

North Chicago's New Middle School and AbbVie – Fact sheet

The news

AbbVie's \$40 million donation to rebuild North Chicago's only middle school, Neal Math & Science Academy

About North Chicago School District

North Chicago District 187 is a public school district of 3,400 students serving children in North Chicago and Naval Station Great Lakes in six schools, pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. They are a district committed to transforming outcomes for their students.

District 187 is on a mission together to empower each child to write their own story of success, and to prepare each child, academically and socially, to pursue and realize their unique purpose. They do this by putting students at the center of their work and thinking, building strong relationships, considering the whole child, setting high expectations, and doing whatever it takes to meet the needs of students.

The need

As a long-term partner of the District, AbbVie is committed to the community of North Chicago, where the company is headquartered. AbbVie learned from the District that its only middle school, Neal Math & Science Academy, was in need of serious upgrades in order to serve as the 21st century learning environment students deserve.

Neal Middle School is where the District educates students during the pivotal transition into high school, when they need to delve into important subject matter and yet their learning environment is in the poorest shape of any district building. Neal has very poor plumbing and heating and is leaking water. The District has to spend heavily on repairs every year.

Two of the strategic goals for the District are to achieve academic growth for all of the students and to increase the graduation rate, which will be furthered by a new middle school.

- With a new facility and the accompanying teacher and classroom supports, the district is continuing to increase and strengthen teaching and learning, ensuring students will be well positioned for success.
- The District expects to grow its graduation rate from 60% today to at least 80% over the next five years.

AbbVie's impact

Over the past six years, AbbVie has been working on improving student success in North Chicago, the company's headquarters. Employee volunteers are at the heart of driving change—committing over 60,000 volunteer hours since 2013. The majority of AbbVie employees' time and talent have been used to renovate every public-school library in North Chicago into learning resource centers, maker spaces and new career pathways facilities. These spaces have resulted in significant increases in student engagement in Literacy, Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) and interest in their futures.

Timeline for construction

During a special event in the Neal Math & Science Academy gymnasium on March 21, 2019, AbbVie announced its commitment to build the new school. The timeline for building the new middle school is:

- April 2019: Facilities Committee and Community Advisory Committee formed.
- Late April 2019: Public forums on new middle school.
- Spring 2019–Spring 2020: Pre-development work will begin, which will include environmental surveys and assessments and the selection of professional services, architect, and contractors.
- Spring 2020: The final design, prepared through the community advisory panels, is shared with the entire community.
- Early Summer 2020: Groundbreaking on new middle school.
- July / August 2021: Construction completion of new middle school.
- September 2021: First class of students enrolled at new middle school.
- May 2022: First class of students complete school year at new middle school.

