

District



News

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Building Bridges to Success

Dates to Remember:

- Jan. 9, 2012 School resumes after winter break
- Jan. 16 No School - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday Observance
- Jan. 20 Second Quarter Ends
- Jan. 26 School Board Meeting
- Jan. 27 Report Card Distribution
- Feb. 10 Bring Your Parent to School Day
- Feb. 16 Parent Advisory Committee Meeting
- Feb. 17 Notices of Concern mailed home
- Feb. 20 No School - Presidents' Day Observance
- Feb. 23 School Board Meeting
- Feb. 24 School Improvement Day - Early Dismissal at Noon
- March 5 No School - Casimir Pulaski Day Observance
- March 6-16 ISAT testing
- March 20 No School - Institute Day, Presidential Primary Election
- March 22 School Board Meeting
- March 30 Third Quarter Ends
- April 5 No School - Parent/Teacher Conferences, Report Card Distribution
- April 6-13 No School - Spring Break
- April 16 School resumes after spring break
- April 19 Grade 4 Science Fair
- April 26 School Board Meeting
- May 4 Notices of Concern mailed home
- May 7-11 Fine Arts Festival Week
- May 9 Band/Vocal Ensemble Spring Concert
- May 16 Band/Vocal Ensemble Awards Night
- May 17 Parent Advisory Committee Meeting
- May 18 School Improvement Day - Early Dismissal at Noon
- May 21 Teacher Institute - Early Dismissal at Noon
- May 24 School Board Meeting
- May 28 Memorial Day Holiday
- May 29 Washington Jr. High graduation
- May 30 Roosevelt Jr. High graduation
- May 31 Lincoln Jr. High graduation

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A Message From the Superintendent



The hustle and bustle of the season is here and District 148 is busy preparing for the second half of this school year.

I congratulate Roosevelt Elementary and Junior High schools for making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) on the latest Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT)!

As the March 6-16 ISAT testing dates approach, we ask you to help make sure your children are ready for these important exams. The 2012 AYP target is to have 92.5 percent of students in every Illinois school and district meeting state reading and math standards.

I am pleased with the arrival of more new SMART Boards in our schools this year. We now have 137 of these interactive white boards with nearly every classroom equipped with one!

These SMART Boards have been well received by our students and staff who regard them as great teaching and learning tools. Federal grant funds made these purchases possible.

Ongoing economic troubles across the country continue to affect all of us. I assure you the District is keeping close watch of its revenues and expenses.

In closing, a growing concern in our schools and in the community is bullying among children. We are aggressively addressing the problem in a variety of ways and urge you to continue to help us curb this negative behavior.

Wishing you a safe and joyous holiday season,

Dr. Jayne E. Purcell

From the Board President



As we get ready to turn the page on a new calendar year, we take time to count our blessings for the great things that came our way in 2011.

We added new SMART Boards to our schools this year. In partnership with South Suburban College we offered, for the first time, a GED program to our community members.

We also continue to provide after-school programs, positive behavior incentives and interventions, and fabulous art and music programs to our youngsters. Our students are showing continued academic growth on the STAR Reading and Math Assessments.

Lastly, we welcome Mr. Terry La Bella to our District Office staff as our new interim business manager.

I look forward to sharing even more wonderful news from our schools in 2012.

Until then, I wish you and your family the happiest of holidays,
-Joyce Jackson

District schools make way for more technology

Federal grant money has paved the way for additional, state-of-the-art technology in District 148 schools.

The District this year was able to purchase an additional 90 new SMART Boards for elementary and junior high schools.

“We consider ourselves fortunate to be able to equip our schools with tools that will help give students the knowledge and experience they need to compete in this high-tech world,” said Superintendent Dr. Jayne E. Purcell.

The interactive white boards feature wide screens, have multi-touch capabilities, and allow teachers and students to work together on lessons. They are popular instructional devices among teachers and are engaging, hands-on learning tools for students.

“I like the fact that they are interactive with the students,” said Mrs. Kimberly Lewis, an eighth grade social studies teacher at Roosevelt Junior High School. She said the SMART Boards are colorful, engaging, and, make youngsters feel special and important.

“The SMART Boards help us because some people learn better using (hands on) technology,” one eighth-grader said.

Other students say the SMART Boards are fun, are a more advanced form of technology, and enable teachers to display items on the Internet to the entire class at one time, rather than to a small group gathered around a single computer.



This RJH student uses a SMART Board for her social studies PowerPoint presentation.

Students also say more can be done with SMART Boards than with regular white boards.

Our Technology Vision

Technology is available and effectively supported for all students and staff to:

- Provide global access to information
- Meet the curricular needs of all learners
- Refine critical thinking skills and foster creativity
- Provide a medium for expression and communication
- Collect, assess, and share assessment data
- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative tasks
- Provide 21st Century skills and proficiencies necessary for higher education and the workforce

Funding concerns continue

Unemployment. Declining property values. A lack of new property growth.

The troubled economy is taking its toll on many entities: individuals, families, communities, governmental bodies, and school districts.

District 148 continues to closely monitor its finances.

“We do have fund balances but the problem is with declining revenues, our expenses keep going up. We are going to eat through those fund balances,” Interim Business Manager Terry La Bella said, adding the District will dip into its fund balances in order to cover ongoing operating costs.

“We have to continue to be watchful and keep looking for ways to save money and be more efficient,” Mr. La Bella said.



This year's Illinois Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) will be taken March 6 – 16, 2012.

Students in Grades 3 through 8 take the exams and are tested in the subject areas of reading and math. Students in Grades 4 and 7 are also tested in science.

Parents, please encourage your child(ren) to do their best on these tests, make sure they get plenty of rest, and arrive at school on time.

Red Ribbon Week



Roosevelt Junior High School



Riverdale Elementary School



Washington Elementary School

District 148 and South Suburban College provide GED program

Some District 148 community members headed back to school this year to be part of a GED program offered through a partnership between the District's 21st Century Community Learning Center and South Suburban College.

This first-time offering began this fall and took place from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Washington Elementary School. The program was free to participants.

"There has been a need for a program like this in District 148. The District is reaching out to the community because we realize strong communities make strong schools," Assistant Superintendent Dr. Patricia Moore said.

Parents have expressed a desire for classes such as these to help them better assist their children with homework, classroom assignments, and test preparation, said 21st Century Director Mrs. Cynthia Marks.

Upon successful completion of the program, each of the participating adults is eligible to take the GED exams.

A waiting list has been started for the next GED session. For more information please contact Mrs. Marks at (708) 878-5203.



These Roosevelt Elementary, above, Franklin Elementary students, below right, and R.J.H. student, below left, participate in after-school activities.



Great things are happening

The following are just some of the positive happenings in District 148:

- ✓ Roosevelt Elementary and Junior High Schools made AYP on ISAT exams this year.
- ✓ Lincoln Junior High School inducted 19 National Junior Honor Society members.
- ✓ Washington Elementary and Junior High schools staff have made a bully-free pledge.
- ✓ Two Riverdale Elementary School students received first place awards in the Riverdale Fire-Rescue Department Breakfast with the Firefighters contest.
- ✓ Lincoln Elementary and Junior High schools collected more than 2,000 non-perishable food items for the Thornton Township Food Bank.
- ✓ The R.J.H. Student Council collected 975 pounds of food for Thornton Township to distribute to those in need.
- ✓ W.J.H.'s N.J.H.S. chapter raised \$465 to provide winter coats and boots for some fellow students.
- ✓ Students and staff commemorated School Board Members Day with songs, writings, and homemade cards for the Board of Education.
- ✓ Park Elementary School has formed a Best Friends Forever (BFF) Girl's Club for girls in Grades 4-6.
- ✓ Franklin Elementary School honored veterans with a hallway display.
- ✓ District vocal ensemble members performed at Riverdale's Veterans' Day ceremony.
- ✓ Morgan Stanley Smith Barney in Riverwoods "adopted" 70 Early Childhood Center children and provided them with holiday gifts.
- ✓ Seventeen L.J.H. students are taking Algebra I at Thornridge High School for high school credit.

Bullying prevention is a top priority

An intense and widespread effort is taking place to educate District 148 parents and students about bullying.

Bullying comes in many forms including physical, verbal, psychological, and Internet bullying, which is also known as cyber-bullying.

Bullying prevention is a top priority in classrooms and schools across the country and in District 148.

Bullying lowers a child's self esteem. We want all children to get along with each other and to feel good about themselves.

Discussions, parent meetings, and workshops have been held. Various PowerPoint presentations have been provided to the community. Brochures have been circulated, and educators have received laminated copies of bullying prevention guides.

In addition, books have been distributed to parents, and information is available to everyone on the District's website. Each of the District's elementary schools also has a copy of an anti-bullying, computer-animated video featuring some of Hollywood's biggest stars for students to view.

All District schools are taking a strong disciplinary stance on bullying behavior. The District has a bullying prevention policy in place and students and parents are urged to report incidents of bullying to the building principal.

We encourage you to continue to help us keep our schools bully free, to tell children not to bully others, and to help them use the Internet safely and responsibly.

STAR Assessments show continued academic growth

A comparison of data collected from students' performance on STAR Reading and Math Assessments shows continued academic growth among District 148 students.

This is the District's second year using the common assessment tool at all schools. This year the District added another component, STAR Enterprise, to the STAR Assessments.

STAR Enterprise will provide us with details of each student's academic strengths and weaknesses, allowing teachers to know which specific area or skill to focus on to increase student achievement.

Students take the computer-based tests in the two subject areas at various times during the school year.

Teachers use the test results to tailor their instruction, to monitor and improve academic growth, to provide students with appropriate learning materials, and to intervene with struggling students.

The charts to the right show District-wide results by grade level. The numbers reflect grade equivalent (GE) scores which are norm referenced representing how students' performance compares with other students nationally. For example, eighth-graders with a GE score of 5.78 in reading in August 2011 performed as well as typical fifth-graders after the seventh month of the school year.

Considering typical growth is .2, or two months, the charts reflect in most cases students made more than two months of gains between August and October.

This information illustrates the continuous growth being made by students in District 148.

Even though our students are improving, we also would like to stress to you the importance of making sure your child is in school every day because attendance plays a key role in student performance.

Reading	August 2010	October 2010	Growth
6th Grade	4.43	4.72	.29
5th Grade	3.70	4.02	.31
4th Grade	3.14	3.47	.33
3rd Grade	2.41	2.76	.35

Reading	August 2011	October 2011	Growth
8th Grade	5.78	5.83	.05
7th Grade	5.14	5.41	.27
6th Grade	4.66	4.81	.15
5th Grade	3.91	4.26	.35
4th Grade	3.23	3.51	.28
3rd Grade	2.45	2.66	.21
2nd Grade	1.58	1.85	.27

Math	August 2011	October 2011	Growth
8th Grade	5.53	5.97	.44
7th Grade	5.12	5.31	.19
6th Grade	4.55	4.92	.37
5th Grade	3.70	4.15	.45
4th Grade	3.01	3.30	.29
3rd Grade	2.27	2.71	.44
2nd Grade	1.38	1.72	.34

For additional District information:
Visit District 148 on the Web at: www.district148.net

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