



KCSD96

Every child. Every school. Every day.

STATE OF THE DISTRICT REPORT

Superintendent Julie A. Schmidt

July 17, 2018

Kildeer Countryside School District 96, Office of the Superintendent

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Introduction

Renowned management consultant Peter Drucker encourages leaders to Follow effective action with quiet reflection. From the quiet reflection will come even more effective action.

The preparation of this State of the District report is a comprehensive reflection on the past school year and an opportunity to build on our deep commitment to continuous improvement. Each year it memorializes the work that has been done in an effort to synthesize it for stakeholders.

This State of the District report addresses department highlights and celebrations as well as progress in meeting recommended goal areas for the 2018–19 school year.

Department Highlights

Business Services and Facilities and Transportation

Assistant Superintendent Jon Hitcho and our Business Office are well recognized state-wide for best practices in facilities and fiscal management. During the 2017-2018 school year they worked with the Lake County Board of Review to save the District \$424,617 in EAV through the tax appeal process and generated \$911,664 in interest income for FY 2018 due to a laddering strategy with CDs and municipal bonds. This is the highest level ever in the District's financial history, averaging \$75,972 per month. They also enhanced the use of the corporate p-card system with more district vendors to receive the highest rebate for purchases—totaling \$10,687—a District record high. Such strategies allow us to maintain stable high-quality programs and services, even when finances from the State of Illinois are uncertain.

Another project aimed at ensuring high levels of efficiency was the creation of an online handbook for administrative assistants and principals on business office procedures/protocols ensuring consistency and accuracy. The department has privatized the food service contract with OrganicLife and has then worked with them and the students to offer different food options in the cafeteria. During the current school year, they also implemented a new third-party flex-spending program for employees.

Leaders in the Business Office are also focused on and determined to expand our renewable energy options through the installation of solar panels. Not only is renewable energy critical to our future, the interaction with solar technology is connected to STEM education. The currently proposed project in Long Grove would pay for itself over nine years and provide over 99% of the energy at the Country Meadows / Woodlawn campus. Business office and facilities leaders will continue to work to expand renewable energy options across District 96.

The District also maintains an ongoing five (5)-year capital improvement plan that includes maintenance and innovation for District facilities. Projects being completed during the summer of 2018 include, but are not limited to, the following:

COUNTRY MEADOWS

New carpet and paint
New school sign

IVY HALL

Water main RPZ (LS)
New carpet and paint
New doors

KILDEER

Three classrooms abated
New carpet and paint
Kiln Exhaust
Exterior door replacement final phase

PRAIRIE

New carpet and paint
New doors
Water main RPZ (LS)

TWIN GROVES

Roof phase 2 & 3
LVT in science corridor
New doors

WILLOW GROVE

New LVT in main corridor

WOODLAWN

New carpet and paint
New school sign

WILLARD ADMINISTRATION CENTER

New carpet
Bathroom ADA renovations

Director of Facilities and Transportation Sam Miranda, in addition to running the district's contracted transportation services, worked to implement a new facility scheduling software and work order program. Also, Mr. Miranda had been a key member of the District's Crisis Committee.

Assistant Superintendent Jon Hitcho has served as chair of the Illinois Association of School Business Officials Budgeting and Financial Forecasting Professional Development Committee for 4 years and was recently recognized for his service. He is a frequent presenter at professional conferences. Topics include "Capital Improvement Budgeting" and "Moving the Investment Needle." Business Services Coordinator Michelle Whitlow serves as Vice Chair of the IASBO Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting Professional Development Committee.

Extraordinary leadership in the business and facilities department has led to 9 years of clean audits and the District receiving Financial Recognition for the last 9 years.

Facility Usage Organizations for the 2017-18 School Year

As a public entity, we continue to provide access to our buildings and facilities for use by many outside organizations each year. In addition to extensive use by the Buffalo Grove Park District, the following groups accessed our District 96 facilities:

Facility Use Organizations for the 2017-18 School Year

- All Community Events
- Banner Day Camp
- BBYO - Great Midwest Region
- Buffalo Grove Basketball Group
- Buffalo Grove Park District
- Boy Scouts of America
- Clutch Ballers Youth Basketball Program
- Congressman Brad Schneider
- District 66
- Fun Fluency
- Girl Scouts of America
- Girls on the Run Chicago
- Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association
- Historic Downtown Long Grove
- JCYS Camp Henry Horner
- KI Martial Arts
- Lake County Division of Transportation
- Long Grove Park District
- Meadowood Estates Homeowners Association
- Multiple Choice Mothers of Multiples Club
- Play Hard Hoops
- Relay For Life of Buffalo Grove/Lincolnshire
- Rotary Club of Long Grove, Kildeer, and Hawthorne Woods
- Russian School of Mathematics
- Schwaben Soccer Club
- Scribbles and Strokes
- State Representative Carol Sente
- Team Impact Illinois Track and Field Club
- Team NLP
- TNT Shockers
- TNT Volleyball
- Twin Orchard Country Club
- Village of Buffalo Grove
- Village of Long Grove
- W Kim Tae Kwon Do
- Waterbury Place THA

Human Resources

Dr. Beth Dalton is our Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources. As a vital member of our professional learning community, her department not only ensures that we adhere to very high standards in the areas of recruiting and hiring, she co-facilitates the new teacher mentor program with Jeanne Spiller. Committed to excellence, Dr. Dalton has earned a high level of credibility at the local, state, and national levels for her expertise and depth of knowledge.

Over the course of the current school year her department has continued to enhance screening and hiring practices through the implementation of video screening / interviewing and the updating of the entire hiring process. New aspects of the process help to ensure that candidates not only have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and expertise, they and we have the opportunity to explore organizational fit. In addition, evaluation support processes were improved to continue to identify relevant and high leverage “look fors” in the process. And correlated with our work around cultural consciousness, we have expanded our recruiting efforts and venues to pursue higher levels of diversity.

Dr. Dalton contributes significantly to the field of education by serving on the board of the American Association of School Personnel Administrators and recently became the president-elect. She has also participated on the Illinois Small Colleges Placement Association advisory board as well as the advisory board for Frontline Education. She is a regular state and national presenter on current human resources issues including hiring, mentoring, compliance, and human resources in a professional learning community.

Curriculum, Professional Development, and Technology

The District 96 Teaching and Learning Department is dedicated to evidence-based best practices. As a professional learning community committed to continuous improvement, all educational professionals in the system participate in learning together. Our students benefit from adults learning together as they strive to meet their own learning goals. The results of this work remain evident in our student outcome data, summarized under Fun Facts and Celebrations!

The Teaching and Learning Department bears much responsibility for ensuring that we have the capacity in the system to achieve our goals. This is accomplished through a strong and sustainable professional learning plan. Each and every district goal requires adult learning in order to bring it to life.

During the 2017-2018 school year, the Teaching and Learning Department—including Jeanne Spiller, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Jason Keenon, Curriculum Coordinator, and Katie Sheridan, Director of Language and Early Literacy—supported our initiatives at extremely high levels. Curricularly, we successfully implemented the Bridges math series in grades K-5. This work will continue next year and has already resulted in high levels of student growth in the area of math as evidenced by NWEA growth data. Also, at the elementary level science targets were re-paced to maximize student learning. At the middle school level, the District eliminated the lowest level of math (Pathway 1) at the 6th and 7th grades in response to data. This year’s growth data indicates that students who moved to a more rigorous math curriculum exceeded their math growth targets. Also in the area of math there was a collaborative revision and implementation of the Stevenson High School math placement process. This was the culmination of three years of collaborative work across the Consortium. Lastly, the department facilitated the implementation and assessment of new Spanish standards while supporting instruction at three grade levels as a part of the new middle school schedule.

In District 96 we recognize that academic targets are critical to the future success of our students, but that social emotional skills are just as critically important to future success.

Thus, ongoing work to update and recreate social-emotional learning standards that reflect cultural awareness and consciousness resulted in an initial implementation pilot. This work will continue next year leading to revised reporting on the new standards.

The Guiding Coalition on Interculturalism (GCI) was a new parent group focused on supporting culturally conscious practices across our system. GCI parents were involved with schools over the course of the school year and supported adult learning during an Institute Day. In addition, GCI made significant contributions to enhancing information and services for our families who are new to the area or to the country. Katie Sheridan serves as co-chair of the Consortium-wide Diversity, Race, and Equity group that is coordinating our Consortium-wide Institute Day focused on this topic during the 2018-2019 school year.

Leaders in this department provide leadership not only locally but regionally and nationally, as well. They are often called upon to assist and consult with neighboring schools and districts on school improvement initiatives. They also present frequently at state and national conferences on topics that include professional learning communities, assessment, cultural consciousness, and grading and reporting. We continue to benefit from their leadership and expertise.

Educational Services

The Educational Services Department provides leadership and program development for special education and student matters, leads social-emotional learning initiatives, and collaborates on the provision of multi-tiered systems of intervention and support to all students. Amy Gluck serves as the Director of Educational Services and Jane Pedersen serves as the Assistant Director of Educational Services. They work closely with the Exceptional Learners Collaborative (ELC)—the special education collaborative to which Districts 96, 125, and 103 belong.

During the 2017-2018 school year the department leaders facilitated the implementation of eSTAR, a new system for the creation of individualized education programs (IEPs). They fostered the development of a parent support group through the ELC for the parents of students with special needs, as well. As local programming for students continues to grow, visioning work to define and articulate programmatic priorities clearly was renewed this year. This work will be ongoing during the 2018-2019 school year and will include continuing to develop co-teaching practices at the middle school level.

Leaders in this area were integral to the social-emotional target development and the integration of those targets with engagement and equity work. The SEL pilot, as stated previously, will continue during the next school year.

Lastly, there was a focus on elementary-level problem-solving practices and the consistency of such by problem-solving teams across the District this year in order to support tiered intervention, discussion with parents, and the development of student plans. This work will continue at the middle school level during the 2018-2019 school year.

Both Mrs. Gluck and Mrs. Pedersen make significant contributions to the field through their professional organizations and by providing professional development. Presentation topics have included best practices

in special education and writing IEP goals. Mrs. Gluck provides support in the area of disciplinary literacy practices and is currently writing a book series on literacy and PLC practices.

Office of the Superintendent

As Superintendent of District 96, I continue to find myself in awe of the focused and passionate individuals who make this District their professional home. At every level of the organization, dedicated adults are committed to improving outcomes for students on a daily basis. There is much consistency from school to school in District 96 as we are committed to a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Each and every student, regardless of school or teacher, will be exposed to and work towards the same priorities in order to prepare them for high school and for life. But each of our schools are unique in their own way and have a culture all their own. Woodlawn and Twin Groves articulate and collaborate but maintain a fierce sense of school-based pride. Kildeer, Country Meadows, Ivy Hall, and Prairie share and learn from each other while offering activities and opportunities unique to the interests and need of their own students and families. And there is nowhere exactly like Willow Grove. Their ability to focus on our earliest learners supports a nurturing and thriving learning environment.

One of the most inspiring aspects of what I do is getting to be in classrooms each year to learn— at an intimate level—what happens on a daily basis in our learning environments. This passion and commitment I mention was evident in the four classrooms that I was privileged to be a part of this year. In Linda Dolan's kindergarten classroom at Willow Grove, I observed our youngest students blossom into confident learners full of curiosity and awe. In Ms. Sas's second grade biliteracy classroom at Country Meadows I experienced the kindness of our students as I learned more from them than they did from me! In Mr. Nagle's 5th-grade Band at Prairie, I saw and heard the steady development of budding musicians who were so very proud of their progress and development. They were even brave enough to let me conduct a piece at their year-end concert! And in Mrs. Everett's 6th-grade math class, I had the privilege of interacting with bright, articulate, and fascinating young people who all have such exciting futures! Each of these teachers and their students allowed me to learn and grow as both an educator and a person this year.

Outside of District 96, I continue to advocate for best practices in education by serving on the Exceptional Learners Collaborative Executive Board, of which District 96 was a founding member. I also serve on the Board of Directors of the Illinois Association for School Administrators and—through this organization—advocate for all of our students with our state and national legislators. I serve on this board as the representative from Lake County. Likewise, over the past four years, I have had the honor to serve on the National Professional Learning Communities Advisory Board. While it would be easy to remain focused and committed to only District 96, I strongly believe that positively impacting the future of public education for our students is my moral and ethical obligation.

Through my involvement outside of our District, I am constantly reminded of how fortunate we are to be a part of such a thriving learning community where we are never complacent, believe that ALL students can learn at high levels, and are committed to taking collective responsibility for that mission.

Board of Education

The Board of Education continues to be highly recognized for its governance practices and participation in the Illinois Association of School Boards and has received the association's top recognition. District 96

Board President Marc Tepper currently serves as chairperson of the Lake Division of the Illinois Association of School Boards and continues to be our legislative representative at the Joint Annual Conference.

Our Board's ongoing commitment to the District's mission, vision, and values continued to be evident throughout the 2017-2018 school year. As a high-functioning Board, they do visioning and planning work all year long as needs arise and change. Their work is not static, but fluid, innovative, and ongoing. In April the Board brought together over 60 community members and leaders to delve into the importance of values to an organization's culture and examined what our current value statements look like—or should look like—when brought to life in 2018. The experience helped renew their commitment to meeting the needs of all families in a school culture that is inclusive and responsive. The Community Focus evening in April was facilitated by District leaders and DeEtta Jones.

The Board supports at high levels the implementation of our goal—both academic and non-academic alike. They allocate the resources necessary to provide exemplary programs and services to students and adults. They are committed to protecting our financial resources so that programs and services do not have to be impacted when federal and state finances become unpredictable. Data continues to show that our constituents receive high value for their dollar with outcomes for students in the Top 10 in the state. The Board continues to be confident about the District's long-term financial stability due to high financial ratings and an ongoing stable fiscal management strategy.

This spring, board member Elizabeth Dietz stepped down after more than seven years of dedicated service. After accepting applications and conducting interviews, the Board appointed Dina Manka to serve the remainder of Ms. Dietz's term.

Community Engagement

District 96 parent group opportunities include the Parent-To-Parent Network, the Parent Review Committee, the Parent Teacher Organization, and the Guiding Coalition on Interculturalism. All of these groups meet at least monthly. The District 96 Parent-To-Parent (P2P) Network is as active as ever, led by Betsy Fresen. The P2P Network focuses on discussion topics of interest to parents that include both formal presentations and informal discussions. This year, childcare services were offered by Stevenson High School students during programs to support high levels of parent attendance. The parent program expert / panel topics in the past year included:

Lead Your Kids to Better Outcomes: Effective Discipline Without Punishment or Intimidation
The Top Ten Mistakes Good Parents Make
Simplifying Stevenson
Understanding Personality and Character: No More Cookie Cutter Parenting
Bullying
Raising Ethical Kids in a Competitive World
The Transition to Middle School

The P2P Network conversations focused on technology questions and managing students' technology habits at home, encouraging kids' extracurricular involvement, helping parents engage with the D96 community, and group advice-sharing on motivating students and communicating with teachers. Discussions were held on five dates throughout this school year.

In addition, we continue to enjoy high levels of support and volunteerism through parent volunteers. The very dedicated PTO Executive Boards serve each of our schools. Not only do hundreds of parents support PTO events, they also volunteer in schools, classrooms, and for extra-curricular events and activities. Parent volunteer opportunities in our schools include but are not limited to the following:

- Cultural Celebration Design
- Mystery Readers
- PE Helpers
- Field Day
- Orange Ruler Run
- Wildcat Wow
- Stevenson Fun Run
- Field Trips
- Library Support
- School Yard Scamper Fun Run
- Copy Room
- Music Concerts
- Media Center Shelving
- Science Lab Support
- Fifth-Grade Party
- Fifth-Grade Girls' & Boys' Night Out
- Family Picnic and End-of-Year Parties
- Band and Orchestra Boosters
- Staff Appreciation Week
- Cultural Arts Assemblies
- Movie Nights
- Family Reading Nights
- After-School Culture Clubs with Parent Ethnicity Presentations
- Girls-On-the-Run Parent Coaches
- Yoga in PE
- Art Helpers
- Cougar Press
- Artsonia
- Picture Day
- Bake Sale
- Book Fair
- Graduation Activities
- Science Olympiad Coaching
- Wrestling Tournament
- IGSMA Rehearsal Performance
- Locker Clean Out
- Track Meets
- General Classroom Helpers

And, again, late this spring community members came together to discuss and share perspectives on District 96 values. During the next school year, we will continue to build on these experiences as we work in partnership with District parents and the community.

Celebrations and Fun Facts!

- ★ When compared to public elementary and middle schools in the State of Illinois, each and every District 96 school achieves between the 91st to 99th percentile in the area of math.
- ★ When compared to public elementary and middle schools in the State of Illinois, each and every District 96 school achieves between the 93rd and 99th percentile in the area of English / Language arts.
- ★ District 96 students, when combined overall, performed at the 97th percentile as compared to the rest of the state of Illinois in the area of reading last year.
- ★ District 96 students, when combined overall, performed at the 98th percentile as compared to the rest of the state of Illinois in the area of mathematics last year.
- ★ Over 359 certified staff are completing 3,605 curriculum writing hours this summer.
- ★ The Board of Education recognized our students in over 395 instances in the areas of academics, athletics, and music during the student recognition portion of Board meetings.
- ★ Approximately 15 District instructors are teaching or facilitating 13 courses and book studies this summer involving 143 participants.
- ★ District 96 hosted over 218 visiting educators who came from across the United States and Canada to learn about our Professional Learning Community practices.
- ★ District 96 ran another full summer school program, with over 280 students attending 5 different programs.
- ★ District 96 continues to perform as one of the Top Ten elementary school districts in the state of Illinois!
- ★ The examination of leading indicators correlated with student achievement indicate that District 96 is exceeding expectations at the 98th percentile.
- ★ Prairie Elementary School received its first Blue Ribbon Award from the United States Department of Education!
- ★ District 96 middle schools offered an average of 26 club and activity opportunities this year.
- ★ District 96 elementary schools offered 10-15 club and activity opportunities that range from after-school sports and Girls On the Run, to stock market club and student council this year.
- ★ District 96 middle schools offered intramural sports in addition to 12 sports team opportunities.
- ★ Woodlawn Middle School was awarded the 3rd Annual DuFour Award in Phoenix, AZ.
- ★ District 96 Parent-to-Parent Network offered 7 programs and 5 monthly conversations on a variety of topics aimed at engaging parents and building community.
- ★ Woodlawn Middle School is the Illinois Science Olympiad 6th-place state champion for its division.
- ★ Twin Groves Middle School is the Illinois Science Olympiad 5th-place state champion for its division.
- ★ The District 96 Board recognized 123 middle school students for outstanding performance and participation in the Illinois Music Educator Association (IMEA) and Illinois Grade School Music Association (IGSMA) events.

- ★ Five faculty members were awarded advanced degrees during the current school year, which now means that over 67 percent of faculty hold master's degrees or higher.
- ★ Julie Schmidt, superintendent of schools, continues to serve as the Lake County representative on the IASA Board of Directors.
- ★ The District launched the D96 App for parents to easily follow and reference school activities and events.
- ★ The District 96 Board of Education was once again recognized for outstanding governance by the Illinois Association of School Boards.

Recommended Goals for 2018-19

The high levels of expertise among our administration, faculty, and staff contribute significantly to all we are able to accomplish each school year. Our focus on ongoing improvement and innovative practices does not waver and we continue to build the capacity of each and every person in our organization. To continue to improve will require laser-like focus on what is most important. We will focus on maintaining high levels of student growth and achievement through the implementation of new learning standards to include science at the elementary level and social studies at the middle school level. We will continue to provide high levels of professional development with job-embedded components to equip our teachers with the learning opportunities they need to reach every student in every school every day. With the much-expanded staff and the expansion of curriculum at that level, we will provide high levels of support to ensure that all kindergarten students have a smooth transition. Lastly, we will continue to focus on parent and community engagement through communication and participation. Specific areas of focus include:

- ★ Continuing work from this past year, we will increasingly apply knowledge of differentiated and monitored small group practices in their classrooms to meet individual student needs
- ★ Extending a pilot from the current school year, implement a NWEA MAP student goal setting process
- ★ Continuing work from this past year, we will continue to focus on high levels of student growth and development of mathematical thinking through continued implementation of the Bridges program at the elementary level
- ★ Research and recommend next steps in biliteracy program development
- ★ We will identify connections between the C3 social studies framework and literacy themes at the elementary level
- ★ Work to examine and implement new fine arts standards at all levels
- ★ Continue to build shared understanding and increased use of play-based instructional practices to meet the developmental needs of kindergarten and early childhood students
- ★ Based on data, build shared deeper understanding of high-quality early literacy instructional practices to increase student growth and achievement in grades 1-3
- ★ Continue to build capacity to design and provide targeted, innovative, and flexible student learning opportunities during the FLEX period at the middle school level
- ★ Examine and refine middle school problem-solving processes and procedures
- ★ Continuing work from this past year, increase our depth of knowledge and application of interculturalism, engagement, and social-emotional learning through the creation of a connected framework that embeds practices into classroom instruction and reporting
- ★ A multi-stakeholder group (leaders, staff, students, community) will engage in dialogue and a

process to develop and make public collective commitments around the District values as a follow-up to the 2017-2018 values work

- ★ Support the exploration of student interests at the middle-school level and increase student leadership opportunities at both the elementary and middle school levels.

In Summary

For many of us, childhood memories of the start of a school year bring recollections of “new”: new teachers, new classmates, new shoes and notebooks, new wax in the hallways, new beginnings.

In reflecting while preparing this State of the District report and anticipating the school year ahead, the sense of “new” still is distinctly present. Even as our District closes still another school year characterized by high levels of student growth, national recognition, and genuine progress in building our professional capacity, the 2018–19 school year ahead beckons with new challenges, new expectations, new opportunities for inspiring, supporting, discovering, and achieving.

While some might see a new school year as resuming a routine, in District 96, it is anything but that! In every one of our schools—every day—every child benefits from teachers, faculty, and administrators bringing their commitment to fostering students’ academic and social/emotional growth and achievement, to building professional capacity, to improving services, to leading with responsible fiscal stewardship, to advocating for all children’s education. Our commitment to continuous improvement makes every year new, ripe with opportunity for everyone in our learning community—children and adults—to experience the pleasure and pride of giving their personal best.

This, indeed, is the culture of District 96, where lifelong learners are nurtured, opportunities to achieve maximum potential abound, and “new” is the route our students and staff will take to develop talents, explore interests, and discover passions.