This page: Hinsdale Middle School students complete the last leg of their annual fundraising run/walk, Ignite the Fight, on May 11. Organized by students with faculty sponsor Leah White, and supported by sponsors, staff and parents, the event raised over $5,000 for the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer.

On the cover: Students in Kristin Jung's first-grade class at Walker School test their pinwheels as part of their science unit on air, water and weather.
Summer Greetings from Community Consolidated School District 181. Welcome to the Annual Report to the Community on the 2011-12 school year in your elementary school district. This publication will bring you into our classrooms, open our financial books, and inform you of new initiatives.

It has been a busy and productive year in District 181. Our students continue to excel, and our educational leaders are committed to making our programs even better in a manner that respects your fiscal contributions as taxpayers.

On behalf of your elected Board of Education members, I want to express pride in our educational product and process. We consider each of you important components in our school district governance. As your representatives, we take seriously our duty to review your communication to the Board of Education, to listen when you speak at Board meetings, weigh all options, and make informed decisions that will benefit the whole district.

This year has seen a large volume of stakeholder involvement at Board meetings, Community Engagement sessions, PTO/A meetings, and special events. We anticipate that this will continue as the administration moves forward with plans to implement recommendations of consultants who reviewed our gifted services.

Within the pages of this report, you will see coverage of major accomplishments that serve to remind us of the excellence that is part of District 181. These include:

- All nine schools received the Academic Excellence Award from the Illinois State Board of Education.
- We expect to end the fiscal year with a balanced budget and are planning for a balanced budget in FY13.
- The Board presented a record number of Ambassador of Excellence Awards to students for outstanding accomplishments.
- Two teachers earned certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.
- The District solicited feedback from staff, parents and other residents at two Community Engagement sessions.
- The U.S. Department of Education named The Lane School a Blue Ribbon School.
- Two schools received state-level recognition for excellence in physical education programs.
- A new section of our website keeps the community updated on Learning and Operations Initiatives, including our gifted program review and the new Philosophy of Teaching and Learning.

As always, we welcome your feedback and thank you sincerely for your support of our community’s elementary schools.

Sincerely,

Michael Nelson, District 181 Board of Education President
D181 Expects to End 2011-12 with Operating Budget Surplus
Preparation of the 2011-12 school year budget brought many challenges for District 181, as the state’s continued fiscal uncertainty and ongoing negotiations with the Hinsdale Clarendon Hills Teachers Association (HCHTA) made it difficult to forecast both revenues and expenditures. Ultimately, the operating budget approved by the District 181 Board of Education was balanced.

Budgeted revenues included local property tax collections based upon a 1.5% increase to the Consumer Price Index (CPI), an 80 percent proration of General State Aid, and an infusion of federal IDEA funds due to the withdrawal from the special education cooperative. Operating revenues for 2011-12 were budgeted to be $56,244,099.

Budgeted expenditures included contractual salary increases, inflation increases for purchased services, supplies, and equipment, operating expenditures and transfers. Total expenditures in the budget were $56,239,099.

“The receipt of the full allocation of General State Aid, coupled with a salary freeze for the teaching staff and continued fiscal accountability, contributed to the expected year-end budget surplus,” said Dr. Troy Whalen, District 181 Assistant Superintendent for Business.

The district’s fiscal year ends June 30.

Fiscal Year 2013 Outlook
Despite the expected 2011-12 budget surplus, long-range projections still indicate the possibility of deficit spending in the future. The 2012-13 budget has been prepared in tentative form and is currently balanced; however, changes in state funding and pension reform could have a significant impact on the district’s budget.

“The 2012-13 Tentative budget is balanced and allows for contingency funds to cover the estimated cost for technology upgrades, textbook renewal, and staffing needs,” Dr. Whalen said.

Financial Profile Score
The state releases a financial profile score annually to report the fiscal health of each school district. District 181’s financial profile designation for FY2011 was Financial Review, the second highest of four categories assessing financial strength. The score is based on five indicators: revenue to fund balance ratio, revenue to expenditure ratio, days cash on hand, percent of short-term debt, and percent of long-term debt available.

The state uses a weighted scale to determine a district’s designation as Financial Recognition, Review, Watch, or Warning. During the past eight years, the district has received Financial Recognition five times and Financial Review three times. For more information on the school district financial profile system, see www.isbe.net/sfms/P/profile.htm.

CAFR Award

Bond Refunding
The Board of Education approved a resolution in November authorizing the refunding of just over $13 million of outstanding Series 2002 and 2003 referendum-approved bonds to lock in net present value savings of over $1.2 million for District 181 taxpayers. The goal was to take advantage of the record low interest rates. In the process of preparing the refunding, the District received a very strong credit rating of Aaa from Moody’s Investors Service.

“Three factors could have been key factors in earning the highest credit rating from Moody’s,” said Dr. Whalen.

Three Years of Reductions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Reduction in Transportation Costs</th>
<th>Savings ( \text{in million} )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>$2,550,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>$2,900,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>$661,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continue Cost Control Measures
- Reduction in transportation costs through consolidation of bus routes
- Energy savings through converting to a four-day workweek during the summer

Data Dashboard
For an overview of District 181 finances, tax rates, fund balances, student achievement data and a profile of teaching staff, visit the Data Dashboard section of the website.

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CAFR Award

Closing Statement
The district’s fiscal year ends June 30.

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Learning - the Key to the Future

@d181 Initiative

A committee of teachers, students, administrators, and a parent spent the 2011-12 school year exploring how to promote student creativity, problem solving and risk taking through the innovative use of technology. The 16-member committee reviewed publications and studies on educational technology, visited schools known for their leading use of technology, and conducted action research at three District 181 schools. With funding from the District 181 Foundation and Parent-Teacher Organizations, students in grade 3 at The Lane experienced a 1:1 pilot of MacAir laptop computers, and students at Elm School used iPad tablet computers in a 1:1 environment. Madison School fifth-graders served as the control group, accessing technology through shared laptop carts and use of the computer lab in the Media Resource Center.

“Action research is one of the ways we can make innovations in schools. The @d181 Initiative Committee did an outstanding job,” Superintendent Renée Schuster said.

Students with 1:1 technology were more engaged learners who demonstrated deeper content understanding, more educational risk-taking and self-directed acquisition of knowledge, according to Dr. Janet Stutz, Assistant Superintendent for Learning.

Today’s students are vastly different from those who attended District 181 a generation ago. The role of the teacher is moving from the “sage on the stage” to that of a facilitator of student learning, or a “guide on the side,” Technology Director Eric Danley said. The airline style of education, turning off all electronic devices while in flight, no longer works for today’s learners, he added. The @d181 Initiative presented recommendations to the Board of Education in May including a three-year rollout of 1:1 technology to all students in grades 3-8 beginning in October 2012. The iPad 2 drew overwhelming committee support for its durability, portability and ability to change the way curriculum is delivered.

“By choosing the iPad now, we will prepare our students and staff for new platforms in the future,” Danley said.

The Board will return to the discussion in late June, when a decision on the recommendation is expected.

District 181 Schools Earn State Honor Roll Top Rank

For the fourth year, all District 181 schools have been named Illinois Honor Roll Schools. The 2011 Honor Roll Schools list recognizes 703 schools in 312 Illinois school districts for making progress toward or maintaining academic excellence.

District 181 schools received the Academic Excellence Award, the highest designation. In this category, 90 percent or more of elementary students met or exceeded state testing standards in reading or mathematics for at least three consecutive years.

“The true measure of a school’s success is student achievement. Having all nine of our schools earn the Award of Excellence is a reflection of the excellent teaching and learning that is occurring every day in District 181,” said Superintendent Renée Schuster.

2011-12 Curriculum Highlights

- Sponsored Community Book Read The Price of Privilege
- Conducted homework survey
- Offered SELAS week activities including a community event
- Completed benchmarks, developed common assessment frameworks, and wrote curriculum aligned to the common core
- Piloted and adopted writing materials
- Completed benchmarks for math aligned to the common core
- Developed a five-year staff development plan

Pupil Services Highlights

During the 2011-12 school year, District 181 provided services to students with disabilities independent of a special education cooperative. The district previously was a member of a cooperative that primarily provided related services, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy and psychological services. During the 2010-11 school year, the district participated in a process to withdraw from the cooperative through creation of a Comprehensive Plan of Services that was presented to the Illinois Advisory Board for Special Education in June 2011. The advisory board unanimously approved the plan, which resulted in hiring additional district staff to provide instruction and services. New staff included interventionists who are primarily school psychologists, a Special Education Director, and occupational and physical therapists.

“The hiring of these specialists, the district has been able to supervise the district’s academic excellence. SchoolSearch, a research and consulting firm, released its 2012 rankings in May. Rankings are compiled using the overall average percentage of students in grades 3-8 who earned “Meets” or “Exceeds” levels on the IAR administered in March 2012. The District 181 score of 92.8% is based on reading and math tests. The state average is 84.5.

Awards for Excellence

District 181 received the Bright Apple Award from SchoolSearch in March 2012. Only 79 of 368 school districts in Illinois earned the 2012 award, which is based on five “family-favored categories” according to the educational research and consulting firm. These include: academic performance, pupil/teacher ratio expenditure per pupil, educational level of teachers, and average teacher salary Data source: 2011 Illinois Report Card.

District 181 also earned the Bright A+ Award in September 2011, based on the 2010 Illinois Report Card data. Only 59 school districts in the state, those in the top 5 percent, were selected. For the second year, Elm School earned a top spot on the SchoolSearch “Best of the Best Award” because 100 percent of its students in Grade 4 met or exceeded state testing standards on 2011 tests.

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The Lane School Earns a Blue Ribbon

A star-studded banner and bright blue bows decorated The Lane Elementary School yesterday, as Principal Ecaiarcus announced to staff, students and the community that the Hinsdale school was named a 2011 Blue Ribbon School. Ame Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education unveiled the national roster of 304 schools earlier that day. The list included 19 public and private schools in Illinois.

The Blue Ribbon Schools program recognizes public and private elementary, middle and high schools that are either academically superior or show dramatic gains in student achievement. The Lane School was selected by the Illinois State Board of Education to apply for recognition, based on federal criteria.

Principal Doug Eccarius travelled to Washington, D.C. for a seminar and ceremony sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education in November. Speech/Language Pathologist Maureen Lascher was chosen by her colleagues to represent the teaching staff in Washington.

“The application process for the Blue Ribbon Schools involved a committee of teachers and administrators who reviewed data, reflected on our past and shared our story of achievement,” said Principal Eccarius. "We are very proud that our school has earned this distinction and are very grateful for the strong support of our parent community and the outstanding performance of our students.”


P.E. Programs Gain Excellence Award

Physical education programs at The Lane School and Oak School earned the Blue Ribbon Schools Award from the Illinois Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. The award recognizes the best physical education and health programs in the state.

THE DESIGNATION FOLLOWED A REVIEW OF THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS, A VISIT TO THE SCHOOLS, INTERVIEWS WITH STAFF, STUDENTS AND PARENTS AND CONSIDERATION BY A STATE-LEVEL PANEL. CURRICULUM AT THE TWO SCHOOLS WAS ALSO RECOGNIZED AS COMPLYING WITH STATE-LEVEL STANDARDS AND THOSE OF THE ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

At The Lane, physical education teachers Ruth Jewell and Dan Ooga completed the application. Oak’s Blue Ribbon Team included physical education teachers Marianne Biedrzycki, Jeff Mack, Gus Lauermann and student Doug Henegro.

The application included responses on assessment, curriculum, instruction, professional development, school leadership, vision and mission. Each school also submitted five years of testing data and showed how it shares its strengths and successes with other schools.

District 181 now has four Blue Ribbon Schools. In 2009, Madison Elementary School, Clarendon Hills Middle School and Hinsdale Middle School earned the award.

The Lane’s recognition as a Blue Ribbon School is a great achievement for our students, families, staff and community,” Superintendent Renee Schuster said. “Under Mr. Eccarius’ leadership the Lane has exemplified District 181’s vision of being a place where all children experience success and exhibit excellence.”

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The award recognizes the best physical education and health programs in the state.

The designation followed a review of the physical education programs, a visit to the schools, interviews with staff, students and parents and consideration by a state-level panel. Curriculum at the two schools was measured against state-level standards and those of Illinois State Board of Education.

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A podcast featuring Superintendent Renée Schuster received the Award of Excellence in the Administrator Category.

Elementary Band Teacher Nancy Golden was named 2012 Chicagoan Outstanding Music Educator Award and recognized in June. The Quinlan and Fabish Music Company sponsored the award.

Four District 181 communications projects earned state-wide awards from the Illinois Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association in the 2011 Communications Contest. Awards honored high quality school publications published or posted between May 2010 and May 2011.

“District 181 - Learning Together,” a podcast featuring Superintendent Renée Schuster received the Award of Excellence. The podcast award was selected as the contest’s prize.

Dr. Renee Schuster, Director of Curriculum and Accountability, and Coppell, Technology Director Eric Danley and freelance videographer Justin Dexter were selected to create the podcast.

The district’s 2011 Summer School brochure, designed by and Communications Department Assistant Audrey Galvin, earned an Award of Excellence. In addition, Mrs. Statton received an Award of Merit for her “Staff E-News” and Rita DuChateau received an Award of Merit for the Annual Report to the Community.

Following an evaluation of the District 181 program for gifted education, the Board of Education met several times and several staff committees began to study and plan better ways to deliver instruction to all students. The program evaluation, conducted by Tonya R. Moon, Ph.D., Catherine M. Brightwell, Christine Trinck, Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, contained suggestions for program improvements.

“Over the past 20 years, the district has conducted external reviews of its gifted service delivery and responded with changes to program design. As research advances our understanding of the learning processes of gifted students and our programs are providing current and effective instruction,” District 181 Superintendent Renee Schuster said.

The January 2012 report recommended District staff for their cooperation prior to and during two days of classroom visits, and explained that the program was analyzed against best practices of the five pillars of gifted education. The evaluators presented recommendations:

• The District should develop a philosophy statement and define- tion for giftedness that we should use to guide all decisions.

• The relationship between gifted and regular education should be examined. The current one-day-a-week ACE pullout program is a part-time solution; All students could benefit from ACE-type instruction.

• The ACE program builds on and overlaps the SELAS program. Recent research on affective needs of all students should be considered.

• The District should incorporate rigor and challenge in the general education program.

• The District should implement a balanced literacy program.

• The District should establish a task force to examine the feasibility of acceleration in math.

“The many of the findings and recommendations align with where we were headed with our programs,” said Dr. Schuster.

Four other teams worked on a transition plan to deliver services in the 2012-13 year. Teams included: Elementary ACE, Middle School ACE, Mathematics, and Enriched Language Arts.

The plan for 2013-14 and beyond is expected in December 2012. The 2012-13 transition plan includes the following items:

• Increase the academic rigor for all students.

• Accelerate math instruction to allow as many students as possible to complete Algebra 1 before the end of eighth grade.

• Expand the scope of services provided by the gifted specialists to become differentia- tion specialists who guide teachers, provide in-class coaching, co-teaching, and small-group instruction.

• Introduce a middle school elective class open to all students that in- corporates problem-based learning, similar to the gifted curriculum. “We are very moving forward to offer a more inclusive philosophy that will benefit all learners,” Dr. Schuster said.

The district’s website contains a new section, Learning and Operations Initiatives, accessed from the Superintendent’s page. Postcards are sent to all students and there are reports to the Board of Education, the program evaluation team, a video on the transition plan, information on differentiation instruction, and the Philosophy of Teaching and Learning statement.
Ambassadors of Excellence

District 181 introduced the Ambassadors of Excellence award program in 1997 to provide the Board of Education an opportunity to recognize individuals who have brought positive attention to the district through their special honors they receive in a variety of local, regional, state and national recognition programs. The 2011-12 Ambassadors were:

**Illinois Art Education Association Exhibit** Lila Hutcherson; 
**Cheer** Luke Adams, Aidan Bocino, Daren Chen, Dov Chen, Julianne Knott, Risako Koga, Nicholas Walsh, Tom Wan, James Zhou; 
**Cross Country** Grace Walther; 
**The Doings Newspaper Writing Contest** Mia Butterbach, Leila Jennings, Shanka Kottapalli; 
**DuPage County Spelling Bee** Paul Cumbert; 
**Exquisite Prompt Redux Writing Contest** Emma Bauchard; 
**Illinois Geographic Bee** Jack Mueller, B.J. Ryan; 
**Illinois Junior Academy of Science Regional Science Fair** Joseph Gordon, Michael Ha, Quincy Horwood, Mita Ramani, Noah Wang, Alison Ward; 
**Illinois Music Educators Association Festival Orchestra** Nathan Cruz, Josephon Cruz, Haerin Kim, Beatrice Makidah, Erika Oku, Mita Ramani, Kate Sekiel, Jake Sembia; 
**International Mathematics Contest** Lila Loughlin, Caroline Morris, Georgia Murphy, Sophia Peculianias, Cassandra Peters, Lisa Pitts, Zoe Relias, Jillian Schaeis, Margarite Schwarz, Samantha Seymour, Nora Stack, Margaret Tamm, Hannah Waals; 
**WordMasters Challenge** Michelle Brown, Daren Chen, Mary Kiyaxis, Omar Nabelsi, Maximilian Paarlberg, Sara Thomas, Akshay Undevia, Perry Zhao; 
**IAHPERD Blue Ribbon** Marianne Biedrzycki, Ruth Jewell, Gus Lauermann, Jeff Mack, Dan Orza; 
**National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification** Gayla Allen, Sue Kamuda; 
**National French Test** Alison Albeida; 

Connor Barker, Rebecca Bower, Olivia Brooks, Katie Bulin, Samantha Camden, Claire Canuso, Michael Claussen, Andrew Coyner, Nicole Eichelman, Caitlyn Elazegui, Jacob Furlong, Jaena Hanley, Arman Haverc, Jake Heiser, Christopher Heneghan, Kristin John, Julienne Krotz, Risako Koga, Nicholas Monson, Katherine Nordstrom, Sarah Pencak, Emma Rosenberg, Paco Soto, Jim Walker, Molly Walsh, Tom Wan, James Zhou; 
**Special Olympics** Rose Kuckertz, Henri Lashinski, Madeline Maturino, Maria Meyer, Track and Field Elle Bergenvin, Livvy Carter, Maya Cave, Molly Caveney, Julie Culler, Megan Draddy, Blake Evertsen, Ginger Gerhold, Lucy Grundberg, Yasmin Hamoud, Jake Heiser, Isabella Ivanov, Emma Loughlin, Andy Margason, Nicole Naccarato, Chloé Polo, Emma Stapleton, Kyle Sullivan, Madeline Sullivan, Margaret Tam, Grace Walther, Tracy Wohlever; 
**Village of Hinsdale Photography Award** Zachary Wood; 
**Volleyball** Elizabeth Bogs, Katie Broz, Sophia Dubroway, Amy Fiedler, Katherine Gallo, Elizabeth Genovese, Katherine Hayes, Barbara Hedikamp, Sydney Herzog, Abigail Hess, Megan Irvin, Kayla Kelly, Emily Knudson, Andrea Kopp, Gillian Lal, Lila Loughlin, Caroline Morris, Georgia Murphy, Sophia Peculianias, Cassandra Peters, Lisa Pitts, Zoe Relias, Jillian Schaeis, Margarite Schwarz, Samantha Seymour, Nora Stack, Margaret Tamm, Hannah Waals; 

Photo: In April, Clarendon Hills Middle School grade II students visited Washington D.C. as part of their study of United States History At the Marine Corps War Memorial (from left): Edward Dodson, Yuji Hayward Melton, James Zhou; 

Sue Kamuda; 

The Doings Newspaper Writing Contest Mia Butterbach, Leila Jennings, Shanka Kottapalli; 

DuPage County Spelling Bee Paul Cumbert; 

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The District 181 Foundation inspires community involvement in education through programs that enrich the educational experience of our elementary and middle school students. Funding for these programs is made possible through the contributions of individuals and businesses in our community.

Following a May 14 reception to honor major donors and grant recipients, the District 181 Foundation announced 2011-12 grants and special initiatives totaling $124,315. The grant program supports innovative and creative proposals that the Foundation hopes will someday have district wide application. Grants went to teachers, students and parents.

"The Foundation has had a very busy year, and we are excited and proud to recognize our talented staff, involved students and supportive parents with these grants. Their ideas will benefit our students in many subject areas at many grade levels. The generosity of our donors has made it all possible," Foundation President Nancy Pollak said.

Outdoor Learning Center: Rosemary Grant, Pam Henry: Water is harvested through a system engineered to direct, contain, and use it in this outdoor classroom at Prospect.

Technology for the Wind Turbine: Nancy Grapenthien, Ryan Cantrell: This grant incorporates software that manipulates, stores and retrieves data from the CHMS wind turbine to make it accessible to all District 181 students.

The Bi6181 Initiative: Matt Haeger, Keri Johnson, Justin Home, Chris Feeney, Jo Ellen Berni: This district initiative tested various technology tools for delivering the curriculum. With the PTOs at Elm and The Lane, the Foundation supported the pilot to test the use of iPads at Elm and laptops at The Lane.

Infusing Technology in the Science Curriculum: Kelly Polak-Olman: The addition of 15 MacBook Pros and related equipment to the grade 8 science classroom enabled teachers of students to use them for research, reports, and information sharing. The pilot included 150 Hinsdale Middle School students.

2011-12 Teacher Grant Winners

Imagination Playground: Principal Kristin Kjellander's grade 1 students help Veterans Day assembly; 2nd grader Luke Adams on his success in an NFL youth competition.

2011-12 KIDS Grants

Kids Initiating a Difference in Society (KIDS) Grants are awarded to students for their community service projects. Recipients included: Madison: Lucy and Sarah Battaglia; HMS: Allison Bruce, Jimmy Lee, Jack Mason, Samson Pollak, Kendall Reichmann; Elm: Hannah Ahad, Karen Alzein; Hudson County: Jacob Schaik, Oak: Michael Bradley; The Lane: Mary Claire Arbor, Denise Fischer, Calla Foley, Anisha Sunkara; Sydney Thayer.

2011-12 Community Grants

The Foundation's Community Partnership Grants provide funding for parent and community programs that align with the Foundation's mission. The 2011-2012 recipients were: SELAS, the District Social Emotional Learning for Academic Success Committee and the District 181 Gifted Education Cooperative.

A volunteer board of trustees governs the Foundation. Board members during 2011-12 were: Megan Balderston, Matt Bousquette, Trish Donlevy, Suzanne Furey, Matthew Haeger, Tracey Head, Tim Leehy, Julie Liesse, Jerry Mejdrich, Rebecca Miller, Jeanne Osgood, Nancy Pollak, Helena Puche, Mary Morgan Ryan, Emilio Salvi, Kara Thompson, Fernanda Valentino, Colleen VerBracser, Lynne Wallace and Kyle Zake. Executive Director is Meg Cooper. PTO/A Liaison is Anna Cumberland; District 181 Liaisons are Rila DuChateau and Dr. Janet Stutz.

Your donations inspire students & teachers to innovate. www.d181foundation.org
A District 181 Foundation grant and sponsor donations supported color printing of this publication.