



D86 *Defining Excellence* FORWARD



Summer/Fall 2020



Dear District 86 Community,

In the first edition of this publication, which we sent you back in January, I talked about how we were poised for a strong and successful finish to our school year. We were several months into the implementation of our five-year strategic plan, had made significant progress on our Future Ready Facilities work, and had witnessed our students and staff accomplish amazing things both in and out of the classroom. Then the unexpected happened in the form of COVID-19, and our lives changed in ways we never could have imagined.

As we continue to navigate the pandemic and strive to return to some semblance of normalcy, I want to compliment and commend you on the way you have handled this crisis. It would have been easy to give in to the fear, frustration and uncertainty brought on by COVID-19. Instead, you have displayed incredible strength and courage in the face of adversity. You have exhibited tremendous resolve and determination in overcoming the obstacles before us. More importantly, you have stuck together and supported each other throughout this difficult and unprecedented time in our lives.

After bidding farewell to our students and staff at the end of the school year, and saying a final goodbye to the members of our senior class, we began what was a busy and productive summer that included:

- The formation of our Recovery-Revitalization-Restore Committee, which has led the planning for our return to school.
- The continued advancement of our strategic plan, most notably in the areas of curriculum alignment and racial and cultural equity.
- The start of much-needed upgrades and improvements to our high schools that were made possible by the voters who approved our referendum in 2019.

While the pages that follow feature more detailed information about this work, I want to take a moment to specifically address the issues of racial and cultural equity in our district. The tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and countless others have served as a powerful and painful reminder of the racial bias and systemic racism that continue to diminish and devalue people of color here at home and around the world. In light of these terrible and troubling events, and the protests that have been organized in response to them, I want to reaffirm that achieving equity and inclusion across our district will remain a top priority going forward. Through our efforts, which are being led by our Building Equity Action Team (BEAT) and our Culture and Equity Leadership Team (CELT), we will ensure that our students, staff and families of color are treated with compassion, respect and dignity, and that the learning environment in our schools is safe and welcoming for all. These goals and the work we must do to achieve them will require time, patience and understanding. They will also require us to keep an open mind, and to recognize that the journey toward our ideal future will not be quick or easy. There will be difficulties and disagreements along the way, and conversations that leave us feeling upset or uncomfortable. However, if we remain vigilant, stand together, and keep the needs of our students at the forefront of our thoughts and actions, I truly believe we will be successful and emerge from this a stronger, better and more unified community.

Sincerely,

Tammy Prentiss, Ed.S.
Superintendent of Schools



Commitment to **RACIAL AND CULTURAL EQUITY**

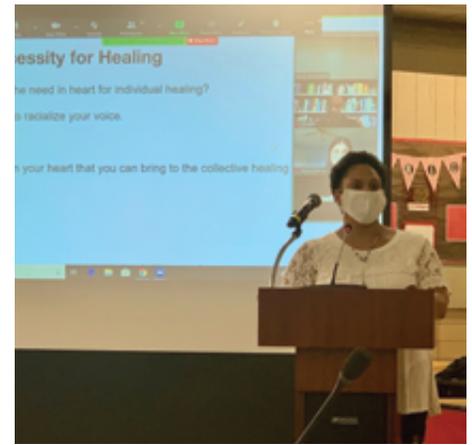
District 86 is strongly committed to promoting racial and cultural equity and inclusion in our schools and community. Below is information about the work we have done and efforts we have undertaken to further this commitment.

- ▶ We established a **LEADS racial equity leadership team** at the start of the 2019-20 school year that is composed of teachers and administrators from across the district. During its first year, the team, which has since been renamed the **Building Equity Action Team (BEAT)**, engaged in an in-depth discussion and exploration of racial bias and systemic racism in order to better understand the issues and identify ways to address them in our schools. The foundation for its work is the book “Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools” by Glenn Singleton, which “explains the need for candid, courageous conversations about race so that educators may understand why achievement inequality persists and learn how they can develop a curriculum that promotes true educational equity and excellence.”

One of the actions taken by the team this summer was to have its members individually contact all of our Black families via phone to check in on them and ask if there are any resources or supports we could provide during the summer or fall.



> Principal Arwen Pokorny Lyp from Hinsdale South presents during the first meeting of the District 86 Culture and Equity Leadership Team on July 7.



- ▶ We formed a **Culture and Equity Leadership Team (CELT)** to actualize and celebrate the core values of equity and diversity that are a driving force for our strategic plan. The team, which is composed of students, staff, parents/guardians and board members, met for the first time on July 7 to begin developing the mission and plan that will help guide our racial equity work. The team also started gathering personal narratives from people of color in the community that will help us establish a more welcoming and inclusive environment in our schools.
- ▶ Members of our staff participated in **Beyond Diversity** training, which is designed to help people understand the impact of race on student learning and investigate the role that racism plays in institutionalizing academic achievement disparities. To date, almost all of the certified staff from Hinsdale South have completed the training, along with a number of administrators and support staff at the district level. Certified, support and administrative staff from Hinsdale Central and the district were in the midst of their training in March when our schools were closed due to COVID-19. The current plan is to reschedule that training for sometime during the 2020-21 school year.
- ▶ Hinsdale South and Hinsdale Central organized a number of outstanding events and activities in honor of **Black History Month** that brought students, staff and community members together to listen, learn, discuss and celebrate. One of the events was a Black History Month Symposium at South that featured Black students speaking their truth about “Overcoming Fear.” Another event was a **Town Hall Meeting** at Central that featured students sharing their lived experiences about how they see themselves in the school, its classrooms and its culture.
- ▶ The student group **The Culture at Hinsdale South** did amazing work throughout the year to project positive images of people of color in the school’s community.

We have taken positive steps toward improving racial and cultural equity and inclusion in our district. With that said, the current state of race in our schools, community, country and society reflect how much more we have left to do. The tragic deaths of individuals such as George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, and the powerful movement to effect change that grew out of them, have reinforced the importance of this work. They have also reaffirmed our commitment to ensuring that the work will:

Not be limited to what happens inside our buildings, or restricted by the confines of a school calendar.

Remain a driving force for our strategic plan.

Continue to be taken seriously, and will receive the time, effort, energy and resources it demands and deserves.

Be guided by the voices of our students, staff and families.

We will use our various communication platforms and resources (e.g., emails, websites, social media, etc.) to keep you updated on the status of this work and the ways you can support our efforts.



RECOVERY-REVITALIZATION-RESTORE Committee

The **Recovery-Revitalization-Restore (R3) Committee**, which is composed of teachers, department chairs, school nurses and administrators, was formed in May and charged with developing the district's plans for the start of the 2020-21 school year.

The committee and its subcommittees met throughout the summer to work on a variety of important issues (e.g., models for delivering instruction, health and safety protocols, and communications) that would enable students and staff to safely return in the fall. This work was carried out in accordance with guidelines issued by local and state health organizations and government agencies. It was also guided by the following principles that were established by the committee:

- ▶ Prioritize the health and safety of students and staff.
- ▶ Foster the personal well-being and mental health of students and staff.
- ▶ Provide cohesive, purposeful, varied, and flexible instruction and assessment to support meaningful student learning and growth.
- ▶ Empower students to be engaged, responsible and accountable, while also building self-management and independent learning skills.
- ▶ Provide consistent communication within the school community.
- ▶ Build classroom and school communities by promoting connections among students and staff.



When exploring what instruction might look like to begin the year, the R3 Committee examined three different models - in-person, hybrid and remote learning. While our original plan was to begin the year on Aug. 17 in a hybrid model without lunch service, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) released updated guidance on Aug. 12 about how schools can help prevent the spread of COVID-19. There were several major changes in this updated guidance, including the ones listed below, that were new and could not be considered or accounted for by our R3 Committee during the time the group spent working on our return to school plans.

- ▶ Close contact is now being defined as “anyone (with or without a face covering) who was within six feet of a confirmed case of COVID-19 (with or without a face covering), for at least 15 minutes **throughout the course of a day.**”

- ▶ The period of close contact begins **two calendar days** before the onset of symptoms.

- ▶ All students and staff who have **COVID-like symptoms (e.g., sore throat, headache, cough, etc.)** should be sent home, need to be diagnostically tested and must remain at home until test results are received.

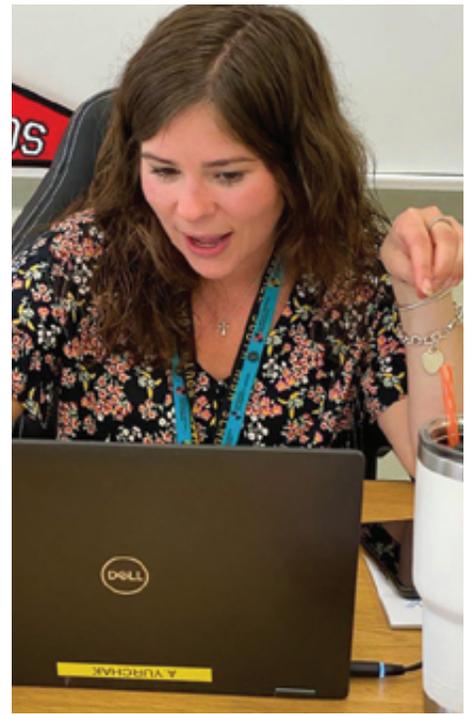
- ▶ An outbreak is defined as “**two confirmed cases of COVID-19 infections occurring within 14 calendar days of each other in individuals in the same classroom.**”

Given the potential impact these changes could have on the instructional and operational aspects of our hybrid model, **we decided that all of our students would start the school year in our Remote Learning 2.0 model.** By doing this, we can give our R3 Committee the time and opportunity to thoroughly review and assess the updated guidance from IDPH and ISBE, and identify any adjustments we need to make to our plans so that we can get our students and staff back in our buildings as quickly as possible.

Below is a general overview of our Remote Learning 2.0 model.

- Per ISBE guidance, every class meeting will have daily teacher contact via platforms such Zoom or Google Meet.
- Classes will meet remotely three days per week.
- Classes will be 75 minutes long two days per week and 25 minutes long one day per week. We established these class lengths based on the following factors:
 1. Feedback from the surveys we administered to stakeholders in the spring that indicated a desire for more instructional time.
 2. The need to provide additional time for transitions in remote environments.
 3. The benefits associated with providing access to deliberate, focused instructional blocks of time.

We have added a section on the district website that features detailed information about the various aspects of our return to school plan (e.g., Remote Learning 2.0 model, hybrid model, online program, athletics, activities, cleaning, HVAC, COVID-19 protocols, etc.). We will use that portion of the site, as well as resources such as email and social media, to provide the community with the latest news and information about COVID-19 and its impact on our schools.



> As part of our return to school plan, District 86 is partnering with our food service and transportation providers to assemble and deliver meals to students who qualify for free and reduced lunch.



Parent – Teacher ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee (PTAC) is a standing committee of the District 86 Board of Education that is composed of students, parents/guardians, faculty, staff, administrators and board members. The group’s charge is directed by board policy and the Illinois School Code, and has traditionally been focused on issues such as student conduct and behavior, reciprocal reporting agreements between the district and local law enforcement, school bus safety and student health (e.g., administration of medication in schools and practices related to concussions).

This year, we are expanding the size of PTAC to include more students and staff, as well as parents/guardians with children in grades six through 12. The members of the group will also have the chance to offer their guidance and feedback on a variety of important issues and initiatives (in addition to the items listed above), including the efforts being undertaken to advance the district’s strategic plan. For example, the committee met on July 9 to:

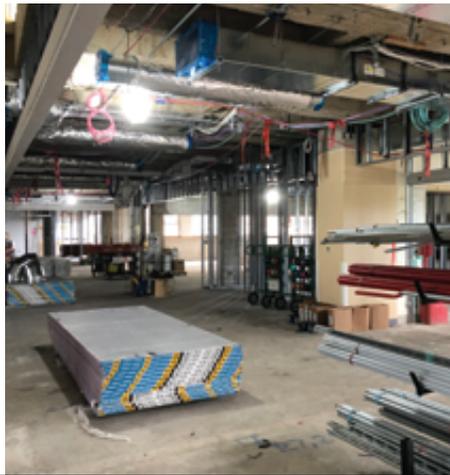
- Review, discuss and provide feedback on the instructional models the Recovery-Revitalization-Restore Committee designed in conjunction with its work on our return to school plans.
- Talk about potential changes to the master calendar for the school year.
- Get an update on the work being done to align the district’s math courses and curriculum.
- Learn about the creation of administrative procedures that will correspond with board policies 6:40 (Curriculum Development) and 6:210 (Instructional Materials).

We want to thank the nearly 120 people who applied to serve on PTAC. The incredible response we received is a testament to our community’s strong support of our students, staff and schools.



We want to congratulate the following individuals who were invited to join the Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee for the 2020-21 school year.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Fouzaan Amjad | Mariam Khan |
| Michael Anderson | Carson Kotecki |
| G’nee Andrulis | Mary Lavorato |
| Aadit Bhavsar | Daniel Levinthal |
| Kristen Bronke | Madison Lipman |
| Amanda Burton | Alan McCloud |
| Abigail Chute | Shriya Mehta |
| Taeza Cobb | Andrew Metzger |
| Aubrey DeGuzman | Susan Owens |
| Kasey Dunlavy | Erin Palmer |
| Mikhail Essa | Madhu Reddy |
| Allison Fish | John Richerson |
| Kassandra Fisher | Patricia Schiappa |
| Susan Grady | Dylan Tang |
| Abbey Green | Luke Terrell |
| Victoria Hinderliter | Kelly Van Hout |
| Isis Jackson | Tiffany Whalen |
| Lana Johnson | Ashley Yurchak |



Update on FUTURE READY FACILITIES

This past spring, we began performing upgrades and improvements to our high schools that were made possible by the voters who approved a \$139.8 million bond proposition in 2019. These upgrades and improvements included several projects that we were able to start early after Governor Pritzker announced in April that Illinois schools would remain closed due to COVID-19.

Thanks to the hard work and dedicated efforts of our business office, operations department and vendors (Pepper Construction, ARCON Associates and Cotter Consulting), we are pleased to announce the projects scheduled for Hinsdale Central and Hinsdale South for Phase I have been completed.

The total cost of the Phase I work completed to date is \$2,769,739, and the total estimated cost of the Phase I work, which will continue throughout the 2020-21 school year, is currently \$52,670,204. The total budget for all of the proposed Future Ready Facilities projects is \$139,815,983.

In an effort to help keep everyone apprised of the exciting work that is happening in our schools, Cotter Consulting is providing a weekly update on the status of open projects. In addition to these updates, Pepper Construction has set up an EarthCam that features a live time-lapse of the work that is being done on Hinsdale Central's new natatorium. You can access the weekly updates and time-lapse by visiting the Future Ready Facilities section of the district's website (d86.hinsdale86.org/frf).



Phase I Completed

Hinsdale Central

- ▶ Buildings and grounds renovation and relocation
- ▶ Classroom upgrades
- ▶ Heating, ventilation and air conditioning upgrades
- ▶ Roof replacements
- ▶ Turf field replacements
- ▶ Various life safety improvements

Hinsdale South

- ▶ Classroom upgrades
- ▶ Electrical upgrades throughout the building
- ▶ Library renovations
- ▶ Roof replacements
- ▶ Special education department renovations
- ▶ Tennis court improvements
- ▶ Turf field replacements
- ▶ Various life safety improvements



**Hinsdale Township
High School District 86**
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> **D86 Forward** *Defining Excellence*

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Updates from 86 email, *First Look*, which offers a preview of upcoming board meetings, and *Board Briefs*, which features a detailed summary from each board meeting. District 86 does not share its mailing list information.

Board Meeting Calendar: 2020-21 School Year



2020

- September 10
- September 24
- October 15
- October 29
- November 19
- December 17

2021

- January 14
- January 28
- February 11
- February 23
- March 11
- March 25
- April 8
- April 22
- May 13
- May 26
- June 23

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