



Human Resources Department Memorandum

TO: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director
FROM: Jennifer Clough, Director of Human Resources
DATE: March 5, 2025
RE: February 2025 Report

Employee Relations, Recruiting and Benefits:

- The District spent its second consecutive month fully staffed, a likely testament to its recent improvements to compensation plans and benefit programs. Prior to this period of stability, the District was experiencing regular and high turnover at all position levels. Seasonal employment opportunities are open for recruitment, and the HR department is training and providing resources to hiring managers to support their selection and orientation processes. Additionally, the HR Director continues to work collaboratively with the budget team to consider requests for staff as an outcome of the successful referendum.
- The Department continues to work diligently on evaluating possible insurance opt-out options, certification pay, uniform allowances, and other opportunities that stem from compensation and classification study recommendations and the competitive employment landscape. Most recommendations surrounding these program enhancements will be fully vetted and prepared for consideration for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026.
- HR is supporting the review and preparation of the fourth iteration of the Organization Ordinance for the Commission's approval. Once complete, the department expects to present its annual review of the employee handbook for consideration. A comprehensive review has begun.
- Department staff participated in a PDRMA legal, IDPH monthly update, and Tyler Technologies pay rates webinars. They also partnered with Equitable to review its new website, met with Plan Source to correct ACA reporting issues and collaborated with the District's IPBC benefits consultant to explore employee self-service options and insurance plan changes for open enrollment.

Safety and Wellness:

There was one general liability (volunteer injury) and one worker's compensation (ankle sprain) claim in February.

- The 2025 safety training plan has been developed and communicated to all employees. The Department will take advantage of the Spring all staff meeting to bring at least one of these requirements offline so that employees have the opportunity to learn together and in a setting that is more conducive for questions. The 2025 plan includes enhanced collaboration with the Kane County IT Department, which coordinates the District's cyber security training.
- The Safety and Wellness committee held its first quarterly meeting of 2025 and first on its agenda is promoting the annual wellness screening to all employees with District Health benefits. This event is scheduled for April 15th of this year and offers employees a premium incentive for participation. In addition, its members are auditing their department's first aid kits for supplies. The committee regularly reviews processes and up for discussion was the vehicle accident process. New documents are being added to all vehicles.
- Employment laws that went into effect in January required the District replace its compliance posters at each of its locations; these field shop visits serve as an excellent opportunity to complete other safety related inspections and activities.
- The Department completed the PDRMA Risk Management Review annual assessment and scheduled a kickoff meeting in early March to develop the 2025 risk management goals. Other collaborations with PDRMA in the last



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month have included gathering claims data and PDRMA coverages for the new golf management company at Hughes Creek and Settler's Hill Golf Courses and coordinating with their legal counsel on a number of employment considerations to best mitigate the District's risk.

- The Safety and Wellness Coordinator co-taught CPR/1st Aid to volunteers and identified and delivered a new mobile first aid kit/station to the Nature Education group at Creek Bend to be utilized during field events.

Volunteer Resources:

In February, 601.50 volunteer hours at 36 events were given to the District!

- Dangerously cold temperatures resulted in a number of volunteer event cancellations. However, snow covered allowed for many workdays to successfully burn down accumulated brush piles.
- The Environmental Sustainability Team (EST) held its first quarterly meeting of 2025 with ambitious goals, including an interest in being able to measure and modify the District's carbon footprint.
- The Department tabled events intended to recruit for new volunteers to the District at Waubensee Aurora and Sugar Grove campuses on 10th and 19th. In another effort to engage the next generation in conservation efforts, the NRM, Environmental Education and Volunteer office staff assisted at Dundee Crown HS as we helped prepare students for the upcoming Envirothon on Feb 19th.
- The HR Department continues to onboard new Stewardship Specialist Rachel Carlson. Rachel is off to a great start meeting staff, seeing preserves, jumping into trainings and getting out with volunteers! The HR team is excited to have her and look forward to lots of good news and updates from her fieldwork.
- Staff attended the Calling Frog Survey virtual training with Notebaert Nature Center, Maple Sugaring Event planning meeting, the Fungi Monitoring kickoff, and a special workday at Sleepy Hollow Ravine with local volunteers and Illinois Nature Preserve Commission.



Pictured on the left: Staff and volunteers restoring Sleepy Hollow Ravine during a workday hosted February 20th.
Pictured on the right: NRM Manager Jason Johnson teaches DCHS students tree identification on February 19th.



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Pictured above: Stewardship Specialist Rachel Carlson talks to students at WCC Sugar Grove volunteer fair hosted by the school on February 20th.