



Dunlap School District #323

June 2022

DUNLAP DISPATCH

Connecting Dunlap community and schools

Dear Dunlap CUSD #323 Community,

As the 2021-22 school year comes to a close, I would like to thank our school community for the support, partnership, and contributions that have led to a successful 2021-22 school year. For the past two years, there have been a lot of unknowns and uncharted territory we were venturing into because of the global pandemic. Throughout this past year, we continued to adjust schedules, policies, and procedures but also experienced a greater understanding and appreciation of what it takes to be a student, parent, staff member, and board member in our school district. The continued partnership, support and understanding, and appreciation of the school community has been incredibly appreciated this past year.

Our district has had so much to celebrate this year. We were named the #1 School District in the Peoria Metro Area, and the #21 out of 411 of the Best School Districts in Illinois by Niche. Dunlap High School was also ranked by U.S. News as the #1 High School in the Peoria, IL Metro Area and was ranked #64 in Illinois High Schools. Across our district, our student achievement continues to reflect the District's reputation for excellence. Many of our students were recognized this year for their achievements in academics, athletics, fine arts, and career and technical industries, at both state and national levels. During the month of May, we celebrated our graduates. We are so proud of the work they have accomplished, the opportunities they have chosen, and the challenges they have overcome, especially in the last two years. I especially wish to congratulate these students, and their parents, as they prepare for post-secondary education, military, or the workforce.

Although summer break has begun for our students and families, staff across the District remain hard at work, planning for the year ahead with a continued focus on personalized learning, improving operational and technology infrastructures, and ongoing attention to student safety and support for student well-being. To close, I want to thank our staff for the incredible impact you've had on our students. All of us play a vital role in creating unparalleled learning experiences for our students and ensuring they have the resources and support they need to be successful. We could not do what we do without you!

Best wishes for a restful and wonderful summer break.

Sincerely,

Scott Dearman

Dr. Scott Dearman
Superintendent

OUR MISSION

Empower all students to reach their individual potential

2021-2022 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Abby Humbles

President, Term: 2021-2025
ahumbles@dunlapcUSD.net

Ms. Theresa Holshouser

Vice President, Term: 2019-2023
Email: tholshouser@dunlapcUSD.net

Mr. Tim Wagenbach

Secretary, Term: 2019-2023
Email: twagenbach@dunlapcUSD.net

Mrs. Ann Henry

Term: 2019-2023
Email: ahenry@dunlapcUSD.net

Mr. Tom Feldman

Term 2021-2025
Email: tfeldman@dunlapcUSD.net

Mr. Mike Wisdom

Term: 2019-2023
Email: mike@wisdomdevelopment.com

Mrs. Andrea Huizenga

Term 2021-2025
Email: ahuizenga@dunlapcUSD.net

Goal #1: Promote growth and achievement in the Dunlap School Community.

Celebrating Student Growth in the Classroom...

Student growth and achievement can be found in all corners of Dunlap Schools. Elementary schools mark a special point of growth each year with their 100th Day of School events. Kindergarteners across Dunlap take time to celebrate being "100 Days Smarter" by dressing as "100-year-olds," participating in activities that include the number 100, and more.

5th Grade students at Banner Elementary spent a great deal of time learning about the physics of motion with the assistance of former parent and Caterpillar engineer, Marcus Weber. They then build their own cars, testing and tweaking them for weeks.

This scientific endeavor culminated in the Jet Toy Derby. The Derby is an opportunity to showcase the growth of Dunlap's budding scientists.

In January 2022 the ECE program expanded and opened a classroom at Banner Elementary School, welcoming Ms. Kerri Uhl, who has many years of Early Childhood experience as an Assistant Director at AppleTree Academy. Students have thrived in their classroom and the entire Banner Community loves having them as part of their family. Growing early childhood education pays dividends to our community.



...and on the playing fields!

Dunlap Valley Middle School celebrated three IESA State Championships and an Individual IESA State Championship during the 2021-22 school year. The 8th girls basketball team completed a perfect 28-0 season that was capped off by winning Dunlap Valley's first basketball state championship. The Lady Spartans dominated the state tournament with a winning average of 32 points per game. In addition, The Valley Chess team took home hardware at each grade level at the IESA State Tournament. The 6th and 8th grade teams both won state championships, with Owen Zhang as the overall 8th grade State Champion! The chess team experienced tremendous success during their season.

This year Dunlap High School Math Club had its most successful season. with over 30 different participants in 4 major contests this year. The contest season started off strong by winning our regional contest with 7 first-place finishes and 1 second. They carried this momentum into the State ICTM math contest. At state, they finished 5th overall as a team with the Algebra 1 team getting 2nd, Fr/So 8 person team 7th, Calculator team 7th, and a 9th place finish for the Geometry team. The hard work of these mathematicians cannot be overstated and we are proud to call them Team Dunlap! Congratulations to all coaches, players, and families as we celebrate their State Championships and the fabulous achievement. Way to represent Dunlap!



Continuous Growth for Dunlap Staff

Everyone knows that student learning happens every day in Dunlap Schools, but did you know that Dunlap teachers, principals, and staff are constantly growing and learning, too?

One major area of focus across all elementary and middle schools is teachers learning about how to best meet the social-emotional and behavioral needs of children. Dunlap schools know that just as academic skills can grow over time, so can behavior skills. The ongoing work of learning about behavior philosophies and supports continued in Dunlap Elementary and Middle Schools this year. Our strong partnership with BIST, or Behavior Intervention Support Team, allowed for continued honing in on practices for guiding student behaviors. BIST is a philosophy that is rooted in grace and accountability for student behavior. Teachers spent time with BIST consultant, Marty Huitt, to solidify philosophies and gain practical strategies to help guide student behavior. The growth provided through these visits produces remarkable outcomes.

This year, family members were invited to grow in their knowledge about BIST practices through virtual parent meetings. This ongoing partnership provides teachers, families, and

administrators support and guidance in the area of student behavior and social-emotional growth.

Through the use of Title 1 funds this year, Ridgeview has implemented an Instructional Rounds model of professional development. According to Ridgeview principal, Todd Jefferson, "Instructional rounds are designed to serve as a high-leverage peer observation tool within a school that allows teachers to learn from each other. They are one of the most valuable tools a school can implement to support growth and pedagogical skills and in developing a culture of collaboration."

Teachers were surveyed to share which areas of their professional practice they felt were strengths they could have others observe and also areas they wanted to observe others to support their own growth. Each Wednesday a schedule was provided with additional peer observation opportunities. Instructional Rounds have allowed Ridgeview to continue growing as an "Our Kids" school where every child belongs, matters, and is worthy!

Another major aspect of staff growth this year is the continued creation of the cohesive district's "Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum". To ensure equitable access to the district's curriculum, the Curriculum Department outlined



the "Roadmap to a Dunlap Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum" (GVC) at the beginning of the 2021-22 school year. This "roadmap" allows for focused conversations about the learning objectives, intentions, resources, and assessments that teachers use throughout each classroom, every day, across the district.

When students are released early on Wednesdays, teachers and staff ramp up their professional conversations during "Professional Learning Community" (PLC) time. The time on Wednesdays devoted to teacher growth allows for rich conversations between teachers in grade levels, and departments, and across the district.

Teacher growth inevitably leads to student growth! Professional Development and culture of never-ending learning are incredibly important components of life as a Dunlap staff member. Each time a teacher's knowledge is strengthened, so is a child's opportunity to access the high-quality learning they deserve.



Elementary Principals honored students with an invitation to the annual Illinois Principal's Association Student Recognition Breakfast. Each principal had the pleasure of spending the morning with the students in celebration of their aptitude, citizenship, academics, character, and integrity.

Goal #2: Manage resources in a responsible, efficient, and effective manner.



SCAN ME

Still need to register? Scan the QR code and head to Dunlap's Registration Page for more info!

School Registration Off to a Good Start

To help plan for the 2022-23 school year and use resources most effectively, parents were encouraged to get their children registered in a timely manner. Every child in grades K-4 who had their 2022-23 registration completed by Friday, March 25th were entered into a drawing to have breakfast with the building principal. There were two names randomly drawn for each grade level. Working together, the elementary principals called the incentive "Breakfast with the Boss." While some schools headed to local restaurants,

the incentive winners at Wilder-Waite were treated to a waffle bar complete with fruit kabobs, eggs and juice. Students enjoyed a variety of waffle toppings and spending time together as they enjoyed their breakfast. This activity encouraged registration and was a benefit to many as it allowed administrators to make informed decisions regarding staffing. Thank you to all of the families who registered early, it is incredibly helpful to allow for meaningful district planning.

Grants Galore

Each year, staff members work hard to secure additional funding through grants and provide a top-notch experience for students. This year was no exception!

Laura Buckley, Hickory Grove Elementary music teacher, received two grants to purchase additional musical instruments for her students. She received \$1,170 from Maggie Bertram Foundation for Fine Arts to purchase a classroom set of ukuleles. She was also awarded a grant from The Meemic Foundation for 54 Boomwhackers. These musical instruments will bring much joy and musical experiences for students at Hickory Grove.

Congratulations to Beth Bergschneiger, HGES third-grade teacher, whose Donor's Choose Project was fully funded. She will be

purchasing a classroom set of the novel *Wonder*, a realistic fiction novel that weaves together themes of compassion, empathy, and acceptance of others.

Nina Andrews, the STEM teacher at Dunlap Middle School, was awarded the "One Classroom at a Time" grant from HoI for \$1,000, which was used to purchase a 3D Printer. The printer will be incorporated into projects that encourage innovation and creativity for DMS students. Congratulations to all grant recipients! The benefits for students are immeasurable.



Peoria-Based Robots Piloted in Dunlap

The Peoria-based company, Pringle Robotics, partnered with Hickory Grove to pilot the use of robots in schools. HGES has three bots that are utilized to make deliveries around the building and disinfect surfaces. The sanitizing robot is able to get through each classroom every night. Of course, the elementary students adore the bots! Students have become very interested in how they work and the ways in which technology can improve lives.





Goal #2: Manage resources in a responsible, efficient, and effective manner.

COVID Relief Funds

The Curriculum Department led a stakeholder feedback survey to identify areas in which the American Rescue Plan (ESSER III) Funds should be utilized to support the school community.

A portion of these funds were utilized for the creation of an after school tutoring program. The Curriculum Department organized and supported this program aimed at targeting students needing an extra boost of instruction.

Another portion of the funds will be utilized for the purchase of new ELA materials at the Elementary level. The Curriculum Department conducted a review of English Language Arts curriculum resources. What started as a routine curriculum review and adoption process turned into a large research and review project as recent studies, legislation, and resources center around what is called the "Science of Reading" as well as "Structured Literacy."

The Elementary ELA Resource Adoption Plan is a two-and-a-half-year plan to pilot the series *Wit and Wisdom* in first through fifth-grade classrooms and continue researching developmentally appropriate resources for our preschool and kindergarten classrooms through the school year 2024. The comprehensive plan also includes two cohorts of LETRS Training, a two-year training that explores the fundamentals of foundational literacy instruction.

Thank you to all stakeholders who participated in the survey and helped make decisions about managing the resources made possible by ESSR-III responsible, efficient, and effective.

Once again, Dunlap High School is found on the U.S. News and World Report Rankings.

#1 in Peoria Metro High Schools

#64 in all Illinois High Schools

#1,369 in all U.S.

This honor exemplifies the hard work of all Dunlap stakeholders. From bus drivers, custodians, secretaries, cooks, aides, administrators, principals, and teachers to supportive and involved families. Most of all, the hard work of our wonderful students allowed Dunlap to have a top seat on this prestigious list.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Mr. Todd Jefferson who has been named the 2022 Central Illinois Valley Region Principal of the Year! The Illinois Principals Association annually recognizes outstanding school leaders who have succeeded in providing high-quality learning opportunities for students in the Central Illinois Valley Region and across the state. The program honors principals that excel in the areas of leadership, imagination, student learning, and advocacy for children. Mr. Jefferson joined the Dunlap District 26 years ago, teaching Social Studies at DMS. Mr. Jefferson began his administrative career in 2000 as the DMS Assistant Principal. He became the Principal at Wilder-Waite in 2003 until his move to Ridgeview in 2012. Mr. Jefferson provides vision and direction for the growth and success of not only Ridgeview but the entire Dunlap community. Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition!



Goal #3: Provide a challenging and positive learning environment in the pursuit of excellence.

Multicultural Fair Spotlights Diversity

Dunlap High School students and staff collaborated to host their annual Multicultural Fair on Wednesday, April 13th. Students from Multicultural Club and Foreign Language Club came together along with other Dunlap students to showcase the many cultures represented at Dunlap High School. Community members had the opportunity to learn more about each culture by visiting student booths. They sampled authentic food and heard a brief presentation from a Dunlap student from that culture. The event also featured a fashion show "Wardrobe of the World", dance performances, and international games for the first time this year.

The diversity of families in Dunlap Schools is one of our greatest strengths. Special events like DHS Multicultural Fair are an opportunity to highlight the beauty of our differences. Ultimately, Dunlap strives to honor the diversity of our students and create schools where all students know they belong every single day. As kids grow in such a diverse environment, empathy, collaboration, and respect for differences develop. This truly is a gift of immeasurable worth.

Thank you to all students, staff, and families who help make this vision a reality, including all involved at DHS multicultural fair.



Dunlap Students participate in DHS Multicultural Fair, as seen in the photos above. To the right is a digital drawing of Banner's new playground.

New Playground Created for ALL Kids

Banner's PTO purchased nearly \$100,000 worth of new playground equipment that is to be installed this summer. The new equipment, along with overall improvements to the playground, will create a space to play that is inclusive of all children, including those with varying degrees of mobility. The plan is to remove all barriers that impede movement from one space to another creating easy access between each space. The new equipment has a ramp with a bridge and will be able to be accessed by ALL children. This playground will be a model to others in the surrounding area in terms of inclusivity.



Congratulations!

Mrs. Natalie Lanser, 3rd Grade Teacher at Dunlap Grade School, was recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education with an award of meritorious service for her commitment to the education of our students. Natalie exemplifies the compassion and hard work this award celebrates. Congratulations, Mrs. Lanser, you deserve it!



Goal #4: Foster partnerships to benefit the overall school community.

Junior Achievement Titan Business Competition

Dunlap High School Marketing students participated in the 16th Annual JA Titan Business Strategy Competition at Illinois Central College's East Peoria Campus on April 22. Students from Dunlap, East Peoria, and Washington competed in teams with the JA Titan online business simulation program. The JA Titan business simulation allows students to compete against one another as Chief Executive Officers of simulated companies. Players plan and execute each aspect of a business including price, production, marketing, capital

investment, and research and development. Like any business, the goal is to reach a balance of supply and demand at an efficient cost of production while competing with other companies in the industry. The software calculates each team's Performance Index (PI) based on a weighted measurement of the company's value and performance. The students also participated in a roundtable and learned what it takes to be a successful professional directly from local business leaders. What a fantastic experience for our high schoolers!



Parent-Teacher Organization Partnerships

Partnerships built within each school's active PTO bring richness to Dunlap Schools. For example, HGES PTO held a Fun Run this spring. Students, teachers, and parents participated in a 1-mile race and a social night of bounce houses and food trucks. Community members also donated items for the online auction. Altogether, the PTO raised \$18K for the Outdoor Learning Center. The next phase of construction will include a science deck and outdoor music and art areas.

PTO is supporting a complete makeover to the front entrance to Banner. Greenview Nursery developed a landscape plan and the new and much-improved entrance will be revealed this spring. These are just two examples of the remarkable support schools receive from PTO.



Pathways Program Partnerships

The Pathways Transition Program at DHS has been busy this spring taking on new adventures out in the community. Every week they learn about a different job and visit or interview a person in that job title. Most recently, the Pathways group was able to learn about jobs at the airport and about the job of a mascot. Pathways toured and learned about all of the different jobs at the Peoria International Airport including the jobs of a baggage handler, an airline carrier ticket agent, a TSA officer, a custodian, and a groundskeeper. Students also had the opportunity to learn about the job of a mascot by the Peoria Rivermen's mascot, Rocky. They were able to interview Rocky and get an inside look at the ice arena. Community partnerships strengthen student experiences.

Goal #4: Foster partnerships to benefit the overall school community.

Dunlap Students and Community Service Make a Winning Combination

Students at Elementary Schools across Dunlap participate in projects that serve the community. At Wilder-Waite, the 5th grade Project Impact team provides opportunities for leadership and philanthropic activities for all students at school. This year the group was able to return to many activities that had been put on hold the previous two years. Following the kick off at the homecoming parade, students organized a coat drive for Neighborhood House, a Giving Tree for Wilder-Waite families, collected socks for Veterans, and completed a food drive for Friendship House. Additionally, the group volunteered weeding the gardens at EPIC and completed activities at Midwest Food Bank.

The group also supported JDRF to support diabetes research and Relay Recess to support the American Cancer Society. Thanks to the generosity of our Wilder-Waite families, thousands of dollars and donations supported the needs of our school family as well as those in the community. Wilder-Waite principal, Stacy Berg, notes, "From these experiences, we hope our Wildcats embrace the idea of helping others in their near and extended communities."



Dunlap Grade School completed its 4th annual One School, One Book project with the partnership of the Dunlap Public Library and Dunlap High School Trailblazer Robotics Team. During this month-long activity, all staff and students read "The Wild Robot." The Dunlap Public Library hosted multiple themed events that correlated with the book. As a culminating activity, the three entities co-hosted a robotics-themed family night that included robotics demonstrations, coding stations, and a robot makerspace.

DGS and Prospect United Methodist Church continue to have a strong community partnership that is mutually beneficial. Each year, PUMC provides backpacks and school supplies for students in need. Furthermore, they provide extra snack and breakfast items as needed for our students. This year, Dunlap Grade School service and leadership club partnered with the kindergarten classes to conduct a food drive. The cans collected were donated to Prospect United Methodist Church's Food Pantry that directly serves our community.

In April, Banner Families donated several items to Almost Home Kids (affiliated with OSF). Such items include diapers, linens, laundry detergent, and gift cards. At Hickory Grove, Mr. Leiner and Mr. Morrow raised \$9,162.55 for the American Heart Association through



the Kids Heart challenge. During PE, the students also participated in Laps for Life raising money for St. Jude Children's Hospital. HGES partnered with the Peoria Area Food Bank for our annual food drive. The students enjoyed filling a truck with the generous donations from our community.

Dunlap's Early Childhood program partners with the community, too. In October, they visited the Fire Department and were able to learn about fire safety, see a Firefighter in full uniform, and sit in the firetruck! In January, they welcomed Shae, from Communication Junction, for Sign and Sing Story Time. Students enjoyed listening to stories, learning sign language, and singing songs.

Dunlap Gives Back, a program within the Dunlap School District that helps support the needs of Dunlap students and families, held a food drive to collect non-perishable items. The food that was collected will go to provide summer meals to area families while school is not in session. Dunlap Schools are proud of the work of students, staff, and community members with these endeavors.



The St. Jude Club raised \$14,000 dollars this year for the children of St. Jude. Members volunteered their time throughout the at JFL concessions, car wash, bake sale, raffle baskets, Black Out night, Halloween candy sales, and Pajama Day at the grade schools.

Students Thrive With Extracurriculars



Congratulations to the cast and crew of Stage 323 Group Interpretation of *Matilda* on representing DHS at the IHSA Drama & Group Interpretation State competition.



Ally Unruh received second place at the 18th Congressional District Student Art show. Art students took home eight ribbons at the Mid-Illini Art Show, bringing home four Merit ribbons for their work.



Due to the generous efforts of the DHS Music & Theater Boosters, the Music Department has a beautiful, new baby grand piano which was used in the Spring Concert that was hosted on April 12th.



Over 100 students attended 2022 Snowball. Workshops ranging in topics such as leadership, self-defense, problem-solving, team building, life lessons, and music took place.



DHS Speech Team finished second at Bradley's Armstrong National Tournament, 1st at Mid-Illini, Regional Champs in Individual Events and Performance In The Round, 2nd Place at Sectionals, and six events performed at State.

Congratulations! Dunlap 2022 RETIREES



Phyllis Brecklin
Jerry (Pete) Carmody
Deana Collins
Angie Connor
Lonnie Edwards
Jody Hale
Cynthia James
Linda Kier
Debra Kreeger
Renee Kuykendall

**Thank you for your years of service.
You have truly made a difference in our Dunlap community!**