



YOUR SCHOOLS

The Magazine of Thornton Township High Schools District 205

Fall 2011 Vol. 58 Issue 1.



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THE GATEWAY FOR PREPARING OUR STUDENTS FOR A
GLOBAL SOCIETY

THORNRIDGE ➤ THORNTON ➤ THORNWOOD



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Each generation faces the challenge of preparing the next generation for success. Our students today are faced with challenges and opportunities most of us never imagined when we were their age. They live in a world of global competition, of expanding knowledge, and of an economy strained by the deepest and longest recession since the Great Depression. They must learn to become lifelong learners, and they

must have the tools necessary to compete with others around the world.

The Board of Education of Thornton Township High School District is committed to providing students with a quality comprehensive education, in order for them to have successful futures.

We are in the age of technology -- of cell phones and Facebook; of instant and frequent digital communication. Our schools must be relevant to the world of our students and must be sufficiently challenging to hold their interest. With the proper tools, they will not only succeed, but will also thrive in the modern world. Thornton Township High School District 205 has been working diligently to transform our education program to provide learning opportunities in the "information age." The infrastructure to support digital technology has been put in place. By the end of this year, all freshmen classrooms will have Smart Boards, which essentially replace chalkboards with large interactive computer screens complete with Internet access. These boards add to the current Smart Boards we have in all junior math classes. We know that computers will be the tools of daily work, just as they are in college and in the vast majority of today's jobs.

Due to this, additional computer labs have been added to each school. District 205's *Gateway philosophy* is centered on preparing our students for the next step of their lives. Over the last several years, we have implemented college and career programs with the goal of equipping our students to be prepared for a career or college by completing rigorous secondary opportunities. Some of the career preparation programs include: the Thornton Township Academy of Truck and Diesel Technology *Powered by Navistar*, Project Lead the Way (Pre-Engineering Program), International Culinary Arts, Digital Media, Pre-Pharmacy and much more. Our new programs boast increases in student achievement and college attendance rate and equally huge decreases in school discipline problems. The benefits are phenomenal. The Board of Education is truly proud of the successes of our District, and working with all stakeholders to sustain the momentum of greatness we have established.

This is all being done with shrinking state and local budgets. While we are seeking grant funding to supplement our efforts, this will only be possible if we can demonstrate broad support within our community. Simply stated, if this is to happen now, it will do so because of the forward-looking spirit of the citizens of Thornton Township. Let us choose at this time to stretch ourselves to provide the resources for going global, to give our students a competitive gateway for their futures, and to help offer our District hope for a brighter tomorrow. Please enjoy the following presentations of the great things occurring within the District.



By Jerry B. Doss and Javon Hall

Over the last five years the Thornton Township High School District 205 Board of Education has taken a bold and unprecedented action by approving the creation and development of a Student Board of Education Program. The Student Board of Education Program was initiated during the 2006-2007 school year. Over the course of the last four years and with the support and confidence of the District 205 Board of Education, Superintendent and administration, the program has successfully accomplished its role as a district-wide student advisory group and prepared student leaders for post high school opportunities.

Since its inception, over 31 students have served on the Student Board of Education representing all three schools. Students serving on the Student Board have a 100% graduation rate, attend college and are awarded scholarships that on average cover more the 60% of the cost to attend. Members of the Student Board also participate in high level policy and strategic planning decision affecting District 205. The 2010-2011 Student Board Goals included:

- Improving the District's current lunch offerings
- Working with students and student organizations to provide recommendation for the District's \$51 million Capital Improvement Program
- Continue to develop and expand the Jefferson Awards Program
- Continue to enhance the District 205 SAVE Program

2011-2012 GOALS

The Student Board of Education recently held its summer Board retreat at the Illinois Teen Institute at Western Illinois University, in Macomb, Illinois. While at the Illinois Teen Institute the Student Board created the following goals for the 2011-2012 school year.

- Work with Arbor Management to diversify breakfast and lunch menu items and improve service and food quality.
- Continue to build and expand the Jefferson Awards Program in District 205.
- Work with Schaumburg High School to continue the Student Exchange Program with a Law and Social Justice Spring Break Immersion Experience.
- Continue to strengthen the SAVE Program across the District.
- Plan and implement the second annual District 205 Board of Education Student Commendation Awards Ceremony.

2011-2012 Accomplishments To Date:

- Provided input that resulted in the successful completion of new cafeterias and Thornton Auditorium
- Facilitated Gold Service Leadership Award from the Jefferson Award Community Service Initiative
- Awarded over half million dollars in scholarships

For more information about the Student Board of Education and to follow its progress please consult the District 205 Student Board of Education website www.district205.net. The Student Board of Education meets regularly on the second Tuesday of each month. During the months of May, June July and August, the meetings are held at Thornwood High school; August, September, October and November at Thornridge High School; and January, February, March and April at Thornton High School.

STUDENT Board of Education

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Thornwood H.S.

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Student Delegate
Thornwood H.S.



From the Acting Superintendent

GATEWAY FOR PREPARING OUR STUDENTS FOR A GLOBAL SOCIETY

Dr. Betheny J. Lyke, *Acting Superintendent*

It is with great honor that I serve as the Acting Superintendent of Thornton Township High Schools. I began my career in District 205 in 1995 as a mathematics educator, moved on to a freshman academy chairperson, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent, and now this role. District 205 has been my home for the past sixteen years and I consider it a true honor to be asked by the Board of

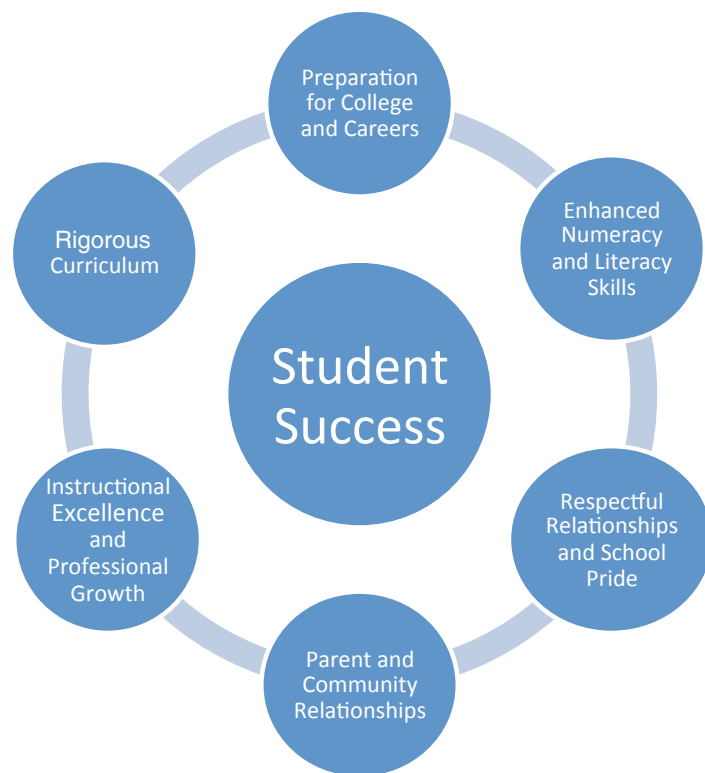
Education to lead our organization during our time of transition.

Over the past few months, I along with Dorith Johnson, the newly appointed Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Mr. Doug Ogarek, the newly appointed Director of Business Operations; Mrs. Carrie Ablin, Director of Pupil and Personnel Services; Mr. Jerry Doss, Director of Public Relations and External Relationships and our exceptionally dedicated principals, Mrs. Darcelle Williams of Thornwood High, Mr. Tony Ratliff of Thornton Township High, and our newest administrator, Mr. James Walton of Thornridge High, have collaborated to set a vision for our students, staff, parents and community. This vision centers on ensuring that all students who come through our schools are prepared for college, whether they plan to attend or not. We are focused on creating programs, structures and environments that will allow each student to meet their maximum potential academically and socially in order for them to be successful citizens, prepared for the real world, and able to compete on any level.

The leadership vision of the District 205 Administrative Team is to establish the District as the gateway for preparing students for a global society through effective, competent and passionate leadership. The five areas of focus that will drive the work of the Team are support, structure, communication, resources and building leadership capacity.

The vision set forth is only words until the staff members of District 205 act on it. Our District is fortunate to have dedicated teachers, counselors, deans, paraprofessionals, secretaries and other support staff that desire to see our students succeed and are putting a great deal of effort into student success. Our staff members are working on implementing plans that will promote student success focused on the six major student-centered goals represented on the circle of success pictured to the right.

As District 205 travels on the path of success, it will be important that all stakeholders embrace the circle of student success. Our students benefit from the knowledge and support from staff members, the nurturing and discipline from parents and guardians, the opportunities for exposure from local businesses, and the networking opportunities from community organizations. Whether you have children in our schools or not, as a member of our community, you can affect the success of our students. Will you?



You are invited to come to our schools to visit the greatness of District 205. Please contact your local school for a tour!

Upcoming Acting Superintendent's Coffee Chats
January 20, 2012-- 9:30-10:30 am
February 27, 2012--9-10 a.m.
Your questions and comments set the agenda!

REACHING FOR THE STARS GALA

Star Award WINNERS

HISTORY

Four years ago the Thornton Township High School District 205 Academic Enrichment Foundation created the Star Award for Teaching Excellence. The Star Award for Teaching Excellence recognizes outstanding teachers who embody District 205's commitment to excellence.

All full-time tenured faculty members are eligible for the award. The award honors teachers who inspire, stimulate, challenge, and motivate their students; teachers who develop in students the ability to think critically and creatively about the world; teachers who instill in their students a lifelong love of learning; and teachers who inspire, mentor; and develop new teachers entering the field.



THE SELECTION PROCESS

Each year the Foundation selects one teacher at each building to receive the Star Award. The Star Award for Teaching Excellence recipients are nominated by their professional peers in each building. The nine professionals that have been selected as Star teachers over the last three years have touched the lives of thousands of students who have attended District 205 schools. The Star Award for Teaching Excellence only ratifies the sentiments of the District, the Foundation, faculty and staff of District 205 that teachers go over and beyond the call of duty everyday in District 205.

STAR AWARD RECIPIENTS

2007

- William Kirksy: Thornridge High School,
- Calvin Stark: Thornton Township High School
- Patricia Brucki: Thornwood High School

2008

- Yvonne Nesbitt: Thornridge High School
- Jackie Woods: Thornton Township High School
- Nancy Lopez: Thornwood High School

2009

- Barbra Green Kenan: Thornridge High School
- Wanda Russell: Thornton Township High School
- Dr. Charles Seigel: Thornwood High School

2010

- Ron Kokesch: Thornridge High School
- Dr. Veronica Peppers: Thornton Township High School
- Deborah Ubriaco: Thornwood High School

2011

- David Eanes: Thornridge High School
- Terry Wells: Thornton Township High School
- Ann Maziur: Thornwood High School
- Dr. J. Kamala Buckner: District Office

Curriculum Corner

By Dorith Johnson

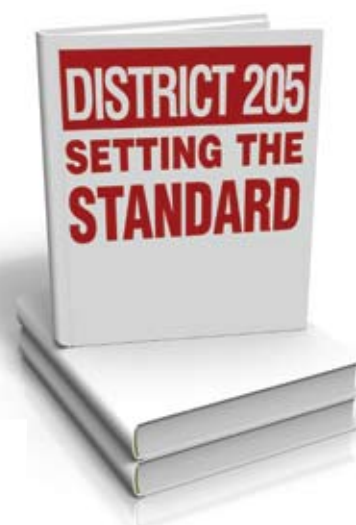


Dorith Johnson

TRANSFORMATION

We are transforming Thornton Township High School District 205 into a Gateway District to prepare students for a global society. Illinois, along with 44 states in our union, have adopted a set of Common Core Standards in math and English/Language Arts. The standards are officially called the New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core. These standards will apply to all students - kindergarten through 12th grade. Having a common set of standards will help the grade schools and high schools throughout our nation to have an alignment of curriculum and assessments.

The assessments that students will take in correspondence with these standards are called the PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College & Careers) assessments. The first set of PARCC assessments will be taken by students during the spring of 2014. At the high school level, all 9th – 11th grade students will have to take this assessment. The Common Core standards and PARCC assessments will require much more of our stu-



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We have literacy coaches in each building who are providing professional development to our teachers on a different Common Core Standard each month. The teachers are taking these skills and strategies back into the classroom for implementation. The teachers attend a follow up session to analyze the student work as an outcome of the incorporation of these skills and strategies. Some of the standards that are being taught focus on include reading and writing for argument, schema building and vocabulary, and reading primary documents for information.

The Common Core Standards also focus on eight mathematical practices. Our math coaches, who are in each building, provide professional development on a different mathematical practice each month. Some of these mathematical practices include making sense of problems and persevering in solving them, reasoning abstractly and quantitatively, attending to precision, and constructing viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others. A large component of the work in math focuses

on fostering critical thinking in our students. As a result, we are seeing more “math talk” and facilitated math discussions in our class-

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

As a parent, you can assist in helping to prepare your student(s) for the Common Core Standards by encouraging your student(s) to read more informational text for understanding. These are nonfiction materials that pertain to information such as cell phone agreements or insurance policies. The Common Core Standards are requiring that by 12th grade, reading done in school should consist of 70% informational text and only 30% literature. Additionally, you can encourage your student(s) to think more critically by asking them to compare and contrast or evaluate options in their everyday decision making. We can work together to ensure that all of our students are college and career ready.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Additionally, we are working on expanding our external partnerships with colleges, universities, and local businesses. If we are truly preparing our students for a global society, they must have real world experiences and connections. We are currently assessing all of our career pathway offerings along with meeting with various institutions in order to determine the best fits for external partnerships. There have been meetings regarding the Certified Nursing Assistant Program, a Law Program, and an extension of our Pre-Pharmacy Program in conjunction with the colleges and universities just to name a few. We are also looking at other programming opportunities for our students in the area of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Science). There is a lot of movement in our nation towards the area of STEM research, funding, and programs in order to get more students prepared for careers in math and science. District 205 will play its part in reaching this goal.

THORNTRIDGE High School



James Walton
Principal



A New Beginning

Hello to the Falcon students, staff and faculty, parents and community friends and partners!

My name is James M. Walton, Jr., and I am proud to be the new principal and instructional leader of Thornridge High School – Home of the Falcons! I have gotten a chance to meet with every student attending Thornridge this year, as well as many of the staff and faculty. I have met with the best assistant principals, deans and house leaders in the District. And while I am very appreciative the fine job Mr. Pearson and Mr. Valant have done, I want to acknowledge and recognize Mr. Bradley Beilfuss for the outstanding leadership he has provided as the principal of Thornridge. I am privileged and grateful to have these gentlemen as members of my



Thornridge National Honor Society Members

administrative team.

As I walk around Thornridge, I have begun to capture the spirit, soul and essence of this school. I see the Falcon pride in everything and everyone. I see the accomplishments and the rich history of this building. I see Thornridge as a place that is near and dear to the community and the alumni. But, there is one thing I see in the eyes of every student here. I see vast and limitless potential in every young woman and young man I have seen since the beginning of the school year. And that excites me, encourages me and propels me to create, shape and craft the components that will continue the instructional excellence in every classroom for every student for one unified purpose: afford every student the opportunity for academic improvement and success at every level of development! I am looking forward to being instrumental in making certain every student is capable, confident and prepared for whatever they purpose and dream to accomplish as they develop, grow and attain the academic and social skills and abilities to be contributory citizens in our community and beyond!

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone who has humbled me with the greatest and most sincere welcome I have ever received. I am elated to be here. I am excited about our educational future. And I am very proud to be a Thornridge Falcon!

Let's all work together to have the best year ever!!!



Thornridge Student Board of Education Members



Thornridge Students enjoying their new cafeteria

THORNTON

Township High School



Tony Ratliff
Principal

Making the Transition

Parents, guardians, and community members,

My second year as principal of our great school is off to a terrific start! Our students are filled with pride as they walk throughout the school and experience their state-of-the-art classrooms, and other facilities such as our auditorium and student cafeteria. Our Wildcat Staff is poised and ready to prepare all of our students for a successful transition into life after high school, such as college, trade school, military, and even the workforce. While we are continuing our focus on providing career opportunities for our upper classes of students to experience, we also understand that critical phase of development as our students transition from middle school into high school. Therefore, this article will focus on our intervention strategies and supportive concepts that are having a very positive impact on the success of our freshmen.



Freshman Academy visits University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign.

The Freshmen Academy Leadership Team consists of Mr. Scott Savage, Freshmen Academy House Principal; Mr. Brad Ablin, Freshmen Academy House Leader; Ms. Paula Walker, Freshmen Academy Counselor; Mr. Darryl Reddick, Freshmen Academy Counselor; Ms. Hanifah Ross, Freshmen Academy Dean; and Ms. Carolyn Strong, Freshmen Academy Dean. This leadership team, along with our Freshmen Academy teachers and staff, has been extremely active in building the bridge from high school to college for our freshmen students. We wanted to expose our freshmen students to life on the college campus. Our intent is to give them a sneak peek of their life just 4 years from now if they work hard and stay

focused during their time at Thornton Township High School. Since the start of this school year, our freshmen had the opportunity to attend a boat cruise luncheon for potential Gates Scholars, participate in college fairs, and visit college campuses. I must say that these activities have proven extremely effective, as more students are meeting with their counselors and discussing career pathways as they prepare to select their choice of upper house to attend during their sophomore through senior years. Our counselors conduct classroom visits to speak with students, constantly reminding them about their grades, choosing career pathways, and reflecting on their experiences.

We also conduct monthly motivational assemblies for our freshmen, where we provide our students with an array of speakers. Speakers range from upper class students who are very successful in their career pathways and now experiencing the excitement of selecting colleges to attend, to those students who started their freshmen year struggling, but are now succeeding and looking forward to attending college. We also invite Wildcat graduate who are working professionals to share their journeys of success and triumph.

The results of these initiatives are staggering, as there has been a significant decrease in major discipline infractions regarding our freshmen students, as well as an increase in their attendance rates. Our entire staff consistently comments that there is something special about this freshmen class, as they seem very focused, and they immediately embraced the concepts of Wildcat Pride, and accepted the challenge to be successful through their high school years. I am very proud of this group, as I am with all of my students, and very thankful for my administrative team and staff for pushing them towards excellence.



THORNWOOD High School



Darcelle Williams
Principal

School Year Well On It's Way

The 2011-2012 school year is well on its way! We had a very exciting beginning to this new year. It was great to see the faces of everyone when they saw the new cafeteria and some of the other changes in the building. Anytime there is something new, there is always the feeling of starting fresh. Our students, faculty and staff began this year with a fresh, new attitude and feeling that something good is about to happen. That feeling is always full of hope and promise. Last year's theme was, "Solving the Puzzle of Excellence and Success: One Piece at a Time." That idea signified that each and every person in Thornwood High School is an essential piece of the puzzle which makes us what we are. That theme is carrying over into this year because we are continuing to solve this puzzle. We are taking the challenge to complete this puzzle of Excellence, Respect and Pride. I know that sounds familiar, but Excellence, Respect and Pride describe what we are all about. We are known for this motto. Those three words describe our common goal, and the result is success.



We began this year by welcoming 473 eager freshmen. One of those freshmen who stood out was Glennita Williams, also known as the "Twinkie Girl," started her own not for profit company. America's Guardian Angels gets information on soldiers from the armed forces recruiting office in South Holland and from the website anysoldier.com, and sends donations and "Twinkies." This year Glennita aimed to send Twinkies to soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq. She received 250 boxes of Twinkies from Hostess after speaking to her freshmen peers in an assembly, she enlisted their help for additional Twinkies. She also collected donations from students and staff for shipping costs. Glennita is already making her mark at Thornwood, and has inspired other students to make a difference in the world.

Thornwood is working to complete the puzzle of Excellence,

Respect and Pride by expecting and challenging students to be on time for class. Attendance Challenge is an initiative created to reach the following goals in order to reduce tardies: Incrementally reduce tardies over the school year; monitor progress through technology; Increase student's self-efficacy; work with parents to reinforce positive behaviors and routines; and reward students who get to class on time. Students are rewarded with a coin, which can be redeemed for items. This program, which was devised and monitored by teacher, Mike Kincaid, has been very successful, reducing our tardies by nearly half of that they were last year.



This year the Thornwood Boys Cross Country track team led by Head Track Coach, Brian Evans, made their mark in the Southwest Suburban Conference by becoming the 2011-12 Conference Champions. They also placed 3rd in the IHSA Regional contest and advanced to sectionals where they had the second highest finish in school history. Students who led the team with great performances were Kenneth Allen, Johnnell Seanior, Reggie Brown and Wole Daramola. Coach Evans says that he is happy to say that with only one senior, the whole team will be returning next year. Watch out for the Thunderbirds.

As we work to complete this puzzle, Thornwood staff, and students will take the challenge to be our best selves, by speaking with good purpose, being flexible, having integrity, showing ownership of our lives and education, balancing our lives between work and play, realizing that failure leads to success, and making the commitment to ourselves, our lives and the people we care about. This year we will make it happen. We have taken the challenge and we will complete the puzzle of excellence, respect and pride through hard work, drive and perseverance.

Who Said District 205 Students Aren't Prepared For College?

By Habibat Oguntade

During my four years at District 205, I learned a lot and can honestly say that those four years are the best four years of my entire life. The skills that I developed have stayed with me and I am now making very good use of them at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. With the help of wonderful District 205 administrators, teachers and counselors, I became a Gates Millennium Scholar, a Coke-A-Cola Scholar and I also received ten other scholarships. I can receive as many PhD's as I desire and go to school for the rest of my life, if I choose. This is not because I am smart, or because I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth. It is because District 205 does have what it takes to prepare its students for the rest of their lives. I really cannot thank them well enough because I would not be where I am today if I did not attend Thornwood High School.

For those of you who are still in high school, please take advantage of every opportunity District 205 has available for you. Appreciate your teachers more than you ever have before. As students, we have a special relationship with our teachers. When you think of your future, I want you to view it as a house full of diamonds. Your teachers are holding the keys to that house, and they are eager to pass those keys onto you. It is your duty as a student to take those keys from the teachers to unlock the possibilities to your future. Be that extraordinary student that every teacher wishes to teach. Practice self-discipline and do not let anyone keep you from being your best.

Another important thing to remember is to find a mentor. This should be someone you can look up to and a person who will always set you on the right path. Mr. Jerry Doss was my mentor in high school and I just cannot thank him well enough because he always stood by me. He never let me down and was always there regardless of what he was doing. In other words, if you do not have a Jerry Doss, find one because those are the kind of people that you will need to be in your corner.

You may think that doing all these is not important because you are still in high school, but trust me success is like a building and without a strong foundation it collapses before you know it. High school is the foundation of your success and you better make it as solid as a rock. If you can do this, you will be able to achieve any goal you set. Let no one or nothing will stand in your way as long as you stay focused, determined and dedicated.

If I had a chance to attend high school again, I would go back to District 205 to appreciate my high school teachers a lot more than I did because I did not realize how much they meant to me until I got to college. Even though I am still making my transition between high school and college, I know District 205 has prepared me to walk into my future boldly with the confidence that I can achieve any goal I desire.



Celebrating the WORLD

By Stacy Wright

“Nǐ Hǎo” to our Chinese teachers!”

By Tom Porter

Thornton Township High Schools District 205 has expanded its Chinese Language Program for the 2011-2012 school year. Over 200 students in District 205 schools are enrolled in either Chinese One or Chinese Two. District 205 is honored to have two native Chinese faculty members this year. Mr. Sun Jin has returned to Thornton Township High School to teach Chinese. Sun Jin is from Wu Han City located in Hu Bei in Central China. Sun Jin's placement is sponsored by Hanban/Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban), which is in cooperation with the College Board. Sun Jin is teaching Chinese One and Two this year. In addition, District 205 welcomes Ms. Dan Zhong. Dan Zhong graduated with a bachelors' degree in history from Beijing Normal University in 2006. Dan Zhong came to the United States and earned her masters' degree in May 2011 from National Louis University. Dan Zhong is teaching Chinese One at Thornwood High School and Thornton Township High School. Dan Zhong loves to cook and to read and she is excited to teach the eager students in District 205.



Sun Jin



Dan Zong

Chinese Language

United Nations Summer Leadership Academy

By Stacy Wright

Launching elementary and high school students into the global society is the fundamental objective of the United Nations Summer Leadership Academy which is joint partnership between District 205, AT&T and the District 205 Academic Enrichment Foundation. As a district, we not only serve our current students, but also our future students by exposing them to enriching academic, cultural and life activities.

The United Nations Summer Leadership Academy is a six-week, community-based program that blends the Ralph Bunche United Nations curriculum, world history, economics, current events, wellness and leadership training. The mission of the UN Academy is to provide students in grades five through eight, from surrounding school districts and communities, with a global-based academic and enriched experience. Weekly cultural field trips are also a part of the academy.



The 2011 summer marked several new additions to the UN Academy. First, a Chinese language and culture class was added as an additional academic component. Secondly, due to the overwhelming popularity of culinary arts with UN Academy students, a second section of the class was added to provide students with more time to explore recipes and cuisine from around the world. And finally, in preparation for the End of Summer Celebration, a theater arts class was added to the program. Students performed “The Wizard of the UN Oz”, which highlighted their understanding of the United Nations, as well as their unique experiences and adventures over the summer.

COMMUNITY

To better prepare students for high school, and subsequently college and careers, District 205 has longstanding and diverse community partnerships. Through our small learning communities—the Houses of Excellence—we have been able to build lasting relationships with our partners to prepare our student for college or to move directly into the workforce.

Here is a list of some of the partnerships that directly impact our students:



- AT&T
- Calumet Lift
- Career Development Systems
- CEDA
- Center for Civic Education-“We the People”
Mock Congressional Hearing Program
- Chicago Community Trust
(South Cook Mathematics Initiative)
- Chicago State University
- Christ Community Church – Intergenerational
Reading Project
- Cook County Circuit Court Sixth Municipal District Mock
Trial Program
- Cook Illinois Corporation
- District 205 Academic Enrichment Foundation
- Eagle Express
- Echo
- Educational Talent Search
- EQ Engineers
- Family Centered Education Agency
- Harvey/Riverdale/Dolton Athletic Coalitions
- Homewood Disposal
- Illinois Department of Transportation (Project Lead the Way)
- Illinois Institute of Technology (D205 Scholar Academy)
- Illinois State University- Department of History
- Ingalls Hospital
- LB Steel
- League of Women Voters
- Loyola University Chicago - School of Law (D205 Law
and Social Justice Program)
- March of Dimes
- McBride Engineering
- Ministers Conference of South Cook County
(One Church One School)
- Navistar International Corporation
- Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship
- Pace Bus Company
- Paige Bus Company

- Project Strive – Department of Children and Family Services
- Restoration Ministries
- Riverdale Intergovernmental
- Robinson Engineering
- South Holland Ministers Alliance
– (Martin Luther King celebration)
- South Suburban College Partnership
 - Early Access Program
 - AIM (Academic Intervention for Matriculation)
 - Pre-Pharmacy Program
 - World AIDS Day Partnership
- The Cradle
- The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History
- Thornton Alumni Legacy Foundation
- Thornton Township Human Relations
 - (Martin Luther King Celebration)
- Thornton Township Teaching Learning K-12 Partnership
- United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
- Universal Technical Institute
- University of Illinois (Pre-Pharmacy Program)
- University of Illinois- Champaign Urbana EnLiST Program

PARTNERSHIPS

THORNTON TOWNSHIP TEACHING AND LEARNING PARTNERSHIP (TTTLP)

The Thornton Township Teaching and Learning Partnership is an organization comprised of District 205 personnel and representatives from each of our K-8 partner districts, who meet monthly for roundtable discussions about improving student achievement.

ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT FOUNDATION

The District 205 Academic enrichment Foundation is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that aspires to promote student development; encourage teacher and staff creativity and excellence; promote the school district as a center for parent involvement and community learning; and encourage school-community partnerships.

ANNUAL STAR APPEAL CAMPAIGN

Donations to the Academic enrichment Foundation's Annual Star Appeal support the students and staff of the District by advancing and supporting educational and cultural enrichment activities. Past donations have helped to send students on enriching and cultural field trips like visiting the United Nations and assisting teachers with enriching classroom activities.

THORNTON ALUMNI LEGACY FUND

The mission of the Thornton Alumni Legacy Fund (TALF) is to create an endowment in excess of one million dollars to provide financial support for under-funded academic and extracurricular programs now and in the future at Thornton Township High School.



HISTORICAL FINANCIAL REVIEW

By Douglas Ogarek



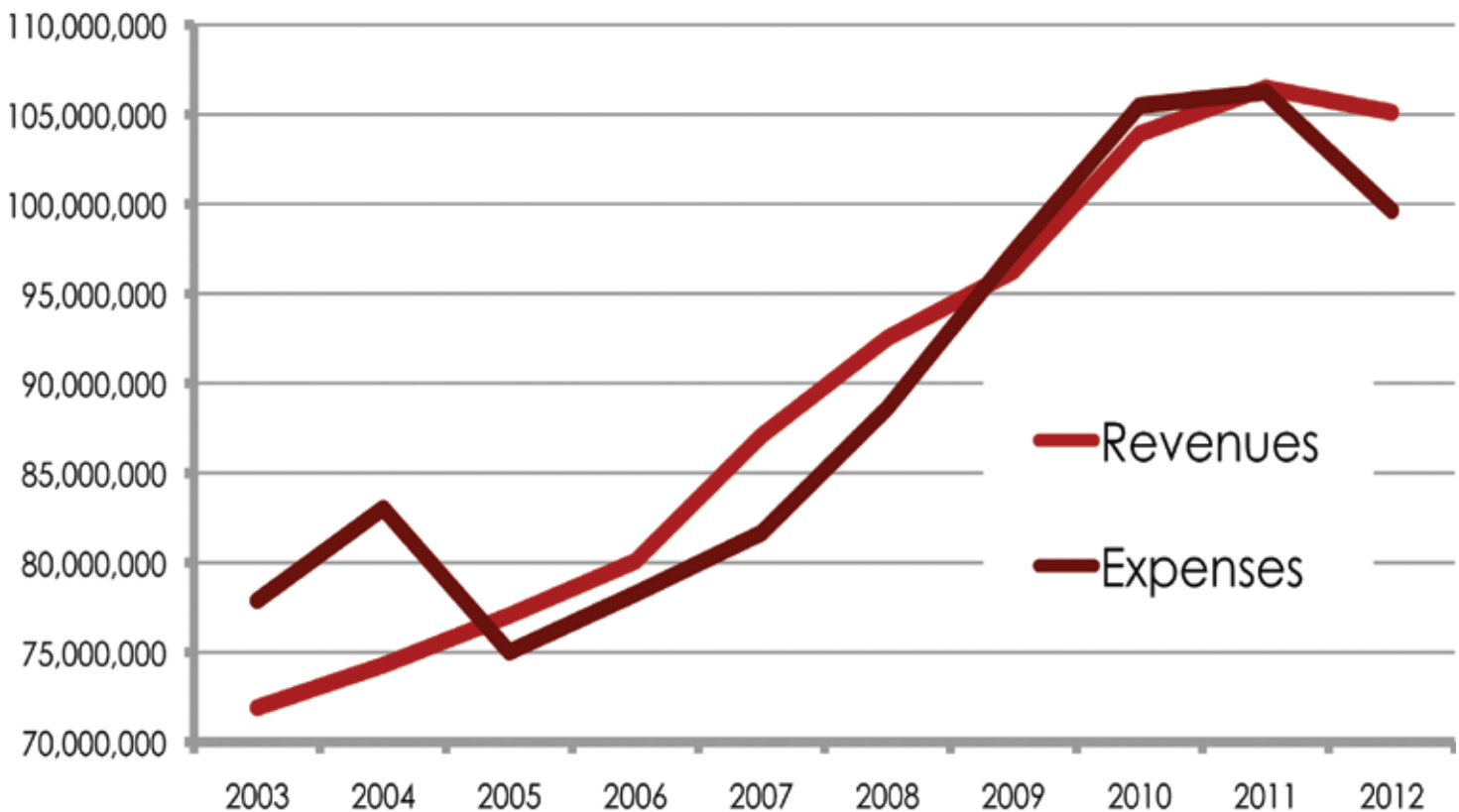
Douglas Ogarek

The US and Global economy continue to struggle. Many financial analysts and economists believe we are headed back into a recession. The District has already felt the impact of the continued economic contraction and will need to continue to take action to limit the negative financial impact on the District's fund balances.

The District has been proactively addressing the concerns brought about by the current economic climate. Despite declining revenues, the District's FY12 budget that was approved by the Board of Education last month shows a surplus of Revenues over Expenditures (excluding the bond fund and the capital projects fund).

This balancing effort shows the prudence and fiscal responsibility of the District while navigating through difficult financial times. The District was fortunate to have been able to utilize \$3.2 million of Federal ARRA funds to help balance the budget for FY12. This will be the last time the District will receive these funds.

Yet, there are still three primary areas of concern for the District as we look to the future: (1) The State financial crisis and its impact on state funding, (2) The increase in foreclosures and its impact on tax collections, (3) Low rates of inflation and its impact on tax revenue growth. **These issues are discussed on the following page.**



ISSUES Facing the District

State Financial Crisis

With almost one-third of the District's revenues coming from State sources, Thornton Township High School District 205 is very dependent on State revenues to fund its operations. It is therefore vulnerable to the economic plight of the State. It has been projected that General State-Aid revenues will decrease by approximately \$4 million over the next two years with declining student enrollment. While the State is making efforts to not reduce funding, it has acknowledged that this will be very difficult going forward. Despite increases in General State-Aid revenues for students from low socioeconomic situations for FY12, the Illinois State Board of Education has cautioned that there is a risk that this portion of General State-Aid revenues may be reduced due to the dramatic increase in cost state-wide.

Increasing Rate of Foreclosures

Over the past five years, the District has collected between 92% and 94% of its property taxes. For the most current year, this percentage has decreased to below 89%. This drop is primarily due to an increase in the foreclosure rate in the District. While banks are paying taxes on most residential property foreclosures, commercial property foreclosures, which banks do not pay taxes for, are dramatically impacting tax collections. For every one percent decline in tax collections, the District loses approximately \$600,000.

Low Inflation

While low inflation levels will help keep the growth in certain expenditure types low, the District is capped in its growth of real estate tax revenues by the rate of inflation as defined by the consumer price index. This led to revenue growth that was capped at the 2009 consumer price index of 2.7% for the tax levy that was approved in December 2011. Many experts are projecting that inflation levels will be low or non-existent for several years given the anticipated slow growth in the economy and the high level of unemployment. With real estate tax revenues making up approximately half the total revenues, an extended period of low inflation could be devastating to the District.

With the goal of ensuring that the financial condition of the District remains healthy, it is imperative to examine and react to major issues that have a significant impact on the District's financial condition.

STANDARD & POOR'S

RATIONALE

The 'AA-' rating assigned to Cook County Township High School District No. 205 (Thornton), Ill.'s general obligation (GO) limited school bonds series 2008 reflects the district's:

- Participation in the deep and diverse Chicago metropolitan area economy;
- Good financial management that overcame a chronic fiscal imbalance and restored positive financial operations following a series of budget adjustments; and
- Strong cash reserves, including working cash.

Adequate but below-average wealth and income levels, and a moderately high debt burden partially offset these factors.

The district's financial management practices are considered "good" under Standard & Poor's Financial Management Assessment (FMA). An FMA of "good" indicates that practices exist in most areas, although not all may be formalized or regularly monitored by governance officials. Management review expenditures on a monthly basis and provides the board with monthly budget reports. The district budgets with the help of five-year financial projections and multi-year building maintenance schedules.

OUTLOOK

The stable outlook reflects Standard's & Poor's expectation that the district's management will take the steps necessary to maintain at least balanced financial operations and strong cash reserves in spite of the levy cap. The district's participation in the Chicago metropolitan area's diverse economy supports the outlook.

Thornton Township High Schools District 205
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www.district205.net

-ECRWSS
POSTAL PATRON

MISSION:

*"District 205's school community
will create an environment where
every student can learn."*

We believe:

- The individual has intrinsic value.
- Learning and teaching should be guided by high expectations.
- Learning is a life-long process.
- All students can learn.
- Education is a shared responsibility of the school, student, family and community.
- Students learn best in and have a right to have a safe, positive and supportive environment.
- Diversity enriches the school community.
- Schools foster social responsibility.



FUTURE READY: *College, Career & Citizenship* DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Betheny Lyke
Acting Superintendent

Mrs. Dorith Johnson
Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Doug Ogarek
Director of Business Operations

Mrs. Carrie Ablin
Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Mr. Jerry Doss
Director of Public Relations

Mrs. Maria Brunson
Director of Information Technology

Mr. Greg Lindy
*Director of Building
and Grounds*

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Thornridge High School

Mr. James Walton Jr., Principal
Mr. Brad Beilfuss, Assistant Principal
Mr. Alfonso Pearson, Assistant Principal
Mr. Steve Valant, Assistant Principal

Thornton Township High School

Mr. Tony Ratliff, Principal
Mr. Scott Savage, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Ebonie Williams, Assistant Principal
Ms. Wanda Russell, Assistant Principal

Thornwood High School

Mrs. Darcelle Williams, Principal
Mr. Dennis Willis, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Kelly Hock, Assistant Principal
Ms. Elaine Brooks, Assistant Principal

AREA INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERS

Mr. Rob Penman
Math

Mrs. Cindy Morris
Science

Dr. Mike Sanders
English

Mr. Jerry Styrsky
Physical Ed & Student Services

Mr. Thomas Porter
Fine Arts & ELL

Mrs. Benita Anderson
Career Technical Education

Mr. Brett Fickes
Social Studies