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## Towns, Kaneland reach agreement on 'school impact' development fees

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**By Linda Girardi Special to The Beacon News**

The Kaneland School Board has given its final approval on an intergovernmental agreement establishing a "school impact payment" on future developer annexations.

Village presidents and trustees from Elburn, Sugar Grove, Montgomery, Maple Park, Cortland, Kaneville and Virgil participated in this week's formal signing of the document.

"This is a great example of cooperation and regional planning," Montgomery Village President Marilyn Micheline said. "We're happy to be one of the leaders in this."

"It lets the developers know they will be treated essentially the same," Elburn Village Trustee William Grabarek said. "It's favorable for the municipalities, developers, and definitely favorable for the School District."

The agreement combines existing capital developer impact fees with the concept of an operational impact fee to offset the cost of housing and educating students. Additionally, it addresses cooperative planning for school sites and facilities.

District officials said the agreement is significant in that it establishes district development fees for the first time in writing and sets a consistent school impact payment schedule throughout the district.

The village representatives said the Kaneland schools are a common link between seven diverse communities striving to remain desirable places to live.

"Everything hinges on the schools, and this is a vital step in protecting existing and future residents," Sugar Grove Village Trustee Mari Johnson said.

The School District 1998 began collecting capital developer impact fees to address the costs associated with residential growth, but it has never had a mechanism to cover the operating side of educating students.

District officials said it costs the district in excess of \$9,000 to educate a student per year, and that 10 to 21 months pass before property tax revenues arrive after a family with children moves in.

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