

State Report Card Results Released

THE JOSEPH SEARS SCHOOL EARNS SECOND-HIGHEST DESIGNATION

CALENDAR

February 1

Board of Education
Building and Finance
Committee Meeting
9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

February 2

JK Report Cards
Mailed Out

February 2

Scamper
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

February 6

District Spelling Bee
4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

February 19

President's Day
No School



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The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) released the annual Illinois Report Card on October 30, 2023. The Illinois Report Card benchmarks how schools across the state are progressing on a wide range of educational goals and provides a summative designation based on the ISBE's indicators of student success, as required by the federal Every Student Succeeds Act.

This year, The Joseph Sears School received an annual summative designation of Commendable, the same as last year. This designation is the second-highest of the four markers that the ISBE awards schools and is a marker of the hard work and collective commitment of our students, educators, and families.

While Sears has worked hard, it is important that we always aim higher. Our eyes are set on achieving the Exemplary designation, which is awarded to the top 10% of schools in the state. Key factors to achieving that goal are: academic

proficiency, student growth, reduction of chronic absenteeism, and a positive school climate.

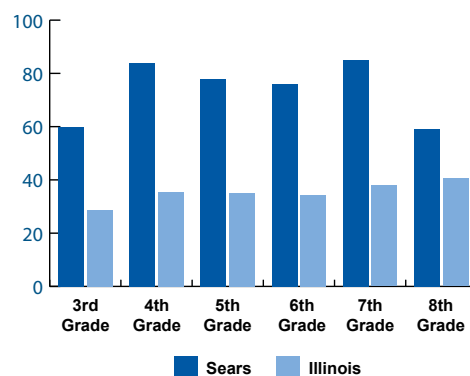
Academic Performance

In English Language Arts (ELA) and Math, Sears again earned all possible points for academic proficiency, which is consistent with our past high achievements. There was, however, an opportunity to score higher in the category of academic growth. In ELA, we recorded a student growth percentile of 55%, and in math, the student growth percentile stood at 50%. We are working to improve student growth scores by focusing on curricular alignment and pedagogical strategies that meet ISBE grade-level standards. Our current goal is to perform consistently with schools receiving an Exemplary designation and reach a minimum student growth percentile of 62% in ELA and 61% in Math.

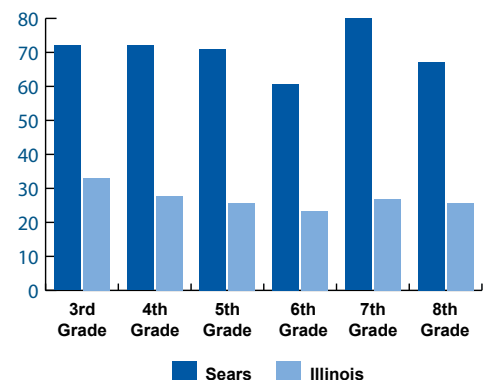
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IAR TEST DATA

Percentage of Students Who Met or Exceeded State Standards (Levels 4 and 5) in ELA



Percentage of Students Who Met or Exceeded State Standards (Levels 4 and 5) in Math



New Math Materials Enhance Student Learning



ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

*As part of our quarterly newsletters, we will highlight and focus on the pillars of our new Strategic Plan. This article will focus on our **Academic Achievement Pillar**.*

As part of an ongoing curriculum renewal cycle, during the 2022-2023 school year, the Joseph Sears School's Math Committee, after significant research, unanimously selected the enVision Math curriculum to implement in grades K-8 this year. The committee researched and piloted various Math programs for future use. The committee's goals were to prioritize Math content standards, examine programs aligned with those standards, and include resources for all students. EnVision is a well-respected program, winning the 2021 Gold Stevie Award for best "Mathematics Instructional Solution."

Junior High Math Teacher Cathy Quigley explained that enVision Math "is well aligned to our prioritized standards and includes a plethora of resources that promote an integrated system of teaching and learning and facilitate skill and concept mastery and growth for all learners." The program also features an accelerated seventh-grade textbook and an extensive series of high school courses, including Algebra, among other beneficial resources for all students.

According to Quigley, enVision Math has already enhanced students' learning in Math this year by providing opportunities for individualized and independent practice while utilizing interactive resources that provide examples such as videos, corrections to students' work, and more. The program also stores achievement and growth data that teachers can use to inform individualized instruction.

"The program facilitates deeper learning and engagement by students as the instruction and practice are replete with timely and age-appropriate real-world applications, and project-based learning options are available within every topic at every grade level," Quigley said. In coordination with Assistant Principal Martin Heffner, teachers have collaborated to learn how to best utilize the many resources enVision offers, both in print and electronically, through iPads, Chromebooks, and other mediums.

Quigley added that all students have responded enthusiastically to the new program, appreciating the projects and interactive programs. Junior high students have taken ownership of their learning by embracing the open-ended practice and problem-solving exercises embedded within the curriculum.

Our Strategic Plan aims for all students to achieve the *Portrait of a Sears Graduate*. These qualities are embedded within the enVision Math program, which asks students to use higher-order thinking to make sense of problems and persevere as Fearless Learners. Students are asked to reason quantitatively, model with Math, and apply repeated reasoning as Creative Thinkers while critiquing their reasoning and the reasoning of others as Compassionate Citizens. Students will also construct and precisely communicate arguments via the new curriculum as Courageous Advocates. EnVision Math's comprehensive resources and contemporary curriculum materials thus provide students with a robust foundation in mathematics, equipping them with the essential skills and knowledge needed to succeed both in class and beyond.



Budget and Tax Levy Update



FISCAL ALIGNMENT

*As part of our quarterly newsletters, we will highlight and focus on the pillars of our new Strategic Plan. This article will focus on our **Fiscal Alignment Pillar**.*

During the September 26, 2023, meeting of the Kenilworth School District 38 Board of Education, the Board approved the Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) budget after holding a public hearing on the matter. The budget reflects District 38's commitment to fiscal alignment and responsibility while financing projects that enhance educational initiatives and fund operational expenses and investments, as outlined in the Strategic Plan.

The Joseph Sears School's mission is to provide a quality education and ensure all students meet our *Portrait of a Sears Graduate*. The approved budget and tax levy are vital components in achieving this goal, allocating funds to key areas of improvement, including the completion of the Phase III portion of the Master Facilities Plan, various curriculum and professional development growth opportunities, and technology enhancements throughout the schoolhouse.

A significant portion of the budget is dedicated to funding the completion of the Phase III construction project. District 38 has embarked on a journey to modernize its facilities and ensure a safe, collaborative, and inspiring learning environment for all students and staff. Phase II of this project included the renovation of the Baker Building, the integration of a new heating-cooling system within JK-5 spaces, the creation of student collaboration hubs, a new Cafenadium, upper and lower-level commons, and a new outdoor classroom with a rooftop garden. Phase III of this project will modernize portions of the building that were not touched in Phase II and will also address structural issues important to the life and safety of the schoolhouse that were discovered in prior construction.

District 38 has recognized that a dynamic and relevant curriculum is essential for students' academic growth. A portion of the budget has accordingly been earmarked for reviewing and revising our curriculum, including developing and acquiring

updated materials and resources. This entails the purchase of textbooks, digital learning tools, and educational software designed to engage and challenge students. Last year, one committee focused on the Math curriculum. Others considered the Social Studies and Physical Education programs. This year's curriculum review is focused on English Language Arts.

In today's digital age, technology plays a crucial role in education. The District has already invested significantly in technology improvements to prepare students for 21st-century skills. This includes upgrading hardware, such as computers, tablets, interactive whiteboards, and network-related infrastructure. Connectivity investments are also top priorities to support technology initiatives and ensure reliable access to online resources, benefiting students and staff.

The District remains committed to fostering a nurturing and innovative learning environment where all students can succeed. The prudent allocation of funds to these three areas represents a significant step towards helping students achieve the *Portrait of a Sears Graduate*.

Taxpayers' support is invaluable in this endeavor, and District 38 is committed to transparency and accountability in using these funds. Per the Illinois School Code and State Law, the Board of Education approved a General Tax Levy of 7.99% for 2023 after a public hearing at its regular meeting on November 20, 2023. This levy is based on the Consumer Price Index, which is historically high, and expected new construction in the village.

The Administration and Board continue to monitor expenditures to ensure that taxpayer dollars are used wisely to further the Strategic Plan and help each student reach his or her full potential during their time at Sears.





THE JOSEPH SEARS SCHOOL

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Report Card

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Attendance and Engagement

Sears' report card revealed a significant decrease in chronic absenteeism, which stands at 9% this year compared to 18% last year. We believe this change is a testament to our attendance communications and partnership with families, the efforts of our attendance committee, our Culture of Care initiative, and the steps we have taken to ensure that every student feels welcome, engaged, and ready to learn. We are grateful to families for helping us achieve our Strategic Plan goal metric of chronic absenteeism below 10%.

The Way Forward

We will remain focused on implementing our 2022–2027 Strategic Plan, which includes targeted goals for student growth in ELA and Math. To achieve these goals, we are implementing our newly adopted Math materials, enVision Math, as recommended by our Math Committee after a year-long evaluation in the 2022–2023 school year. We are also conducting a curriculum evaluation for ELA materials to be implemented in the 2024–2025 school year, which includes standard alignment with our performance on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness.

As we work toward a fully aligned curriculum, our staff will continue to focus on meeting each student's academic needs by collaborating within our school community, engaging in comprehensive professional development, and conducting further curriculum analysis through our Tuesday In-Service programming. During this time, we will also be working closely with our Curriculum Committees to identify other potential changes in our programming to support student mastery of state standards to implement this school year.

For more information about our Strategic Plan and the metrics of success we hope to achieve for all students, please visit our website at www.kenilworth38.org/board/strategic-plan.



Illinois Assessment of Readiness

The Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) is a statewide assessment that is administered to students in grades 3–8 to evaluate their mastery of learning standards in English and mathematics. The IAR was designed to test student knowledge of key concepts, critical thinking, reasoning, research, communication, and problem-solving skills.

IAR uses a five-level system for breaking down student performance toward grade-specific standards:

- **Level 1:** Did not meet expectations
- **Level 2:** Partially met expectations
- **Level 3:** Approaching expectations
- **Level 4:** Met expectations
- **Level 5:** Exceeded expectations