

2010 BacktoSchool Report

FALL 2010



The mission of District 58, in partnership with parents and community, is to challenge each child by providing quality educational programs and support services in safe, nurturing environments in order to prepare all students to be lifelong learners and contributing members of society.



Dear District 58 community member,

The start of a new school year provides the perfect opportunity to reflect on the past year. We are very proud of the work that was done last year and look forward to the school year ahead.

The 2009-10 school year saw more than 92 percent of our students meeting or exceeding state standards in reading and mathematics as measured by the ISATs. Our students also continue to excel in many other areas as well, with noteworthy accomplishments in the arts and athletics last year.

While our students continue to be very successful academically, we continue to work to improve our education program. The District is implementing a revised Language Arts curriculum this year, has reviewed its vocal music program and is focusing on meeting the needs of all learners through Response to Intervention. Our staff cares deeply, not only about our students' academic development, but also about the well-being of each child as a whole person. The Board has adopted a goal to develop and implement strategies that support the social-emotional development of each student as a vital component of the educational program.

District 58 has made more than \$2.5 million in operating budget reductions in the past two years in response to a variety of challenges posed by the state's fiscal problems and the tough economy. Throughout this process, the Board and the administration were committed to making reductions without negatively affecting our programs for students.

The strong involvement of our parents and our community partners in education enables us to succeed in providing the best possible educational experience for each and every child. We will seek input from those partners this year as we work together to create a new strategic plan—a stakeholder-driven road map that will focus our mission going forward. District 58's last strategic plan was adopted about 10 years ago, and outlines strategic goals that have guided us in our decision-making.

We strive to demonstrate our dedication and commitment to a world-class education for each and every student with all we do, and thank you for your interest in and support of Downers Grove School District 58.

Paul C. Zaander,
Superintendent of Schools

Elizabeth Davis,
President, District 58 Board of Education

We envision. We seek. We believe.



District 58 moving ahead with strategic plan process

District 58 will seek the community's input as it embarks on a strategic planning process this school year. Strategic planning is an opportunity for the community to provide input into District 58's future, and gain an understanding of where the district is headed.

The process will involve engaging the community with a public workshop and surveys; creating a vision; and implementing that vision. The process will unfold over the next school year, with the district reaching out to a broad cross-section of stakeholders, including community members, staff, students and former students.

District 58's last strategic plan was adopted about 10 years ago. The plan encompasses a mission statement, strategic goals, a vision statement, quality standards and an action plan. To view District 58's current strategic plan, visit www.dg58.org/boe/plan.htm.

Please visit www.dg58.org for a link to District 58's online community survey. We encourage everyone to participate and offer their feedback. For those without access to the Internet, paper copies of the survey are available at the school buildings and central office.



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1. ELIZABETH DAVIS, *President*
2. STEPHEN G. FUNK, *Vice President*
3. JOHN COOPER
4. GARY LESTER
5. SALLIE LUPESCU
6. JOHN MILLER
7. SCOTT O'CONNELL

2010-11 District 58 at a Glance

Downers Grove Grade School District 58 serves preschool through eighth grade students from Downers Grove and portions of Darien, Oak Brook, Westmont and Woodridge.

Total enrollment: Approximately 5,000

Student-to-teacher ratio: 20.3 to 1

Students meeting or exceeding state standards on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (2008-09): 92 percent (state average is 80 percent)

**Figures based on the 2009 Illinois school report card data*

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE CENTER

1860 63rd Street, Downers Grove, 630.719.5800

Superintendent of Schools — Paul C. Zaander

Secretary to Superintendent — Pamela A. Osika

Assistant Superintendent for Personnel — Jayne Yudzentis

Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction — Cathie Pezanoski

Controller — James Popernik, Ed.D.

Asst. Superintendent for Special Services — Terrence J. Martin

Director of Business Services — Lorie M. Pilster

Coordinator of Grove Children's Preschool — James R. Swade

Coordinator of Communications — Jennifer Waldorf

LONGFELLOW CENTER (technology, buildings and grounds)

1435 Prairie Avenue, Downers Grove, 630.719.5867

Director of Technology — Connie Hodson, Ed.D.

Director of Buildings & Grounds — Rick Bubula

Supervisor of Maintenance — Ken Young

WEB SITES

Downers Grove Grade School District 58: www.dg58.org

Education Foundation of District 58: www.dg58ef.com

Spotlight on the Board

District 58 is served by a seven-member school board, whose members are elected to four-year terms without pay. Responsibilities include policy making, budget approval, hiring and evaluating the superintendent, appointing members to advisory committees, hearing discipline appeals and other duties as prescribed by law. The board delegates the day-to-day operations of the schools to an administrative staff led by the district's Superintendent of Schools.

The District 58 Board of Education typically meets on the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at Longfellow Center, 1435 Prairie Ave. Meetings in June, July and August are held at the Administrative Service Center, 1860 63rd St.

Meetings are recorded and uploaded as streaming audio files on the district's Web site, www.dg58.org. Meetings are usually uploaded by 3 p.m. the next day, and are available until the next school board meeting.

Board meeting and workshop schedule, 2010-11

** All meetings begin at 7 p.m. at Longfellow Center unless posted otherwise, and with the exception of the summer months.*

REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS

- September 13
- October 12 (Tuesday)
- November 8
- December 13
- January 10
- February 14
- March 14
- April 11
- May 9
- June 13 (ASC, 1860 63rd St.)
- July 11 (ASC, 1860 63rd St.)

WORKSHOPS

- Curriculum workshop (school report cards) | October 25
- Financial workshop | November 22
- Curriculum workshop | February 28
- Workshop regarding tentative 2011-12 budget | April 25

The District 58 Web site contains a variety of additional information about the School Board, including:

- Biographies of board members
- Board calendar
- Board policies
- Strategic plan
- Meeting summaries

Descriptions of the standing advisory groups serving the board — the Legislative Committee, the Policy Committee and the Financial Advisory Committee



Spotlight on curriculum

COMMITTEES REVIEW MUSIC, L.A. CURRICULA

Committees were hard at work reviewing the District 58 Language Arts and first through sixth grade vocal music curricula during the 2009-10 school year, aligning them with best practice research and state standards.

LANGUAGE ARTS

District 58's Language Arts committee spent two years developing the strongest possible program, which has been put in place for the 2010-11 school year. The curriculum was developed in line with the state standards for writing, spelling, vocabulary and research.

The curriculum will focus on helping students learn to make connections and meet the state goals related to Language Arts. These goals are that students should be able to write to communicate for a variety of purposes; listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations; and use Language Arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information.

VISION FOR DISTRICT 58 LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM

“ We believe the District 58 Language Arts curriculum fosters an excitement for learning and an ability to communicate effectively as readers, writers, speakers, and listeners through active, integrated and collaborative learning. Proficiency in language arts, through effective teaching, empowers students to become self-directed and responsible learners, successful communicators and critical thinkers in the 21st century.”

Some features of the new writing curriculum will be writing throughout the curriculum; promoting student ownership and responsibility by allowing them to select their own topics; and teaching grammar and mechanics in the context of actual writing. Students will learn to produce excellent writing no matter what the format, and teachers will acknowledge and incorporate newer communications tools such as text-messaging and e-mail.

MUSIC

Music comes to life in many ways in District 58.

Students practice songs during their vocal music class to perform for their classmates and parents; work in sectionals to practice their violins, trumpets and other band and orchestra instruments; rehearse with the Downers Grove Children's Choir; even work in small groups to learn the guitar.

While they cultivate valuable musicianship skills, they also are working towards achievement of the Illinois Learning Standards related to music, on which District 58's curriculum is based. These standards call for students to:

- 1 | Know the language of the arts
- 2 | Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced
- 3 | Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present

VISION FOR DISTRICT 58 VOCAL MUSIC PROGRAM

“ To enrich the quality of life through the creation, performance, and study of music. Through music, students gain a greater understanding of their own cultural heritage, as well as a sense of the larger world community. Music is a vital component in our pursuit of education as a lifelong process.”

Best practices in music education, according to the Music Curriculum Committee's research during 2009-10, are active learning; cross-curriculum connections; student choice; critical thinking opportunities; exposure to a variety of art forms; and opportunities for sharing exposure to arts performance. As part of the research and review process, the committee also surveyed students, parents and staff members regarding the music curriculum.

As a result of the year-long review, the committee plans to increase opportunities for curriculum integration; increase communication about the musical activities occurring at school; and increase opportunities to showcase the school choirs and Downers Grove Children's Choir.



WHAT'S NEXT?

As part of its regular curriculum review cycle, District 58 plans to assess its math program in 2010-11.



students are capable of learning and should be **educated and challenged** at his/her ability level.

Meeting the needs of all students: **Response to Intervention**

The 2009-10 school year marked District 58's third year of implementing Response to Intervention protocols.

RtI allows educators to quickly identify at-risk and struggling students; provide them with high-quality, research-based interventions matched to their needs; and monitor their progress. RtI also is designed to ensure the educational success of all students by strengthening and enhancing the core curriculum.

The key to RtI is that data drives the decision-making. Working in teams, staff uses assessment data collected through a computer software program called AIMSweb to identify needs and intervene earlier than ever before, and to monitor the effectiveness of those interventions. This provides a consistency, structure and accountability to decisions. It also allows staff to take into account a student's rate of improvement (growth over time) and level of performance compared with peers across the country, district, or school.

A core principle of RtI is that all children can learn, though not necessarily all in the same way. Another key concept is that staff must intervene early when there are needs identified through screening. All children in District 58 are screened three times per year, and the progress of students determined to be in need of interventions is monitored more frequently.

More information regarding RtI is available at www.dg58.org/intheknow/rti09_10.pdf, as well as www.dg58.org/community_relations/forms/intervention.pdf

Most students are performing at or above grade level and fall within what is known as Tier 1, meaning the core curriculum meets their needs. Students who fall within Tiers 2 and 3 are at low- and high-risk respectively and need extra support, such as additional instruction presented in small groups or individually. Students in Tiers 2 and 3 also receive more frequent progress monitoring to determine the effectiveness of the interventions.

District 58 uses a team-based problem-solving framework to structure thinking and decision-making related to instruction and intervention with RtI. Problem solving asks four questions throughout the process, which involves close collaboration among staff: What is the problem? Why is it happening? What should be done about it? Did it work? The answer to the WHY question can be related to the curriculum, but can also include environmental factors and characteristics of the individual learner.

Intervention plans include information about the type of intervention being used; the length of time that will be allowed for the intervention to have a positive effect before moving to the next tier of intervention; and how progress will be assessed.

Parent education has been key in successfully implementing RtI throughout the district, and plans are to expand and build upon that in the years to come. Next steps will include refining data collection, looking at additional reading interventions, and moving beyond literacy to look at math benchmarking and interventions.

The RtI system is divided into a three-tier intervention model for academic systems, as illustrated below.

TIER III: 1 TO 5% OF STUDENTS

Intense, customized interventions for a very small number of students at high risk, done in addition to Tier I and II activities

TIER II: 5 TO 10% OF STUDENTS

Small group interventions, for students at a mild level of risk, done in addition to Tier I activities

TIER I: 80 TO 90% OF STUDENTS

Core curriculum, whole group/core instruction, for all students

District 58 focuses on **Social-Emotional Learning**

A District 58 education focuses on the whole child, and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) is an important component.

SEL, as defined by the not-for-profit Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL), is "the process whereby children and adults develop essential social and emotional skills, knowledge and attitudes" related to the core areas of social and emotional competency:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills
- Responsible decision-making

According to CASEL, research has shown that SEL has a wide variety of benefits for students. It supports and boosts academic achievement and provides the foundation for improved social, health and behavioral outcomes. SEL promotes key competencies through instruction and modeling, as well as through the creation of learning environments where students feel safe, cared for and engaged in learning.

During the 2009-10 school year a District 58 SEL committee--which included a parent and a wide cross-section of more than two dozen staff members--brainstormed activities and practices in District 58 that already support SEL, and discussed how to provide leadership in developing a school community that promotes social-emotional learning competencies. To achieve this, all adults in the community need to model successful behaviors.

During an institute day in February, staff was asked what qualities they would like to see a special child in his/her life possess by the time he/she is 18. Answers included: strong work ethic, respectful,



Technology continues to enhance education in District 58 schools and classrooms

In one sixth-grade classroom, students put the finishing touches on a “news broadcast” about the plot points in the novel “Tuck Everlasting,” while in a first-grade classroom, students used iPod Touches to work on vocabulary and reading fluency.

Technology is a key learning tool in the 21st century, and the District 58 Technology Department continually keeps up with best practice and ensures staff are well-versed in its use through classes, assistive technology and workshops.

This year the Technology Department provided interactive whiteboard professional development and an all-day Tech Mini-Conference for staff. Other accomplishments included transitioning to an electronic report card and holding a technology retreat for administrators.

District 58’s technology is implemented according to national standards for students. These overlap with the Social-Emotional

Learning standards on which the district is focusing, such as self-management and responsible decision-making, said Technology Director Connie Hodson.

Not only does technology in use in District 58 benefit students directly, it also provides easy storage and access to key information and data about student learning, and facilitates communication. Plans for the 2010-11 school year include continuing to update hardware, software and peripherals as funding permits; continuing to incorporate new technologies such as handheld video cameras; continuing grant opportunities; and continuing professional development.



Highland School students use I-Movie to create a “broadcast” about a novel.

Teachers focus on technology at District 58 mini-conference

Podcasting, producing I-Movies and Earobics were just a few of the technology-related topics being taught in District 58 this past April—only it was the teachers who were learning. That teacher institute day, organized by the Technology Leadership Team, was a day-long Tech Mini-Conference, the first of its kind in District 58.

All teachers signed up to take four classes, the vast majority of which were taught by District 58 teachers and technology staffers. Among the offerings were Music and Technology; Social Studies and Technology; Podcasting Across the Curriculum; iPod in Reading; Creating iMovies; and SmartBoard overview.

“Our goal was to not take teachers out of the classroom any more than we had to for technology training, and to provide them with a variety of topics and integration ideas,” said Connie Hodson, District 58’s Director of Technology. “I knew we had lots of technology integration taking place in the classrooms, and this gave teachers a chance to share.”

The iPod, for example, has available a variety of education-related applications, including vocabulary lessons to engage students.

El Sierra students wow legislators with TECH 2010 demonstration

A team from Diane Claver’s third-grade class at El Sierra School headed down to Springfield in May to share a multi-media presentation on their class’ “I AM” writing project during TECH 2010. Claver’s class first tackled writing “I AM” poems, then worked together to compile them into a multi-media presentation using Keynote software. Students Abby Casmere and Luke MacKinnon represented the class in Springfield.

“It’s exciting and engaging for the students to start a writing project with a pencil and piece of paper and move into working on the computers, taking pictures of each other, recording their voices and pulling it all together to present their poems,” Claver said. “The students are very open and eager to try new technology programs and projects. These activities are very engaging with the students having fun and learning along the way. It is fun to watch.”

During TECH 2010, schools from throughout Illinois set up booths throughout the Capitol building to show elected officials, business leaders and the general public how technology is being used in schools. Among those who visited El Sierra’s booth were Rep. Patti Bellock, Rep. Sandra Pihos, and Sen. Kirk Dillard.



good communicator, problem solver, independent, compassionate /caring and honest. The majority of these skills come from SEL and dovetail with the state goals regarding SEL. These state goals are:

Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success;

Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships; and

Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school and community contexts.

Social-emotional learning will continue to be a key focus for District 58 during the 2010-11 school year. An administrative retreat Aug. 5 focused on SEL, as did the keynote address during this year’s opening day for all staff. Plans are to establish an SEL core at each building to monitor and lead efforts, and the SEL committee also will work to facilitate district-wide collaboration.

In addition, District 58 has entered a multi-year SEL partnership with CASEL and the Regional Office of Education to provide resources and training for staff.

SEL VISION

The vision for SEL in District 58 is to develop a community where educators, students, families and community members work together to support the healthy development of all students.

District 58’s goal is to create a learning environment where students show up eager to learn; feel a sense of connectedness to their school and teachers; feel safe from being treated poorly; perform to their fullest potential; treat all others with respect; and contribute to the well-being of the community.

schools should be a **safe, friendly, nurturing place** where everyone comes to learn, grow and change.



District 58 ends 2009-10 fiscal year with balanced budget

Thanks to careful planning and approximately \$500,000 in cost containment measures, District 58 ended the 2009-10 fiscal year with a balanced budget. District 58 also made approximately \$2 million in operating budget reductions for the 2010-11 budget in response to a variety of challenges posed by the state's fiscal problems and the tough economy. Final approval of District 58's proposed \$59.7 million budget was slated for September 13.

All decisions regarding District 58's spending plan are made with the district's mission first and foremost, which is, in partnership with parents and community, to challenge each child by providing quality educational programs and support services in safe, nurturing environments in order to prepare all students to be lifelong learners and contributing members of society.

Cuts were designed to have as little impact as possible on programs and services provided directly to students. For the previous year's budget, District 58 made cuts/found savings in the areas of supplies, equipment and purchased services in the amount of approximately \$500,000. Cuts to the 2010-11 budget included reducing benefits premiums, reducing staff development and eliminating discretionary field trips.

The cuts in 2009-10 and proposed cuts for 2010-11 were made in response to projected shortfalls in state funding, as well as sharp decreases in other revenue sources such as interest income on investments and flat property tax revenues due to a flat Consumer Price Index (*see charts on page 7*).

The CPI for 2008, which determines a district's ability to increase its major revenue stream via the annual tax levy, was essentially flat for the first time since the enactment of the tax cap in 1991. This impacted the 2009 levy year, and therefore the 2010-11 school year. Normally, the CPI comes in between 2 to 3 percent each year (*see chart on page 7*).

In addition, exceptionally low interest rates on investments have cost the district more than \$2 million in revenues. In fiscal years 2006-07 and 2007-08, investment interest netted the district approximately \$1.5 million per year in revenues. For 2008-09, that amount was reduced to approximately \$750,000, and this past fiscal year it dropped to just \$163,000 (*see chart on page 7*).

"With all of these factors combined, this is the most difficult year for school finances that I have ever seen," said District 58 Controller James Popernik.

Three roof replacements among 2010 summer maintenance projects

While school was out for summer, District 58's maintenance staff kicked things into high gear. Major projects completed during summer 2010 were:

- Roof replacements at Belle Aire, El Sierra and Kingsley
- Chimney repair work at Henry Puffer, Herrick and Pierce Downer schools
- Heating and ventilation work in Puffer's primary wing and Herrick's locker rooms
- Outdoor security light pole work
- Asphalt repair at ASC, Fairmount, Henry Puffer, Highland, Lester and O'Neill
- Asphalt sealcoating at Fairmount, Herrick and Whittier
- Some ceiling replacement work at O'Neill Middle School

The roof replacements and some of the other projects were funded by \$10 million in Life Safety bonds issued earlier this year as part of District 58's long-range plan to ensure student safety and maintain the community's investment in its buildings.

As one component of its facilities and operations plan, District 58 maintains a comprehensive, ongoing list of capital projects needs at its 13 schools. These range from roof replacements to plumbing work.

In 2007 it was estimated that nearly \$16 million was needed to complete all projects on the list.

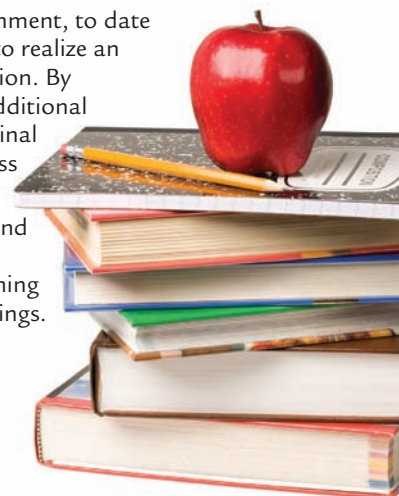
District 58's citizen-driven Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) spent two years discussing potential funding mechanisms before recommending the Board of Education issue Life Safety bonds to begin addressing those needs. After studying and working on this issue for more than two years, the Board of Education issued these bonds in January 2010.

The plan was always to use the bond proceeds to take care of the items identified as the most immediately pressing—then, should those projects come in under budget and a balance remained, staff could recommend the board discuss using the savings to address other previously identified life safety projects. This plan was spelled out in the Roof FAQs at www.dg58.org earlier this year.

Due to an extremely competitive environment, to date District 58 has been fortunate enough to realize an overall savings of approximately \$3 million. By considering using this money to fund additional projects, the board is following the original plan laid out several years ago to address the many needs at our aging buildings.

District 58 is very proud of its schools and is committed to providing safe learning environments for students and maintaining the community's investment in its buildings.

For more information, please visit www.dg58.org/boe/roof_faq.htm. Check www.dg58.org for updates on our progress on addressing our capital project needs.





State funding cutbacks also are affecting District 58's finances.

Because of its strong property tax base, District 58 receives its state revenues primarily in the form of categorical funding and reimbursements. In addition to approximately \$2 million in outstanding debts already owed District 58, the state has made dramatic cuts to many of its allotments for categorical spending this year, despite continued requirements for school districts to provide the programs associated with this funding.

Federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act also will be a diminished revenue source for school districts in 2010-11. District 58 received approximately \$750,000 in federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in 2009-10, and anticipates an additional \$500,000 in 2010-11.

The vast majority – 82 percent – of District 58's revenues come from local property taxes, compared with 59 percent statewide. Another 5.5 percent comes from other local funding. State aid makes up about 10 percent of the district's revenues, with only about 3 percent of that coming in the form of general state aid; another 3 percent comes from federal funding.

District 58 earns financial recognition

District 58's 2010 Financial Profile, which is based on the 2008-09 school year financial data, placed the district within the Financial Recognition range, the highest category obtainable. The Illinois State Board of Education said that "given the economic difficulties school districts are facing, the State Board realizes this is a significant accomplishment."

All Illinois school districts receive an annual rating from the ISBE, which takes into account financial indicators including fund balance to revenue ratio; expenditure to revenue ratio; days of cash on hand; percent of short-term borrowing ability remaining; and percentage of long-term debt margin remaining.

For more information about District 58's budget and finances, including the annual tax levy, visit www.dg58.org and click on **Financial Information** under Administration.

Expenditures by the numbers

EDUCATION – \$46.2 MILLION

The majority of District 58's money goes toward expenditures in the education fund, most of which is used for personnel expenses. This fund also includes staff development, classroom and office equipment, furniture, technology, and supplies, such as textbooks, maps and paper.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE – \$4.4 MILLION

Money from this fund is spent to operate all District 58 facilities, including repair, maintenance and utility costs (electric, heat, fuel, phone, refuse, water and sewer). It also pays custodial and maintenance salaries.

TRANSPORTATION – \$2.4 MILLION

This fund pays for FirstStudent to transport students living more than one and a half miles from their school, as well as students living along routes along which it is hazardous to walk to school.

ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT FUND – \$1.7 MILLION

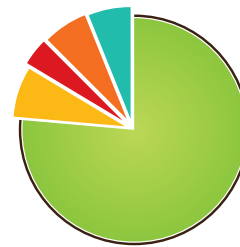
All non-certified employees are mandated by the state to receive retirement benefits through the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund.

DEBT SERVICE – \$1.2 MILLION

This fund pays the principal and interest on the bond debt issued in 2001 for facilities and technology, and the bond debt issued in early 2010 for Life Safety work.

LIFE SAFETY FUND – \$3.8 MILLION

The Board of Education established this fund to account for revenues and expenditures related to the issuance of \$10 million in Life Safety bonds for roof repairs and other facilities needs.



EXPENDITURES BY FUND

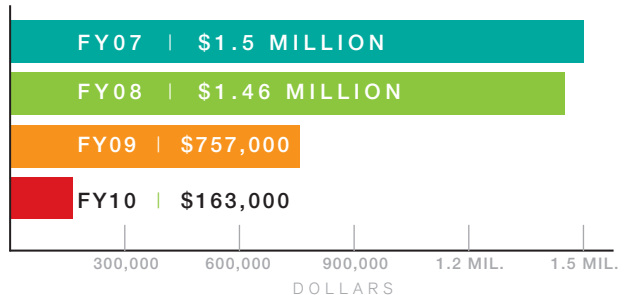
- EDUCATION
- IMRF, DEBT SERVICE
- OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE
- STUDENT TRANSPORTATION
- LIFE SAFETY FUND



REVENUES BY SOURCE

- PROPERTY TAX
- OTHER LOCAL FUNDING
- STATE AID, OTHER STATE FUNDING
- FEDERAL FUNDING

INVESTMENT INTEREST INCOME, 07-PRESENT



CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, 2001-PRESENT

2001 3.4	2005 3.3	2009 0.1
2002 1.6	2006 3.4	2010 2.7
2003 2.4	2007 2.5	
2004 1.9	2008 4.1	

standards of conduct, commitment and accomplishments should be expected of all students, staff and parents.



A group of new staff film the opening segment of the iMovie they created as part of District 58's comprehensive orientation program.

Meet our new administrators



Cathie Pezanoski has joined the District 58 team as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, replacing Dr. MaryBeth Webeler, who retired after 23 years with District 58. Pezanoski came to District 58 from Plainfield District 202, where she served as Elementary Director of Curriculum and Instruction since 2006. She has more than two decades of experience in elementary education.

IN HER WORDS: *"I am in education because of my passion to do what is best for all students in regards to their academic, social and emotional growth. I love having the opportunity to work directly with principals and staff, to read to children of all ages, and visit classrooms to truly see the curriculum implementation and instructional best practices in action and making a difference with students."*

Sabrina Breault has been chosen as assistant principal for Pierce Downer and Hillcrest schools. Breault student taught at Hillcrest in spring 2002, then taught for six years at Pierce Downer before participating in the district's two-year administrative intern program.

IN HER WORDS: *"I am pleased to have the opportunity to continue working with the Pierce Downer community, and at Hillcrest, the staff has already been extremely welcoming. Working in two schools will help me see different perspectives and share ideas across the buildings, and I look forward to continuing the collaboration to provide support to students."*

Justin Sisul will serve as the assistant principal for Lester School. Sisul also participated in the district's administrative intern program, serving for two years at Lester after teaching music at Herrick Middle School for seven years.



IN HIS WORDS: *"Having spent two years as an administrative intern at Lester, I know firsthand what an outstanding school and community this is. It's inspiring to be a part of a school family where the staff is warm, caring and committed to excellence; the parents are supportive and engaged in the school; and the students achieve great things and have fun in the process."*



District 58 welcomes new staff members

District 58 welcomed approximately two dozen new staff members for the 2010-11 school year, including 20 classroom teachers, two social workers, one band/orchestra teacher, one LRC teacher, one nurse and one reading specialist.

New staff members spent five days in a comprehensive orientation program in mid-August, where they learned about District 58's curriculum, technology and philosophy, in addition to meeting with their mentors. The welcome week also included luncheons hosted by the Downers Grove Noon Lions Club and the District 58 Education Foundation.

For the full list of new staff members, visit www.dg58.org!

The Schools of District 58

BELLE AIRE SCHOOL

3935 Belle Aire Lane
630.719.5820

Principal: Michael Mitchinson
Built in 1969, named after a street
Mascot: Bulldog

EL SIERRA SCHOOL

6835 Fairmount Avenue
630.719.5825

Principal: Lucille Carney
Built in 1969, named after a subdivision
Mascot: Bobcat

FAIRMOUNT SCHOOL

6036 Blodgett Avenue
630.719.5830

Principal: Anthony Coglianese
Built in 1959, named after a street
Mascot: Falcons

HENRY PUFFER SCHOOL

2220 Haddow Avenue
630.968.0294

Principal: Todd McDaniel
Built in 1937, named after Lisle Township settler Henry Puffer
Mascot: Panthers

HERRICK MIDDLE SCHOOL

4435 Middaugh Avenue
630.719.5810

Principal: Jason Lynde
Asst. Principal: Brent Borchelt
Built in 1953, named after board member W.D. Herrick
Mascot: Spartans

HIGHLAND SCHOOL

3935 Highland Avenue
630.719.5835

Principal: Judy Kmak, Ed.D.
Built in 1952, named after a street
Mascot: Huskies

HILLCREST SCHOOL

1435 Jefferson Avenue
630.719.5840

Principal: Paula Thomas
Assistant Principal: Sabrina Breault
Built in 1952, named after a street
Mascot: Hound dogs

INDIAN TRAIL SCHOOL

6235 Stonewall Avenue
630.719.5845

Principal: Robin Bruebach
Built in 1967, named after the Indian Boundary line
Mascot: Stallions

District 58 Education Foundation gives back



Over the past eight years, the District 58 Education Foundation has brought in more than \$300,000 for the schools of District 58, which has been donated back primarily in the form of classroom and building grants for technology innovation, staff development and curriculum enrichment.

For the 2009-10 school year, those grants totaled approximately \$20,000. Projects/equipment funded included interactive whiteboards, a virtual frog dissection program, take-home phonics bags, and audio-book backpacks.

The Foundation also sponsors the Select 58 awards honoring eighth graders for service to their school and community, Distinguished Service Awards for staff, Sneak Preview for incoming seventh graders, and the annual new teacher welcome luncheon.

Downers Grove Grade School District 58 wishes to thank the Education Foundation and its volunteer Board of Directors for its tireless work on behalf of District 58 and its students:

Robert Aument, Greg Bedalov, Mike Busse, Laura Crawford, Deborah A. Drews, Todd Gallentine, Marc Hausmann, Emad Isaac, Deb Kimminau, Brian Krajewski, Paul Lueken, Terri McCreedy, Laura Neiberg, Liz O'Toole, Rupa Raote, Tom Rizzi, Jay Stocki, Tana Williams, Barb Wysocki

The District 58 Education Foundation welcomed the following new board members in September: Clifford Grammich, Bob Grogan, Amy Kovacevic and Stephan Upshaw.

For more information on the District 58 Education Foundation, including its programs and how to make a donation or get involved, please visit www.dg58ef.com.

District 58 offers free preschool screenings

District 58 offers free preschool screenings designed to identify all children ages two years and 10 months to five years old who might benefit from special education prior to beginning kindergarten. Parents or guardians of children who are residents of the district but not yet in kindergarten are eligible to register their children for the screening. For scheduled dates and locations for 2010-11, please visit www.dg58.org/preschool/screening.htm or call 630.719.5824.

Education Foundation announces 2010 Kelly Miller Circus performances

The Kelly Miller Circus will bring its animal menagerie and performing troupe to Downers Grove on Monday, Sept. 27 on the Fairmount/O'Neill grounds at 59th Street and Blodgett Avenue for the District 58 Education Foundation's annual fundraiser. The traditional old-fashioned circus will again present two performances, one at 4:30 p.m. and one at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are on sale now at the District 58 Administrative Service Center, 1860 63rd St.; at Community Bank, 1111 Warren Ave.; and online at www.dg58ef.com.

KINGSLEY SCHOOL

6509 Powell Street
630.719.5850

Principal: Charles Purdom, Jr.

Assistant Principal:

Elynn Cunningham

Built in 1963, named after Downers Grove settler Giles Kingsley

Mascot: Lions

LESTER SCHOOL

236 Indianapolis Avenue
630.719.5855

Principal: Carin Novak

Assistant Principal:

Justin Sisul

Built in 1956, named after Downers Grove WWII Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Fred Lester

Mascot: Leopards

O'NEILL MIDDLE SCHOOL

635 59th Street

630.719.5815

Principal: Matt Durbala

Assistant Principal:

Randy Janousek

Built in 1957, named after IL first female state representative,

Lottie O'Neill

Mascot: Senators

PIERCE DOWNER SCHOOL

1436 Grant Street
630.719.5860

Principal: Lisa Mondale, Ed.D.

Assistant Principal:

Sabrina Breault

Built in 1952, named after Downers Grove settler Pierce Downer

Mascot: Panthers

WHITTIER SCHOOL

536 Hill Street
630.719.5865

Principal: Linda Welch

Built in 1928, named after poet John Greenleaf Whittier

Mascot: Jaguars

To visit any of our schools' Web sites, go to www.dg58.org and click on the link for that school along the left-hand side of the page.



cultivate within the child values and character necessary to be a successful citizen.



Below are some of the many accomplishments of District 58 students and staff during 2009-10.

Celebrate 58!



District 58 staff members and School Board President Elizabeth Davis were honored May 7 by the Illinois chapter of the National School Public Relations Association for their service to District 58 students, families and community, and their support of public

education. Receiving awards were Dr. MaryBeth Webeler, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, in the Administrator category; School Board President Elizabeth Davis in the School Board Member category; El Sierra Principal Lucille Carney, Henry Puffer Principal Todd McDaniel, English Language Learner teachers Ruta Koncius, Cindy Szwed, Traci Leach, Susan Barker and Elizabeth House, and aide Yolanda Herrera, in the Team category for their work in organizing the “Navigating the American Educational System” workshops for District 58’s Spanish-speaking families.

Twenty-nine students each from O’Neill and Herrick middle schools were honored at the annual Select 58 banquet in April for their citizenship and contributions to school and community.

Three District 58 students advanced to the state science fair at the University of Illinois in May, having earned top scores at the regional science fair in Cicero. Emily Alves and Abby Kargol from O’Neill represented District 58 with their project, “Do Preschool Children Prefer ‘Imagination’ or Electronic Toys?”, and Katelyn Edel from Herrick represented District 58 with her project, “The Effects of Salinity on a Geyser.”

The student council at Henry Puffer School paired with the Village of Downers Grove to produce a calendar of Downers Grove landmarks. As a result of the school’s involvement in the village’s Total Community Development (TCDIII) process last spring, Puffer students were invited to participate in National Planning Month in October, and they decided to create the calendar. The net proceeds from the calendar sales were paired with a matching grant to purchase 10 bicycle racks for downtown Downers Grove.

Thirteen fourth- and fifth-grade students from Fairmount School were recognized for their submissions in the 2010 StoryTubes video booktalking contest.



The Herrick Chamber Strings ensemble earned the Northwestern University Music Marathon’s Group Prize for raising the most money from the most donors. They brought in a grand total of \$840 from 26 donors for The People’s Music School

in Chicago, which provides music lessons to families that could not otherwise afford them.

The O’Neill student council visited the Aurora facility of Feed My Starving Children, where they packed a total of 14,900 meals—enough to feed 41 children for a year.

Projects by 14 District 58 students represented the Downers Grove Area Council of PTAs at the state level of Reflections, a PTA arts recognition and achievement program for students.

More than 150 students earned top scores in the Band and Orchestra Solo Day competitions at Herrick and O’Neill in February.

Nearly three dozen Herrick and O’Neill students were selected by audition to participate in the Illinois Music Educators Association’s District 1 Music Festival in November, representing orchestra, concert band and chorus.



A total of 26 students in second through sixth grade at Pierce Downer School logged at least one million words read through the Accelerated Reader program this school year, earning spots on the school’s Wall of Fame.

Accelerated Reader is a software assessment used to monitor reading, and involves quizzes for each book read through the program.

Seven District 58 schools honored with Academic Excellence awards

More than half of District 58’s 13 schools have been honored with Academic Excellence awards from the state. These awards are given to schools in which at least 90 percent of students met or exceeded state standards in reading and math for three consecutive years, as measured by the Illinois Standards Achievement Test. Across the state, only 438 schools earned Academic Excellence Awards for 2009. Receiving the designation in District 58 were **Belle Aire, Highland, Hillcrest, Lester, Pierce Downer, Whittier** and **Herrick Middle School**. Academic Excellence is one category of award in the Illinois Honor Roll program. More information about the Illinois Honor Roll is available at www.ilhonorroll.niu.edu.



Students at Fairmount School – along with Principal Tony Coglianese – show their support for Haiti relief by wearing Hats for Haiti.



The O'Neill Middle School eighth grade boys' basketball team won their second consecutive DuPage Metro Valley Association Conference title.



Ten District 58 staff were honored at the Education Foundation's 2010 Distinguished Service Awards ceremony. This year's nominees were Megan Finnegan, Sarah Pinkus, Leslie Walker, Beth Taylor, Julie Bianchin, Amy Brown, Diane Claver, Nancy Herkes, Carol Christofano and Katie Modine.

Lester/Highland physical education teacher Pat Brown was honored by the Downers Grove Elementary Education Association as Teacher of the Year for 2010. Fellow nominees were Meg Adams, Julie Bianchin, Carol Christofano, Marla Gilbert, Sandy Leff, Pattie Pearson, Sherry Shanahan, Melissa Swallows and Margot Van Dyke.

The Downers Grove Junior Woman's Club honored three District 58 staff members with Outstanding Teacher Awards: Pierce Downer third grade teacher Karyn Langdon; Sean Rhoads, who supervises the Developmental Learning Program for District 58 students at O'Neill Middle School; and Pierce Downer second grade teacher Mary Eagan.

Highland School Principal Judy Kmak earned her doctorate this past spring!

O'Neill science teacher Meg Van Dyke netted a \$5,000 grant for the school from the Kinder Morgan Foundation, which made possible the purchase of 10 computing devices and several sets of environmental probes.

Kingsley School earned a grant from Sylvan Dell Publishing for access to 50 e-books, featuring English and Spanish text/audio.

District 58 students give back through service projects

District 58 students give back to the community and the world in many ways. They hold bake sales, movie days and penny harvests to raise funds, and donate items such as winter clothing and canned goods. Organizations and projects that received help from District 58 schools in 2009-10 include:

- Hats for Haiti, which brought in more than \$12,000 for earthquake relief
- Operation Support Our Troops
- Advocate Hospice
- Humanitarian Service Project
- FISH pantry
- Greenhouse Shelter
- Juvenile Diabetes Foundation
- Toy Express
- People's Resource Center
- Toys for Tots
- West Suburban Humane Society
- Ronald McDonald House
- Feed My Starving Children
- Sudanese Community Center



Older Adults and Kids: A partner in education

Do you have a story to tell, or a special skill to share? Do you enjoy reading aloud and helping children grasp the joy of the written word? What about tutoring or homework help?

District 58 children can learn so much from our community members who are 55 and older, and participating in our Older Adults and Kids (OAK) volunteer program doesn't require any specific time commitment. It's whatever works in your schedule, and whatever you feel you can give.

Those interested in volunteering are encouraged to contact Jennifer Waldorf at 630.719.5805 or jwaldorf@dg58.org, or visit the Community Relations page at www.dg58.org for more information and an application.

District 58 Communications Department earns awards

The District 58 Communications Department has been honored with four statewide awards for work done during the 2009-10 school year. The department was recognized in the Illinois chapter of the National School Public Relations Association's Communications Contest. District 58 earned awards for its video about District 58's annual Author Fest; the Bridges biannual newsletter; the Communicate 58 e-newsletter; and the 2009 Back to School Report.



Downers Grove Grade School District 58
We Envision. We Seek. We Believe.

1860 63rd Street
Downers Grove, Illinois 60516
www.dg58.org | 630.719.5800

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District 58 moves to online-only e-flyer system

As part of continuing efforts to make communications conveniently available online and to “go green” by using less paper, District 58 has changed the way its community partners in education distribute information to students and families.

With our new e-flyer system, in effect for 2010-11, District 58 is introducing an eco-friendly distribution system that saves resources, and also the time required for parents and staff to sort and handle materials.

In the past, District 58 has distributed nearly half a million pieces of paper each year on behalf of community groups and organizations. Beginning this year, flyers are available for viewing online only. Parents and community members can see the latest postings at www.dg58.org/community_relations/flyer.htm.

The central office still will approve flyers twice per month, and they must still meet the district’s criteria in order to be distributed via the e-flyer system. When new flyers are available for viewing, parents will receive an e-mail alert via the parent notification system. A link to the e-flyer page and the listing of new flyers also will be included in the district’s periodic e-newsletter, Communicate 58. To sign up for Communicate 58, visit www.dg58.org or e-mail jwaldorf@dg58.org.

For families without Internet access, copies of flyers will also be available at the ASC, 1860 63rd Street, as well as at individual schools. For more information, please contact Jennie Waldorf at 630.719.5805, or e-mail jwaldorf@dg58.org.

twitter



Residents can also keep up with the latest news from District 58, its schools and the Education Foundation by visiting www.twitter.com/DGDDistrict58, or by signing up for a Twitter account and requesting to follow DGDDistrict58. Please contact Jennifer Waldorf at jwaldorf@dg58.org or 630.719.5805 with any questions or concerns.



Get the latest from District 58 delivered right to your inbox!
Visit www.dg58.org to sign up for Communicate 58 today.