



## Waunakee Rotary Club

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Maintaining excellent student achievement during a fiscally dismal time is a balancing act school district administrators and school board members face.

Randy Guttenberg, Waunakee school district administrator, explained some of the district's directions for the future during the Jan. 29 Waunakee Rotary Club meeting.

The school district currently has just under 3,600 students and 500 employees, Randy said. Special education students make up approximately 12-13 percent of enrollment, slightly below the state average. Six percent of students qualify for free and reduced lunch, as compared to the statewide average of 32 percent.

Randy said most of the district's goals deal with education, including student achievement. This community sets a high level of excellence for its schools and should be proud of students' test scores. While the state's ACT scores are among the top in the nation, Waunakee students' scores exceed the statewide average, he said. The district's co-curriculars are also above par, part of the reason Madison Magazine ranked Waunakee No. 1 for public schools in this region.

Throughout the district, each building has a goal of improving school climate and wellness, and all are examining how to make students feel welcome and secure. As part of that, the district is working on community relations to gather as much public input possible.

The next public forum Feb. 2 will focus on the co-curricular code and the district's upcoming youth risk assessments of middle and high school students.

Another public forum Feb. 12 is set to examine the district's Elementary World Language curriculum, which combines social studies

curriculum with Spanish instruction.

But at all times, growth is on the Waunakee district's radar and is "the No. 1 challenge," Randy said. For now, that challenge is felt most in the Arboretum Elementary School neighborhood. That school was built for four classes at each grade level, including 88 kindergartners. Currently, 121 kindergartners are signed up to attend next year, Randy said.

At a recent school board meeting, the members seemed to feel that adding a classroom by renovating a room could provide a fix for two years. But the district still needs to plan for long-term growth, Randy said. The short-term solution will prevent a reconfiguration of attendance boundaries and ensure children can attend their neighborhood school.

The next phase will be accommodate future growth as these large kindergarten classes progress through the grade levels, Randy said.

Business and finance is another challenge. Currently, state revenue caps, determined by student populations, limit district spending. The state funds an average of 2/3rds spending. But the Governor has told the district that no new money will be available for education, so the balance will have to come from taxpayers, Randy said.

"It will be interesting," he said. "I don't think the state is trying to move everything from their burden to the local burden."

Randy added that the federal stimulus package may include some funding for special education, another mandate that impacts school finance.

#### Other items:

•Rotarians who plan to attend the Youth Exchange potluck are welcome

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### Calendar of Events:

- Jan. 31-Feb. 1, Winter Weekend for Youth Exchange
- Feb. 1, Waunakee Neighborhood Connection Super Bowl Sunday
- Feb. 21, Waunakee Community Foundation Hypnotist Show

to bring children's books. One of the students' projects is to sort the books. The youth exchange coordinator ships them to South Africa for children with AIDS. The potluck is at 5:30 p.m. Jan. 31 at the Village Center.

•President Dan Statz reminded that club that two seats on the Rotary board are open. Anyone interested in serving on the board can talk to him or president-elect Tom Reis.

Guests: William Barlow, guest of Phil Willems; Craig Urso, guest of Fritz Durst; Susan Hedrick and Genna Eaton, guest of Phil Willems; Paul Gilbertson, guest of Lynne Speilman; Amy Fluke, guest of Lori Derauf.

Birthdays: Feb. 11, Phil Willems; Feb. 11, Ron Ballweg.

Anniversaries: Feb. 9, Ed and Elizabeth Kruchten.

Prayers: Feb. 5, Susan Vergeront; Feb. 12, Leonard Allen.

Programs: Feb. 5, Club Assembly.

Greeters: Feb. 5, Jon Townley and Bob Tucker; Feb. 12, Jim Tubbs and Bill Tygum; Feb. 19, Phil Willems and Rich Wipperfurth; Feb. 26, Brent Ziegler and Mike Ableidinger.