



District 220 Early Learning Center

ELC Principal Barb Romano

At the end of June, Barb Romano retired after serving 15 years as principal of Barrington 220's Early Learning Center (ELC). The school serves at-risk preschool students, in addition to kindergarten students enrolled in the district's Spanish Dual Language Program. Quintessential Barrington talked with the newly retired Romano about her time in Barrington 220 and her future plans.

QB: Can you tell us about your background and experience in education?

BR: I received a bachelor's degree in special education from Western Illinois University and a master's degree in educational leadership from Aurora University. Prior to joining Barrington 220 in 2005, I worked for 24 years as a special education teacher at various locations.

QB: What are you most proud of about your time as principal of the ELC?

BR: When I started in Barrington 220 in 2005, the district's early childhood center was located at the former Woodland Elementary School in Carpentersville. As the building grew older, the district made plans to move the early childhood center to a new location that would be more appropriate for young learners. I am very proud to have played a role in the collaboration to build the current state-of-the-art Early Learning Center, which opened its doors in 2010 right next to BMS-Prairie Campus.

QB: What has been your favorite part about working in Barrington 220?

BR: It has been such a privilege to work with the preschool children and families of the Barrington 220 community. In addition, the ELC staff is amazing and it has been an honor to serve alongside them over the past 15 years. They are early childhood experts who take such pride in everything they do for kids.

QB: What will you miss most about being principal of the ELC?

BR: As principal of the ELC, I had the opportunity to be a part of so many big moments in the lives of Barrington 220's youngest children. I witnessed first words, first steps. These are moments I will cherish forever.

QB: What are your plans for retirement?

BR: I look forward to volunteering with Save The Children Action Network (SCAN), which serves as the political advocacy arm of Save the Children, to be the political voice for kids. SCAN works to ensure that the issues critical to children's lives and futures are given top priority by our elected leaders, building bipartisan support to make sure every child has a strong start in life. I am also looking forward to being a full-time grandma to my two grandchildren!

KIND WORDS FOR A KIND PRINCIPAL

"Whenever Barb walked into my classroom, she always made a conscious effort to put a smile on each child's face and made sure they felt loved and appreciated."

- Kate Johnson, ELC Education Teacher

"Barb wasn't just a principal, she was your friend. It didn't matter if you were a student, parent, or staff member, she was always there for you with a laugh, a smile, a story, a hug, a solution to a problem, or just an ear to listen with compassion and understanding. Barb led with her wisdom and her heart."

- Kelly Springer, Administrative Assistant to the ELC Principal

"Barb is one of the most compassionate people I have ever met. Her caring and empathetic nature made her a wonderful leader. She taught us to focus on the important things in our lives and the lives of our students."

- Amy McGrath, Early Childhood Special Education Teacher

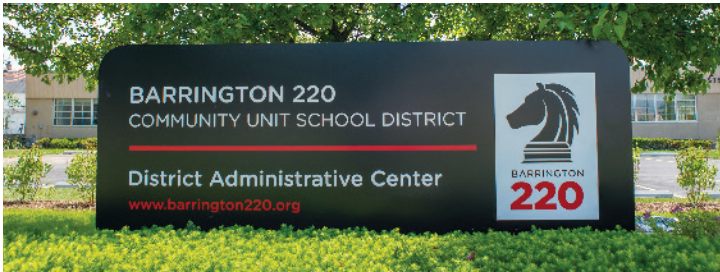
Meet New ELC Principal Ms. Acosta

In March 2020, the Barrington 220 Board of Education approved Michelle Acosta as the new principal of the Barrington Early Learning Center, starting July 1, 2020. For the past three years, Ms. Acosta worked as the assistant principal and summer school principal at Barrington 220's Sunny Hill Elementary School.



Prior to working in Barrington 220, she worked in Palatine District 15 as an assistant principal, school psychologist, and special education case manager. Before moving to Illinois in 2010, she worked as a school psychologist and early childhood teacher in Iowa. She received her Bachelor's of Science in Psychology from the University of Illinois, a Master's of Education and Educational Specialist degree in School Psychology from National Louis University, and a Master's of Education in School Administration and Leadership from Concordia University.

"I am thrilled and excited to partner with teachers, staff, and the community to build strong foundations for our youngest learners in Barrington. Although these times are unprecedented, I am confident through collaboration and hard work we will get through it together and be stronger than ever," Ms. Acosta said.



Barrington 220 District News

AAA Bond Rating: The Barrington 220 School District was notified that it has maintained its AAA bond rating status from S&P Global Ratings, making it one of just 85 school districts across the country to earn the highest rating. In addition, Barrington 220 is one of only 22 school districts in Illinois with a AAA bond rating. As a AAA bond rated school district, Barrington 220 will receive the lowest competitive interest rates when seeking bond financing. In March 2020, Barrington area voters passed a \$147 million bond measure, which will fund many critical capital projects at all Barrington 220 schools.

New District Equality Position: Barrington 220 is searching for Director of Equity, Race and Cultural Diversity Initiatives. While Barrington 220 has taken positive steps toward addressing the issues of racial bias and cultural sensitivity over the past several years, the district has more work to do in this area. "We remain committed to helping build a strong sense of empathy within our students and an ability to embrace differences. We need this position to lead those efforts. I want the Barrington community to know that we expect our students and staff to promote compassion and respect to all people regardless of race, creed, gender, or orientation," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Brian Harris.

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