

# Lake Villa District 41

Fall 2024

## Change on the District 41 Board of Education: Thank you, Joe Dunne; Welcome, Joe Malacina

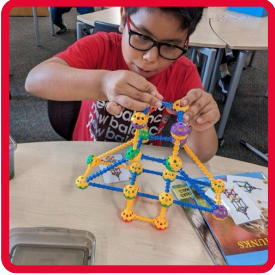
At the District 41 School Board Meeting on June 17, 2024, long term School Board Member, Joe Dunne, announced that he was stepping down from the Board due to his plans to move out of the district. Joe has served on the Board for 14 years as he was appointed to fill a vacancy in 2010.

Joe Dunne has provided excellent service to the Lake Villa District 41 School Board and community during his tenure. He served on the Finance Committee working with our Business Administrator to review the proposed annual budget for the district. Joe would routinely work with auditors each year before they would prepare their annual report for the Board regarding the overall finances of the district. During Joe's tenure, the Board had to make a difficult decision to close Pleviak School due to declining enrollment and financial constraints the district was facing. Joe was also very involved in demonstrating the financial needs for the district during the recent referendum approval process by the community. Joe also served as the District 41 IASB Board Delegate to the Assembly when voting on issues impacting school districts across the state at the annual conference. Joe was definitely a regular contributor to the Board in many different ways and we cannot thank him enough for his years of faithful service to our board. We wish him and his family nothing but the best as they make their transition to a new community.

With Joe Dunne's transition off the Board, we would like to welcome new, Lake Villa District 41 School Board Member, Joe Malacina. After candidate interviews conducted in July, Joe was selected by the Board to fill the vacancy left by Joe Dunne. Joe lives in Lake Villa with his wife, Grace, and daughter, Olivia. He graduated from the University of Illinois Chicago with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering and an MBA in Finance. He is an entrepreneur and business owner since 2013 operating a company that provides



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technology services to consumers. He is active in civic organizations in the community, and he is very passionate about education, particularly technology's changing role in society. We look forward to working with him on the Board.

When Joe Malacina took the Oath of Office on August 12, 2024, the remainder of the Board also renewed their oath. The full language of the Board Member Oath and Conduct can be found under [Board Policy 2:80](#). Over the years, the Board Member Oath has been expanded to ensure that new board members have the proper motivation for becoming a board member and that they truly have the best interests of students, staff and community in mind when making decisions. Please take the time to review the policy to better appreciate the important work which school board members undertake as volunteer elected officials. There is a great deal of work that each board member must put in to effectively represent the interests of the district. As School Board members for Lake Villa District 41, we actively demonstrate what it means to Learn, Lead and Serve!



**Board of Education Members**  
**Front Row: Kurt Hansen (Vice President), Mike Conway (President), Debbie Walsh (Secretary)**  
**Back Row: Joanne Osmond, Mark Aleckson, Joe Malacina, Ed Liberman**

# Palombi and Hooper

## Back-To-School Highlights



The school year at **Palombi Middle School** is off to a fantastic start! The sixth graders have brought a vibrant energy that has truly invigorated the entire school. To kick off the year, each grade level gathered in the gym for a welcoming presentation, after which the sixth graders toured the building. In every classroom, teachers facilitated collaborative activities that helped students connect with their peers while engaging in critical thinking and problem-solving.

During classroom visits, administrators observed a palpable sense of enthusiasm and positivity from both students and staff.

To amplify ALL voices, students, staff, and parents, we are creating a word cloud graphic for our school. We sent out an email to all stakeholders requesting their feedback on three words that best describe Palombi. After the survey closed on August 31st, we collaborated to design the word cloud, which will be displayed on a wall in the middle of the building.

It's going to be a remarkable year at Palombi!

-Angela Sisi, Principal



As **Hooper Elementary School** embarks on a new school year, let me tell you about the positive environment we are creating at Hooper School. We strive for academic excellence and aim to foster a positive and supportive culture for all our students and staff members. At Hooper, it's more than just a family atmosphere; it's about creating an environment with kindness, respect, and collaboration with our students, staff, parents, and stakeholders.

We will be starting a BJ Hooper Parent Advisory Community for the 2024-2025 school year. This committee will focus on building and improving our school's culture, among other important topics.

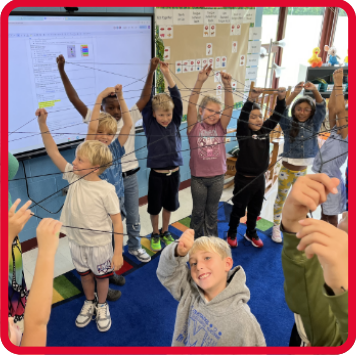
Thank you for everyone's continued support at BJ Hooper!

-Steve Feldman, Principal



# Martin and Thompson

## Back-To-School Highlights



**Martin Elementary School** students have done a fantastic job settling into their routines, meeting their new teachers, and getting to know their classmates. It has been heartwarming to see students engage in learning with curiosity and excitement. Our teachers have also gone above and beyond to create a welcoming environment, ensuring every child feels comfortable and ready to learn.

We've started the year with engaging activities fostering collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. From team-building exercises to hands-on projects, we aim to make learning meaningful and enjoyable. We are committed to providing a rich educational experience that supports academic growth and social development.

-Dr. Scott Klene, Principal



We are pleased to report that the start of the school year at **Thompson Elementary School** has been excellent. The first week has been full of energy, enthusiasm, and a great atmosphere that promises a rewarding year ahead.

Our students have eagerly embraced their new routines - meeting their teachers, making new friends, and immersing themselves in their learning adventures. It has been heartwarming to see their curiosity and excitement shine through. Our teachers have created a warm and welcoming environment where every child feels at home and ready to learn.

We began the year with a variety of exciting activities designed to promote collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. From team-building challenges to hands-on projects, our focus is on making learning both meaningful and enjoyable. Our goal is to nurture academic growth while also fostering social development in a lively and engaging manner.

We extend a big thank you to all of our families for the incredible support during this first week! Their assistance in preparing the students and staying in touch with the school has made a significant difference. Here's to a fantastic year ahead filled with learning, laughter, and lots of fun!



-Traci Strieter, Principal

# Lake Villa District 41 Foundation

## Did you know that Lake Villa 41 has a Foundation?

The Lake Villa 41 Foundation was created in the early 80's as an education foundation and a scholarship foundation. Approximately 15 years ago, the scholarship foundation merged with the education foundation to continue its purpose: "To assist in the performance of the educational purposes of the School District, all by providing funds and property for educational purposes for which funds may not otherwise be available to the School District."

For the past 20 years, the Foundation has generously awarded five to ten \$500 - \$1,000 scholarships annually to graduating eighth-grade students for financial assistance once they register for college classes. The Foundation needs new members from the Lake Villa community to serve on our board. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact Dr. Vic Wight, President of the Lake Villa #41 Education Foundation @ [victor.wight@district41.org](mailto:victor.wight@district41.org).

## Welcome District-Wide Coordinators

### Aimee Redding, Multilingual English Learner Coordinator

Aimee Redding brings a wealth of experience in multilingual education and a deep understanding of the unique challenges English Language Learners (ELs) face. Aimee has successfully implemented programs that have significantly improved EL student outcomes in her previous district. As Multilingual (EL) Coordinator, Aimee will focus on developing and refining programs that support our multilingual students' linguistic and academic growth. Her expertise and passion for technology and language education will be instrumental in fostering an inclusive and enriching educational environment.



### Susan Harkins, Coordinator for Early Learning and Outsourced Students

Susan Harkins comes to Lake Villa CCSD 41 with over 20 years of experience in special education. Throughout her career, she has successfully helped expand special education programming and ensure that the full continuum of services is available to all students. She is passionate about ensuring that all students feel part of the community and have an inclusive school experience.



# Thompson School Welcomes Incoming Principal, Traci Strieter

I am honored and excited to introduce myself as the new principal of Thompson Elementary School. Having dedicated my career to the education and empowerment of young minds, I eagerly look forward to the opportunity to work with each of you to foster a nurturing and dynamic learning environment for our students.

Before joining you, I served in the U.S. Navy, an experience that instilled in me the values of teamwork, integrity, and commitment. These principles have guided me through various educational roles, from a general education teacher to a special education teacher and later as a building and district administrator. These experiences have shaped my educational philosophy and prepared me to lead Thompson Elementary with a vision focused on student success and community collaboration.

As a mother of three wonderful children, I understand parents' and guardians' hopes and concerns regarding their children's education. I am deeply committed to ensuring that each child at Thompson receives the best educational experience tailored to their unique needs and potential. I believe in the power of high expectations and the importance of supportive, engaging learning environments.

I am thrilled to join a team of dedicated and exceptional staff here at Thompson. I am committed to working closely with each of you to ensure our school is where staff can flourish and students can achieve their best. Together, we will continue to build on our school's legacy of excellence and ensure our children's educational journeys are both successful and joyous.

As we embark on this exciting chapter together, I am eager to develop a strong partnership with all of you in the Thompson school community. Your thoughts, ideas, and participation are welcomed and essential for our success. Please feel free to contact me anytime; my door is always open.

Thank you for this warm welcome into your vibrant community. I am looking forward to a fantastic school year ahead!



Traci Strieter, Thompson School Principal

# Welcome New Staff Members!

With the support of the Board of Education, Lake Villa District 41 is infusing additional staff members in preparation to elevate our district.

Welcome, new staff members, to District 41!

## Hooper School

1st Grade - Jessica Frank  
1st Grade - Shama Arjumund  
2nd Grade - Jennifer Hernandez  
2nd Grade - Jennifer Waugh  
4th Grade - Margaret Muscia  
5th Grade - Kelsey Franz  
Art - Heather Wisniewski  
Physical Education - Raymond Wertz  
Paraprofessional - Kylie Miller  
Lunchroom Supervisor - Alessa Pasternak  
Lunchroom Supervisor - Tania Walsh

## Martin School

1st Grade - Caria Arroyo  
2nd Grade - Molly Boyd  
2nd Grade - Keri Rudsell  
3rd Grade Bilingual - Norahely Avila  
4th Grade - Madison Novack  
English Learner Teacher - Ashley Gerchikov  
Music - Thomas Power  
Physical Education - Alexander Ledinsky  
Paraprofessional - Elizabeth Schmieder  
Lunchroom Supervisor - Lyle Kanable  
Lunchroom Supervisor - Elizabeth Lopez  
Lunchroom Supervisor - Patty Sheridan

## Thompson School

Traci Strieter - Principal  
Kindergarten - Jenesha Schem  
1st Grade - Alison Krawczyk  
Physical Education - Alexander Ledinsky  
Special Education Resource - Abigaile Freund  
Paraprofessional - Madelyn Labriola  
Paraprofessional - Deb Pellettiere  
Paraprofessional - Bridget Schuler-Beck  
Lunchroom Supervisor - Doreen Givens  
Lunchroom Supervisor - Maria Guzman  
Lunchroom Supervisor - Laura Winzentsen

## Palombi School

6th Grade ELA - Timothy Kramer  
8th Grade ELA - Sydney Brock  
Physical Education - Genevieve Kapecki  
Social Work - Heidi Ramirez-Cabanit  
8th Grade Special Education -  
Courtney Dudek  
7th Grade Special Education -  
Amanda Chavez  
Media Center Aide - Michelle Morea  
Paraprofessional - Allen Abigail  
Paraprofessional - Jay Buchtenkirch  
Paraprofessional - Griffin Jones  
Paraprofessional - Noah Meincke  
Paraprofessional - Victoria Rathke  
Paraprofessional - Esmeralda Tovar

## District-Wide

Coordinator of Early Learning and District  
Out Placements - Susan Harkins  
Multilingual English Learner Coordinator -  
Aimee Redding



# Learn More About Us

Lake Villa uses a variety of communication tools, which are planned to increase as we move forward.

## Lake Villa District 41 Website

[district41.org](http://district41.org)

## School Newsletters

Hooper: Hooper Happenings

Martin: Mustang Minutes

Thompson: Tiger Tales

Palombi: The Lancer Latest



## Social Media Outlets

Follow us on our district's and school's social media outlets to see our current events and life around District 41 schools.

Facebook and Twitter:

@lakevilla41

@hooperschool

@martinschool

@palombischool

@thompsonscool



## Connections Magazine

[connectionsmag.com](http://connectionsmag.com)

A quarterly magazine shares news and events throughout the Antioch, Lake Villa, and Lindenhurst communities. The magazine features Lake Villa District 41, Community High School District 117, Antioch CCSD 34, Emmons School District 33, Grass Lake District 36, Village of Antioch, Antioch Township, and Lake Villa Township.

# Upcoming Events

## October

7th - Board of Education Meeting  
11th - No School, Teacher Institute  
14th - No School, Columbus Day  
28th - Board of Education Meeting

## November

5th - No School, Election Day  
8th - End of Trimester One  
15th - Report Cards Available  
18th - Board of Education Meeting  
25th - 26th - Parent/Teacher Conferences  
27th - 29th - No School, Thanksgiving Break