

## Superintendent reflects on district's past and looks to the future

By Dr. Brenda S. Dietrich, Superintendent

The Auburn-Washburn School District is built on a legacy of community commitment to education. Teachers and administrators, working together with the Board of Education, support personnel, patrons and parents, continually strive to make our schools exemplary institutions.

USD 437 has seen some significant changes over the past 20 years. We have grown from 2,539 students in 1981 to 5,077 students in 2001. The majority of that growth in student population took place in the early 90's and has been rather stable for the past few years. District facilities cover 296 acres on 9 different sites. The assessed valuation of property located within the district boundaries has grown from \$38,107,178 in 1981 to \$274,536,678 in 2001.

Maintaining a leadership position in education with these kinds of changes requires a dynamic approach. Thanks to the residents of USD 437, the mail-in bond election was approved in May and we have begun the next phase in the Auburn-Washburn continuous school improvement cycle.

Construction projects are currently underway at 7 different facilities in our district. Auburn Elementary is adding five new classrooms; Jay Shideler, Indian Hills and Pauline Central are adding four classrooms and Indian Hills is expanding their library. Wanamaker is adding a new gym, expanding the library and adding new classrooms; Pauline South is adding two classrooms and the Shuler Education Center (Administrative Offices) will expand to create a technology training center for teachers and staff and accommodate space for support services personnel and community meetings. These expansions will allow us to provide full-day kindergarten district-wide to our patrons, keep our class sizes small, and enhance educational opportunities for our youngest students. It may also be possible to expand our pre-school program.

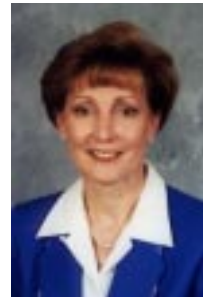
Additionally, the bond passage has allowed us to purchase a district-wide telephone system (to be installed very soon), up-grade our technology equipment, purchase a student data management system, and air-condition the gymnasiums at WRHS, Auburn Elementary, Indian Hills, Pauline South, and Pauline Central.

My goal for this year is "Excellence First, Learning Always". This should be everybody's business. The Education Center is here to offer support in making "Excellence First, Learning Always" a reality. My goal for the Education Center (which will be much easier once all of the construction is completed and everyone has their own space) is for us to focus on being user-friendly. We should make life as smooth as possible for all of our employees, especially those who work directly with students, so that student achievement is not derailed by our actions or inactions. I am going to do my best to focus us on providing better service by promoting quality, communication, and prompt service so that those of you in classrooms can focus your efforts on improving student achievement.

The Board of Education will be developing goals for this school year very shortly, and so will I. My goals will probably be very specific with measurable outcomes but I do expect to target six general areas for improvement that I would like to share with you now:

- 1.) Providing exemplary instructional programs to meet the needs and develop the potential of every student
- 2.) Integrating and expanding technology through the district
- 3.) Recruiting, training, and retaining exceptional staff
- 4.) Maintaining and continuously improving district facilities and equipment
- 5.) Expanding and strengthening business and community support
- 6.) Assuring safe schools

My highest priority has always been to create an enriching, nurturing, disciplined educational environment for students and staff. I hope you will work with me this year to achieve as many successes as we can and let me know what I can do to help you achieve your goals.



# Construction projects on schedule

Construction brought about by the May 2000 bond election is proceeding as planned. Major work is underway at all elementary schools as well as the district administrative offices. All projects are expected to be completed by August 1st of 2001. Dr. Dennis Johnson, Director of Support Services said that most of the masonry work on the projects is complete and expects roofing to go up soon. He said the construction will then be closed-in allowing inside work to begin.

Last June the administrative central office facility was named in honor of retired Superintendent Howard Shuler and is now the Shuler Education Center. A formal dedication of the building will take place when construction is complete.



Construction at schools includes the following additions:

**Auburn Elementary**  
5 classrooms

**Pauline Central Primary**  
4 classrooms

**Indian Hills Elementary**  
4 classrooms  
Library expansion

**Pauline South Intermediate**  
2 classrooms (South wing)

**Jay Shideler Elementary**  
4 classrooms (NW corner)

**Wanamaker Elementary**  
3 classrooms  
New Gymnasium  
Expanded Library

The bond issue also funded the following projects:

Air-conditioning in school gymnasiums which were not already air-conditioned. These projects have been completed.

A classroom data management system which was implemented at the start of the current school year.

A new telephone system for the district which includes a station in each classroom. Installation of the new system should begin in October and be completed early in 2002. Work will begin in building offices and proceed to classrooms as the school schedule permits.

## Benefit forms due September 14



Lori Harwood, payroll clerk (I.) helped staff members with forms at the recent district benefits fair. All employees must turn in completed forms to the Business Office by Friday, September 14. If you have questions or need additional information contact Lori via e-mail or at 862-0419.

## Thanks go to area businesses

Special thanks to the following businesses who donated prizes and gift certificates as door prizes for the new teacher luncheon held on August 3rd. Please support these businesses that support education.

**Applebee's**- gift certificate

**Boston Market**- gift certificates

**Hastings**- gift certificate

**Dillon's**- gift certificate and two green plants (the store at 28th and Urish)