: BHS football game on October 27, 2017, at Barrington Community Stadium.

“UPGRADING OUR PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ATHLETIC FACILITIES WITH LARGER SPACES AND BETTER EQUIPMENT WILL GIVE TEACHERS AND COACHES GREATER OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK MORE EFFICIENTLY WITH OUR STUDENT-ATHLETES. WE WANT TO MAXIMIZE OUR STUDENTS’ TALENTS AND PHYSICAL FITNESS LEVELS.”

-MIKE OBSUSZT, BHS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Blueprint 220: The Plan

After months of collaboration and community engagement sessions in Spring 2017, Fall 2017, and Spring 2018, the Blueprint 220 Core Team and the Board of Education created a master plan, which the board is close to adopting. The master plan contains several design possibilities for all Barrington 220 schools, that will enhance student learning in the four priority areas. It also contains important safety and security upgrades to each school. This fall, the Board of Education will narrow down which projects a potential referendum should focus on and the dollar amount of that referendum.

Blueprint 220: The Timeline

September 2018: Board of Education approves long-term master-facility plan.

September/October: Board discusses priorities/engages community discussion.

November 2018: Board reviews community feedback.

December 2018: Board approves referendum question.

April 2, 2019: Community members vote on referendum question.

Fun FACT

The seats in the current BHS auditorium are from 1949!

A HISTORY LESSON: How Old Are Barrington 220 Schools?

1855: Hough Street School opens (the original home of BHS)

1949: BHS opens at its current location on Main St.

1953: Grove Avenue Elementary opens

1954: Sunny Hill Elementary opens

1966: BMS-Station opens

1969: Arnett C. Lines Elementary opens

1973: Barrington 220 School District is formed

1992: BMS-Prairie opens

1998: Barbara B. Rose Elementary opens

1998: North Barrington Elementary opens

2002: Countryside Elementary opens at new location on Main St.

2002: Roslyn Road Elementary opens at new location on Roslyn Rd.

2010: Barrington Early Learning Center opens

“OUR STUDENTS HAVE THE INTEREST, THE KNOWLEDGE,
AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE ABILITY TO ACHIEVE AT
HIGH LEVELS IN THE ARTS. OUR CURRENT FACILITIES,
HOWEVER, ARE HOLDING BACK THEIR EXPERIENCES TO
A TIME AND ERA THAT IS LONG GONE.”

-ALISON ROHRBACH, D220 MUSIC TEACHER

A VOCABULARY LESSON: What Is a Referendum?

In addition to the revenues already received from local property taxes, and the state and the federal government, a community can provide additional school funding by approving a referendum question on an election ballot. In this case, the referendum would be a YES or NO question, asking for a set amount of money to be raised for various projects in Barrington 220 through local property taxes. The Board of Education approves the question before it gets put on the ballot.

Blueprint 220: The Impact on Students

While the Board has not yet determined the exact projects that it could ask voters to approve in the April 2019 election, a major component in the Blueprint 220 initiative is the use of flexible spaces. Flexible spaces in a school could mean placing walls in classrooms that have the ability to open up to create larger instructional spaces. It could mean using furniture in a classroom that is easily adjustable, so students can quickly go from working on their own, to small groups, to large group exercises. “This flexibility gives students and teachers the ability to quickly adapt to their needs during any given lesson and foster active teaching and learning,” Dr. Harris said.

It is a growing trend in 21st century education. A 2011 report by Hanover Research looked at school design measures that contribute to developing 21st century skills in students grades pre-K-8. It states, “Schools should be designed in anticipation of evolving learning needs, as both student populations and the relevance of specific subjects change over time.”

Take Barrington 220’s Elementary STEM Program for example. The program engages students in collaborative problem solving through engineering design and robotic challenges. It started in the district during the 2015-16 school year, but STEM teachers are using classroom spaces that were designed in some cases in the 1950s and 1960s. “Teachers today have the unique challenge of preparing students to solve problems that don’t even exist yet,” said Elizabeth Nelson, a Barrington 220 STEM Teacher. “Our STEM spaces should mirror our expectations for student learning and be places students can develop the cognitive competencies necessary for future success.”



FINE, VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

PROVIDE A HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM THAT ADVANCES INTEREST, KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCES, AND ABILITIES IN VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND ENHANCES THE COMMUNITY THROUGH PRODUCT AND PERFORMANCE.

Top: Students perform in the BHS February 2018 production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat". Above right: Students in the Extended Program at Hough Elementary perform in the March 2018 production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream". Above left: The BHS production of "Treasure Island" in April 2018.

“THIS IS ABOUT SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST UPDATING FURNITURE AND FACILITIES. IT’S ABOUT TAKING STUDENT LEARNING TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL, ONE THAT WILL TRULY PREPARE OUR STUDENTS FOR THE UNKNOWN FUTURE OF OUR WORKFORCE.”

**-HEATHER CHVOJKA, BMS-STATION
MATH TEACHER**

FUTURE-READY LEARNING

PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE, PERSONALIZED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES, WHILE USING TECHNOLOGY TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR AN EVER-CHANGING WORKFORCE.

A MATH LESSON: How Much Will This Cost Me?

The Barrington 220 Board of Education has yet to determine the set amount of money it would ask for, if the decision is made to put a referendum on the April 2019 ballot. However, here is an estimate of how different amounts could impact homeowners. By spending an extra \$.53 per day, a taxpayer with a \$500K home could help raise \$200 million for Barrington 220 schools!

Total Referendum \$	Annual Impact on \$500k Home as Compared to Current Tax Bill
\$80 Million	\$314 Decrease
\$150 Million	\$19 Decrease
\$200 Million	\$192 Increase
\$250 Million	\$403 Increase
\$330 Million	\$741 Increase

Blueprint 220: The Finances

For more than 20 years the Barrington 220 School District has managed to maintain a balanced budget and has been one of the few school districts nationally to consistently earn a AAA bond rating from Standard & Poor’s. More than 80 percent of the school district’s revenue comes from local property taxes. The balance of the district’s revenues comes from state and federal funding, and other local revenues such as registration fees and donations.

While the district is able to allocate approximately \$2.5 million to \$3 million every summer to various capital projects, this level of capital investment is not enough to make significant improvements to its buildings. In fact, the last time Barrington 220 was able to make significant capital improvements was about 20 years ago. In the late 1990s the Barrington 220 taxpayers approved a series of referenda that resulted in the reinvestment in every school in the district, as well as building new elementary schools at Barbara B. Rose, Roslyn Road, Countryside, and North Barrington. During this time period, the community invested more than \$120 million, which is currently being paid off through annual property taxes. The district’s current debt service for principal and interest payments will be complete after fiscal year 2021. A referendum question on the ballot in April 2019 will provide taxpayers the opportunity to decide whether or not they want to continue investing in Barrington 220 schools. About \$155 million could be provided in local property taxes by extending the current tax levels for another 20 years.



An example of a flexible future-ready learning space, designed by architectural firm DLR Group for Panther Lake Elementary in Kent, Washington. Photo Courtesy of Brandon Stengal.

Fun FACT


The last successful referendum for Barrington 220 was passed in April 2007. The \$4.4 million was used to rebuild the stadium at Barrington High School. Today the stadium is a popular gathering place in the community, used year-round for P.E. classes, middle and high school athletics, community fitness, and organizations such as Barrington Youth Football. It also is our home-field advantage in school sports, having been a field for Barrington's state championships in Girls Soccer (2017 and 2018) and others.

Blueprint 220: The Empty Nesters

Whether you're an empty-nester, or don't have children, you may be asking yourself: "What's in it for me?" It's no secret that quality schools create quality communities. "By investing in the school district, you're investing in the growth of students who could become future leaders in our community," Dr. Harris said. Homeowners are also investing in their own property values. "In my 43 years in the real estate business in Barrington, the school district has probably been the number one priority for people deciding to move here," said Carol MacGregor, a RE/MAX Real Estate Agent. "It's a big selling factor."

Blueprint 220: The Future

Since Barrington 220 was officially formed more than 40 years ago, the community has invested responsibly in its schools, which has helped make Barrington 220 a destination district. Without that community support, innovative district programs such as BHS-TV, Business Incubator, and Elementary STEM would not have the same success they have today.

"Now it's time to start thinking about the next 40 years," Dr. Harris said. "Blueprint 220 gives our community the chance to imagine the possibilities." 

Samantha Ptashkin has worked as the Director of Communications for Barrington 220 since July 2017. Previously she worked as a TV news reporter in Illinois, Arizona, and Texas. She is a graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University and a member of the Illinois Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association. You can email her at: sptashkin@barrington220.org.