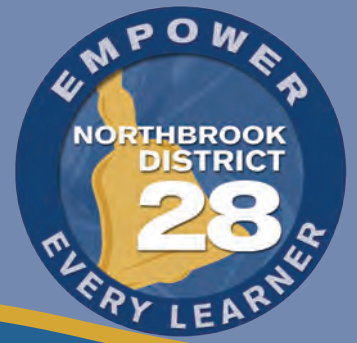


# UPDATE

A Newsletter from the Northbrook School District 28 Board of Education



## A JOYOUS NEW YEAR

First-and second-grade Westmoor School students perform in the annual Winter Sing and Art Show in December. Performance experiences are an integral part of the music curriculum.

## DISTRICT FOCUSES ON FUTURE LEARNING PRIORITIES

An exciting initiative to set a new direction for Northbrook District 28 is underway. In a rapidly changing world, it's important to continuously improve and strive to understand the needs of our students and what the future will demand.

Future Focus 28 will engage the community to develop a vision for the future and a plan on how to get there. The district is partnering with the nonprofit organization Catalyst for Educational Change to lead this strategic planning process. A 40-member strategic planning team made up of staff members, parents, and community members will meet over the next five months to develop a shared understanding of the current status of the district, develop a vision of where the district hopes to be in the future, and identify long-range goals and success indicators for those goals.

Parents, community members and staff will have several

opportunities to provide feedback during this process. The first opportunity is now open! All residents of District 28 are invited to complete this survey, which will help the team assess the current status of the district and expectations for the future.

The district's previous strategic plan was adopted in June 2018 with five goal areas and action plans. The timing is right to take a new look at the district's mission, vision and goals with Dr. Jason Pearson joining the district in July 2022 as the new superintendent and with the goals and objectives from the 2018 plan complete.

Take the survey by scanning the QR code on this page or visiting [northbrook28.net/FutureFocus28](http://northbrook28.net/FutureFocus28).



# SNAPSHOT

## BY THE NUMBERS

**Total Enrollment**  
**1,830**

**625 – Northbrook Junior High**  
**339 – Greenbriar**  
**444 – Meadowbrook**  
**422 – Westmoor & Young**  
**Explorers Early Childhood**

**89%**  
**Teacher Retention**

**79%**  
**Teachers with master's degree**  
**or higher**

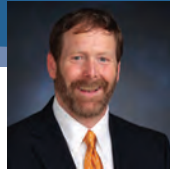
**13:1**  
**Pupil/teacher ratio**

**18**  
**Average Class Size**

### Student Diversity

**75.5% White**  
**14% Asian**  
**5% Two or More**  
**4.5% Hispanic**  
**1% Black**

Data from the 2023  
Illinois School Report Card.



# REFLECTIONS

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Jason Pearson, Ed.D.

### New Directions, New Beginnings

One of the highlights of being in education and schools is the opportunity to begin anew. There is no more important work than to equip our community's youth with the knowledge, resilience and confidence they need to thrive in an ever-changing world.

As a learning organization, we are committed to adapting to change with continuous improvement. We always want to learn and grow, to become better, to improve and enhance our programs and services for our students, staff and community.

Beginning this month, District 28 will embark on a new strategic planning process. Through survey data, focus groups, and a steering committee of over 40 staff, parents, and community members we will understand our success and identify next steps and opportunities for growth.

Our work will be guided by the nonprofit organization Catalyst for Educational Change. Our plan is to focus on three areas: the organization, student learning and staff recruitment and development. Just like with those New Year's resolutions, we hope to identify goals that will position D28 to positively impact and catalyze the learning experience for our students now and in the future with a strong organization and a dedicated, highly qualified staff.

As a community member of Northbrook District 28, we want to hear from you as we begin this process. I invite you to share your ideas and perceptions of our district through an environmental scan survey. Please take a few moments to participate by scanning the QR code on this page.



### NEW SCIENCE CURRICULUM

As part of the district's continuous curriculum review cycle, Smithsonian Science for the Classroom was implemented this year for grades K-5. At left, 4th-grade students observe animal communication in fiddler crabs and variables that impact their behavior. The new curriculum was selected by committee for its focus on engaging students in phenomenon-based learning, inspiring teachers with point-of-use support, and connecting students firsthand to the world around them.



# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT REPORT

## Performance Well Above State, National Scores

Northbrook District 28 students demonstrated strong performance on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) in both English language arts and mathematics, and outperformed students nationally on the NWEA MAP assessment, the annual assessment report to the Board of Education shows.

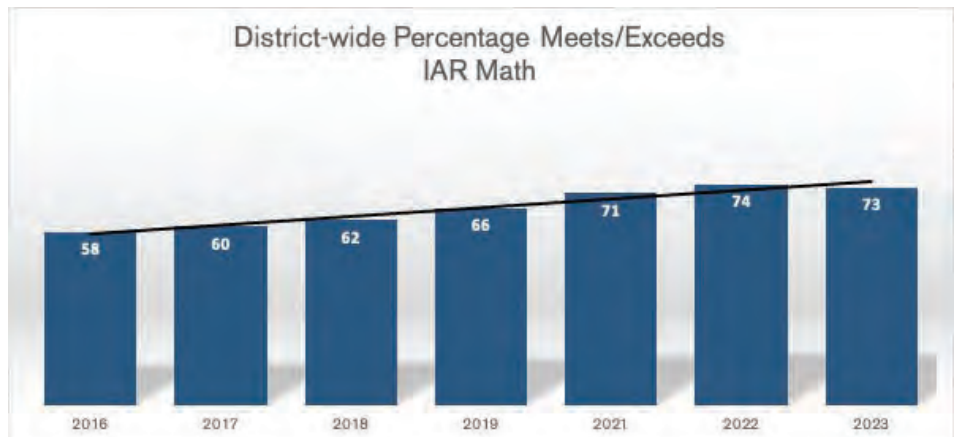
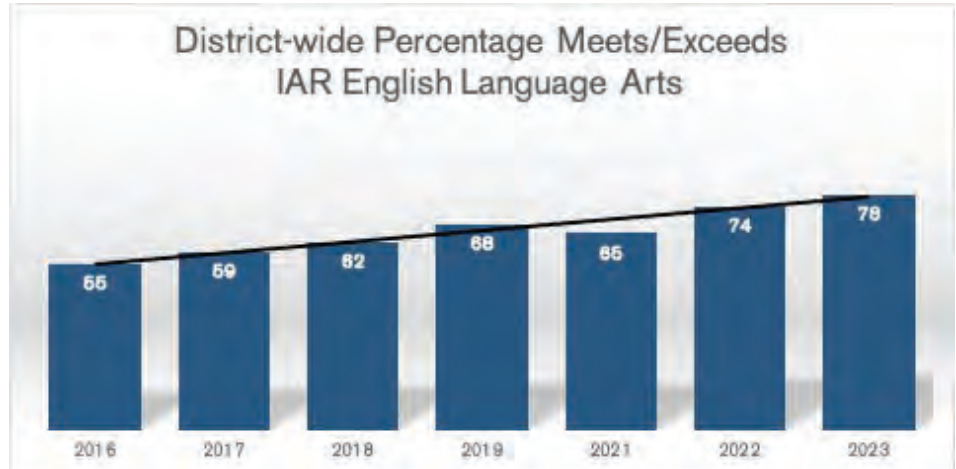
The district uses two main standardized tests that help evaluate teaching and learning. The IAR is state-mandated and measures a student's performance against defined criteria of proficiency. The other assessment is the nationally normed NWEA MAP assessment, which is given two to three times a year, serves as a 'thermometer' on student learning and provides immediate results.

The IAR results show district-wide performance scores of students meeting or exceeding state standards increased 23 percentage points over the last eight years in English language arts and 15 percentage points in math. The IAR scores are reported to the public in the Illinois School Report Cards, which were released Oct. 30.

The NWEA MAP assessment adapts to each student's skill level and knowledge. Scores are compared to all schools that participate across the country. Results are available quickly, so schools and teachers can adjust instructional strategies and provide specific students support as needed.

Scores on the NWEA MAP assessments show between 70% and 80% of students are performing at the two highest national quintiles whereas a typical district would have

### ILLINOIS ASSESSMENT OF READINESS DISTRICT-WIDE SCORES



**The complete assessment report to the Board of Education and the school report cards are available at [northbrook28.net/SchoolReportCards](http://northbrook28.net/SchoolReportCards).**

about 40% of students in the top two quintiles. District performance in the lowest quintiles is between 10% and 20% whereas a typical district would have 40%. Students performing in the lowest quintiles are monitored and provided additional support from interventionists when needed.

"We are proud of the students and teachers in this district. At the state level many schools are still working to rebound from the pandemic. That is not the case in District 28, which continued to grow through the pandemic and now we are well beyond that," Michelle Jackson, Director of Learning, said.

# NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON



Current and past board members, retired superintendent Dr. Larry Hewitt, Principal Dr. Scott Meek joined with parents, staff and students to celebrate receiving the National Blue Ribbon Schools Award from the U.S. Department of Education.

## NBJH Celebrates Blue Ribbon Award

Northbrook Junior High Principal Dr. Scott Meek, District 28 Superintendent Dr. Jason Pearson and teacher representative Wendy Concklin accepted the 2023 National Blue Ribbon School award in Washington D.C. on Nov. 17.

Northbrook Junior High was among the 353 schools nationwide and 20 schools in Illinois to receive the award in 2023. The recognition is based on the school's overall academic performance.

**“W**e're grateful for the opportunity to accept the award on behalf of the NBJH community, and we're excited to share this award with our staff, students and parents.”

-Dr. Scott Meek, NBJH Principal

“Going to Washington D.C. for the Blue Ribbon Award ceremony was truly special. It was great spending time with educators from across the country who were also being recognized. There was so much positive energy and enthusiasm in the building as everyone was celebrating their success and clearly were proud of their own school's

accomplishments,” Dr. Meek said. “We're grateful for the opportunity to accept the award on behalf of the NBJH community, and we're excited to share this award with our staff, students and parents.”

Northbrook Junior High held an all-school assembly on Friday, Dec. 1 including a student musical performance and video. State Rep. Jennifer Gong-Gerschowicz and State Sen. Julie Morrison were among special guests at the celebration. U.S. Rep. Brad Schneider was in Washington D.C. so he created a video greeting for students and staff.

## ABOUT D28

### SCHOOLS

#### Northbrook Junior High

1475 Maple Avenue, Northbrook  
Scott Meek, Ed.D., Principal

#### Greenbriar School

2195 Cherry Lane, Northbrook  
Ginny Hiltz, Ph.D., Principal

#### Meadowbrook School

1600 Walters Avenue, Northbrook  
Ericka Garza, Principal

#### Westmoor School

2500 Cherry Lane, Northbrook  
Maria Eck, Principal

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Jennifer Gallinson**  
President

**Mara Silver-Schack**  
Vice President

**Beth Bazer**  
Secretary

**DeShawn Arms**

**Matt Cassidy**

**Christine Beeftink**

**Adam Weinstock**

To contact board members, please email: [BoardofEducation@northbrook28.net](mailto:BoardofEducation@northbrook28.net).

### ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

**Jason Pearson, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent

**Kris Raitzer, Ed.D.**  
Assistant Superintendent

**Kelly Sculles, Ed.D.**  
Director of Student Services

**Jessica Donato, CSBO**  
Chief School Business Official

**Edward Brophy**  
Dir. of HR and Admin. Services

**Michelle Jackson**  
Director of Learning

**Terry Ryan, APR**  
Communications Director

**Joel Gallegos**  
Director of Buildings & Grounds

Please call (847) 498-7900 to reach any member of the administrative team. Update 28 is published two times a year by the Board of Education for citizens residing in Northbrook School District 28 at a cost of about 32 cents per issue.

Terry Ryan, Editor  
Volume 36, Number 1

January 2024 | [www.northbrook28.net](http://www.northbrook28.net)



# EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

## Young Explorers Offers Progressive Learning Environment

Northbrook School District 28 serves our youngest learners with an innovative early childhood program encourage exploration and skill development through child-centered experiences that build self confidence and connections between learning and natural environments. The program serves at-risk students, special needs students and typically developing students in a blended classroom model.

All 3- to 5-year-olds living with district boundaries are eligible for our program. Children will participate in a play-based screening in the areas of cognition, language, fine and gross motor skills, social-emotional functioning, and adaptive skills. Screenings are held monthly by appointment. Contact Helene Josephson, Admin. Assistant for Early Childhood at 847-504-3809.



## Program Highlights

### Integrated services for all students from certified staff

- Teachers are dual-certified in Early Childhood and Special Education
- Full-time classroom aide in each room
- Full-time Social Worker
- Full-time Speech-Language Pathologist
- Part-time School Psychologist
- Occupational therapist and physical therapist
- Related service personnel through NSSD

### Curriculum that supports development of the whole child

- Creative Curriculum
- Jolly Phonics
- Handwriting Without Tears
- Incredible Flexible You

### Progressive learning environment

- Project-Based Learning
- S.T.E.M. Education
- Environmental Education
- Service Learning
- Outdoor Classroom

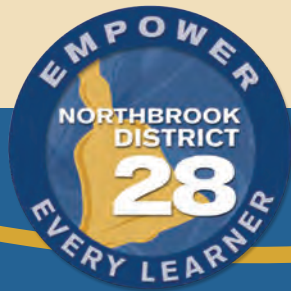


Young Explorers Early Childhood Program offers educators and specialists to support all students in a dynamic, engaging environment. Class size is 15 max with minimum 2 adults per class. Children can enroll beginning at age 3.



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\*\*\*\*ECRWSS \*\*\*\*

RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER  
NORTHBROOK ILLINOIS 60062

# UPDATE 28

## Kindergarten

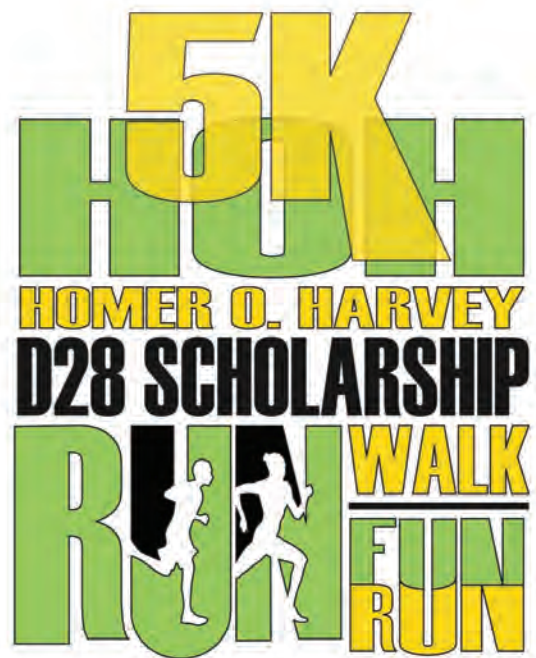
### Registration for 2024-25 February 2 - 9

Children who will turn 5 years old on or before September 1, 2024 should be registered for kindergarten during open enrollment February 2-9, 2024.

District 28 includes

- Greenbriar School, 2195 Cherry Lane, Northbrook (847-498-7950)
- Meadowbrook School, 1600 Walters Ave., Northbrook (847-498-7940)
- Westmoor School, 2500 Cherry Lane, Northbrook (847-498-7960)

Parents can access registration forms, boundary maps and contact information at [www.northbrook28.net/kreg](http://www.northbrook28.net/kreg).



### Save the date: May 4, 2024

This event is the main fundraiser for the Homer O. Harvey Scholarships. Since 1989, \$367,500 has been awarded to 388 Northbrook Junior High graduates. Homer O. Harvey was a longtime superintendent of District 28 and dedicated his career to providing high standards of excellence in learning.