

Student Success at the Heart of 2012–13 Accomplishments

*Contracts Signed, Indicators Met, Common Core Preparation Started,
and Strategic Budgeting Review Completed*

The Board of Education and administrators framed last August what a successful 2012–13 school year would look like as the District strives to improve student’s lives and their learning opportunities. That picture of success came into focus recently when Superintendent Dr. Michael Nicholson provided the State of the District Report, highlighting the many milestones reached.

“This was an ambitious year of goals, the density of which is unsustainable if repeated

yearly,” Dr. Nicholson said. “Nonetheless, much progress was made this year and all District 34 stakeholders should feel pride in that. We set goals and worked diligently on them.”

The report Dr. Nicholson presented to the Board included several categories of achievement.

Goal Area Indicators Met

The District has three main goals that center around curriculum, instruction and assessment. Those include:

- All classroom teachers will be using the available Common Core State Standards by June 2014.
- Strengthened instructional support systems and a refined strategic resource allocation process will be implemented to ensure our finite resources are focused on the most effective instruction for learning in every classroom by June 2014.
- Valid assessments for measuring student growth and achievement for all grades, in all subjects, will be in place or ready for pilot by June 2014.

In order to reach those goals, there were several indicators for 2012–13. Despite an aggressive timeline, all of those indicators were met this year. This puts the District in position to reach each of those three goals by the end of the 2013–14 school year.



Student success is the basis for the goals set forth each year.

see **Accomplishments**, page 4

Student Success Remains High

District 34 considers itself to be a high achieving school district both in the State and across the country. That status was once again confirmed with the most recent student achievement results on the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessments.

Students are evaluated once in the fall, once in the winter, and once in the spring through the NWEA exams. There are 20 grade level and content area assessments given to students in 3rd through 8th grade. The fall assessments help teachers gauge a student's level of understanding in each curricular area (reading, math, and language usage) as the school year begins. The winter exam shows progress toward goals. The spring exam is used to determine the growth attained in each subject area assessed.

District Reaches Goal in 19 of 20 Measures

Following the fall assessments, a growth goal for each child is set. The results in the spring provide a picture of how well the school year went from a student growth perspective. It is important to note that when the results are provided, the District compares its students to other high achieving school districts across the country as defined by NWEA. The District then raises the level even

higher to set its goal. Even with those elevated attainment levels, in 19 of the 20 measures, District 34 students either met or surpassed the goal. In fact, in eight of the 20 measures, students significantly exceeded the elevated goals.

"We are proud that we have reached these lofty goals and know this is a direct reflection of the outstanding work of our teachers, principals, support staff and administrators as we all focus on individual student achievement throughout the year," Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Beth Tsoumas said. "We hope to build upon this success through continued professional development around teaching students to self assess and set goals. Student goal setting, supported by regular descriptive feedback from teachers and self-reflection, helps to significantly increase student learning."

College and Career Readiness

The NWEA exam was tied to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2011–12, which has helped the District assess how students are progressing.



Students continue to succeed when compared to peers nationally.

The measure will help support our understanding of instructional levels, achievement growth and the effectiveness of our instructional programs in District 34.

By using this version of the NWEA exam for the past two years prior to adoption of the CCSS in the upcoming school year, District 34 has positioned itself well to help students prepare for high school and beyond. The assessment will be one predictor of how well we are doing in preparing students for college and career readiness.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THE COMMON CORE

As District 34 implements the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) during the upcoming school year, parents and community members have many questions. Many of those questions are answered on the District 34 website at www.glenview34.org. In addition to the frequently asked questions posted

on the site, a video also is available that helps explain the initiative. Both Superintendent Dr. Mike Nicholson and Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Beth Tsoumas answer questions about the CCSS.

THANK YOU RETIREES

District 34 thanks recent retirees for their dedicated service to students.

The list includes:

Pamela Clifford, Springman/Attea Student Services Administrator, 8 years

Shirley Corbeil, Pleasant Ridge Associate, 12 years

Becky Dean, Westbrook LRC Director, 29 years

Dr. Jill Engel, Assistant Superintendent of Personnel, 8 years

Margaret Henrick, Hoffman Associate, 14 years

Alice Hill, Payroll Coordinator, 16 years

Terri Kimura, Hoffman Teacher, 17 years

Brenda Kraber, Glen Grove Teacher, 28 years

Patricia Neudecker, Lyon Teacher, 23 years

Board and Glenview Professionals Association Approve a Four-Year Contract

The Board of Education voted to approve a four-year contract with the Glenview Professionals Association (GPA) in June following ratification by GPA members.

The agreement aligns annual increases of one of the district's major expenditures (salaries) to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This is significant, as a majority (approximately 88%) of the district's revenue comes from local property taxes and those annual tax increases are capped at CPI or 5%, whichever is lower.

"One of our goals for this agreement was fairness to our support staff members, who are vital to our success, and stewardship to the community that provides us with the resources needed for our programs and services," said Board President Chris Northwick. "Working collaboratively with the GPA, we have strategically aligned the community's resources with District 34's educational priorities through this contract."

Raises Tied to CPI

The contract ties raises to CPI, with a total salary increase of 3% in the first

year of the contract (2013–14). In the second year of the contract, the total salary increase is 1.7%. In the final two years of the contract, total salary increases will mirror the increase in the CPI with a floor of 1.5% and ceiling of 4.0%. The CPI for the third year of the contract will be announced in January of 2014 and the CPI for the fourth year of the contract will be announced in January of 2015.

The GPA contract for the 2012–13 year provided a one-time contract extension ratification payment equal to 2% in lieu of a raise. This new contract places that 2% on the base for employees for purpose of applying future salary increases.

Health Insurance Changes

The GPA and the Board also agreed to a revamped health insurance plan. As was reported earlier when the teacher contract was ratified, this system-wide change in the health insurance plan will

result in approximately \$500,000 savings each year starting in 2013–14.

"The creation of this agreement provided an opportunity for the Board and the GPA to better understand each other's needs and work toward a common goal of staying competitive in salary and benefits for our high quality support staff," Superintendent Dr. Mike Nicholson said. "I look forward to further strengthening the communication level and understanding that was reached as we worked together to create this agreement."

Contract Runs Through June 2017

The new contract runs through June 30, 2017. There are approximately 230 full-time and part-time professionals represented by the GPA. Some of the professionals represented by the GPA include associates, custodians, food service employees, administrative assistants and health coordinators.

Student Services Coordinator Hired



Dr. Jason Rehfeldt

The Board of Education recently hired Dr. Jason Rehfeldt as the Student Services Coordinator for Attea and Springman Schools. In his role he will be the administrative leader in the special education area for both schools, working collaboratively with the principal and assistant principal in those areas. He will also be the lead administrator for the Response to Intervention (RtI) program to help all students succeed.

Dr. Rehfeldt has been a psychologist in

District 34 since the 2006–07 school year, working at both Lyon and Pleasant Ridge during that time. In his role, he has worked with the school community to help develop early intervention system for students with academic and behavioral challenges and has helped develop students both socially and emotionally. He has also been a leader in using research to inform practice within the psychologist group.

Prior to arriving in District 34, he was a school psychologist in Ridgeland School District 122, and in Wyandotte Comprehensive Special Education Cooperative in Kansas City.

He earned his bachelor's degree in psychology from Northern Illinois University, and both his specialist and doctoral degrees in school psychology from the University of Kansas.



Common Core Work Underway

Under the leadership of Executive Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Beth Tsoumas, a dedicated group of teacher leaders spent last year preparing for the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The basic tenant of the CCSS is to ensure all students are prepared for college or the workforce after graduating from high school. The standards provide a clear understanding of the learning expectations in several key curricular areas. All staff were provided professional development throughout the year. This work will ensure District 34 will be positioned for high quality implementation of the CCSS this year and beyond.

Strategic Budgeting Implemented

In the spring of 2012, following staff and community input, the Board voted to cut \$1.8 million from the budget to help align expenditures to revenues. The 2012–13 school year was the first year those cuts were implemented and Assistant Superintendent for Student Services Art Abrego led a year-long review of the reduction impacts. Three conclusions were reached, including:

- The financial goal was exceeded.
- No compelling evidence surfaced to change the implementation.
- The review process provided opportunities for the District to strengthen data collection and monitoring processes.

New Contracts for Certified Staff and Support Staff Signed

The Board and the District’s two unions agreed upon contracts this past year that tie raises to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This was significant as the agreements align annual increases of one of the district’s major expenditures (salaries) to the driver of the District’s revenue (CPI). To learn more about the support staff contract, see page 3.

Reflections on the Year

“When we clearly define the work, our progress will be easier to see,” Nicholson said. “Defining the work and progress indicators at the outset pays dividends for productivity and satisfaction.”

Nicholson also shared the significant challenges the District successfully met in recent history. “Just over two years ago, there were many uncertainties including financial deficits, new curriculum reform, two expiring union contracts, turnover in key leadership, and attendance boundary concerns,” he said. “Through our work together, we are on the other side of most of these challenges, and celebrate the relative stability we have brought to the system.”

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To empower children
to be self-directed learners
and responsible decision makers.

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