

# Headlines

a publication of Hillside School District 93 ♦ 4804 Harrison St. Hillside, IL 60162 ♦ (708) 449-6491

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## Technology Updates ENHANCE LEARNING

An evolving goal for Hillside School District 93 is an ongoing focus on updating and expanding technology. All teachers use technology to supplement instruction, which broadens the possibilities for learning, and the school is also giving parents technology tools to participate in their children's education. Improvements began last year with the construction of a state-of-the-art Technology Lab. The District also hired a new technology director, Mr. Robert Gilmore Jr. He is furthering the District's philosophy of using technology to help students achieve.

Last year, students and parents also benefited from a number of additional technology improvements.

The District gave parents the ability to monitor their children's academic progress online, and students began to use a variety of online tools such as HomeLogic, a website that enables students to access their assignments and class resources quickly, easily, and effectively.

This year, more improvements are underway. Teachers welcomed state-of-the-art hardware to further the integration of technology in their classrooms. The District added 20 new Elmo™ document cameras and projectors. An Elmo allows a



**ENHANCING A LESSON:** EXTENDED LEARNING PROGRAM TEACHER MRS. LINDA CANAPARY USES AN ELMO DOCUMENT CAMERA TO PROJECT A WEB PAGE ONTO A WHITEBOARD, WHILE STUDENTS USE WIRELESS LAPTOP COMPUTERS TO ACCESS MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUBJECT.

### Internet Safety Night

*In October, the District held an Internet Safety Night. Led by Mr. Gilmore, about 35 parents and children attended. They discussed ways to keep Internet browsing a safe experience, learned about social networking, and how to avoid viruses and scams. "As the District's technology coordinator, it is important to keep parents technologically informed and I look forward to having more activities like this in the future," Mr. Gilmore stated.*

Recently, District 93's Internet service received a major boost. Replacing the original T1 line with a fiber optic connection resulted in an Internet connection speed increase from 1.5 megabytes to 11 megabytes! Students can access and use online tools such as ThinkCentral much faster than they could before, and multiple locations throughout the building are able to be online simultaneously with no loss of access speed.

In the future, Hillside School will continue to provide new technology tools to help improve students and families' educational experience. Plans include wireless Internet access throughout the entire school building, redesigning the District website, replacing older computers, and updating the technology infrastructure.

ALAN MOLBY,  
SUPERINTENDENT

STEVEN BOGREN,  
PRINCIPAL

JENNIFER McGUIRE,  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

CYNTHIA WAGNER,  
DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM

SARAH JOHNSON-MILLON,  
BUSINESS MANAGER

## THE MARVELOUS MATHEMATICAL CIRCUS

The circus is in town—the Mathematical Circus, that is. On the evening of October 28, Hillside School families filled the gym to participate in the school's annual Family Math Night. This year's theme was the *Marvelous Mathematical Circus*.

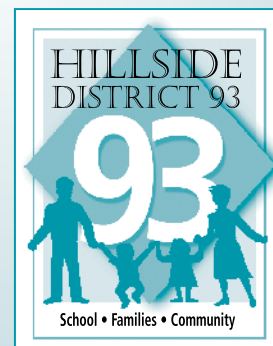
Teachers and volunteers manned "centers" with different hands-on math activities based upon the circus theme. When students arrived they received a ticket with a list of all of the activities. After they completed each activity, their tickets were stamped, and students who completed six of the activities earned a prize.

Some of the math activities were "Circus Train," "Musical Numbers," "Step Through Hole," "Cake Walk," "Balloon Math," "Bubbles," "Magic Squares," and "Pizza Problem." The activities were correlated

with the requirements of the new Common Core Standards in Mathematics. The Common Core Standards are designed to make learning consistent across the country. In Illinois, Common Core Standards in Math and English are now being implemented.

The math activities were not only fun and engaging, but taught higher-level math concepts. For example, students created large soap

CONTINUES ON PAGE 4



# Welcome, NEW EDUCATORS

At the beginning of the school year, several new educators began their career at Hillside School. Introducing the District's newest members:

## **Amber Dispensa, Fourth Grade Teacher**

A first-year teacher, Miss Dispensa graduated in 2009 from Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL, where she earned a B.S. in Education. She majored in Elementary Education with a concentration in English.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to teach fourth grade at Hillside School and am thankful for the warm welcome I received from the administration, faculty and staff. I am also impressed with the students and look forward to enjoying our fourth grade journey together," Miss Dispensa remarked.

During college, Miss Dispensa was an active Special Olympics volunteer. She was also named to the Eastern Illinois Dean's List in the

Department of Education. Miss Dispensa is engaged and is busy planning her July 2011 wedding.

## **Kenya Dockens, School Social Worker**

Ms. Kenya Dockens comes to Hillside School with four years of experience in education, including working in District 93's Special Education program. She earned a B.S. in Psychology from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and a Master's of Social Work (M.S.W.) from Loyola University, Chicago.

When asked to give her impressions of the school Ms. Dockens stated, "Hillside School is a pillar of the community, valuing educational excellence, diversity, leadership, teamwork and personal growth."

## **Jackie Flanagan, Teacher's Assistant**

Ms. Flanagan is enjoying her first year in education. She is a recent graduate of Bradley University, Peoria, where she



HILLSIDE SCHOOL'S NEW EDUCATORS (L TO R): AMBER DISPENSA, KENYA DOCKENS, JACKIE FLANAGAN AND DAVE MARQUEZ.

achieved a B.S. in Elementary Education.

Ms. Flanagan enthusiastically stated, "I am having a wonderful experience at Hillside School! I feel so welcomed by the fabulous individuals who put District 93 in motion. The creativity and dedication of the teachers and staff are reflected in the hardworking students and by their supportive families."

## **Dave Marquez, Fifth Grade Teacher**

Mr. Marquez, who has three years of experience teaching at the intermediate level, earned an Associate's Degree from Moraine Valley Community College, Palos Hills, then went on to attain a B.A. in Elementary Education

from the University of Illinois, Chicago.

"Hillside School is a great place to be!" Mr. Marquez observed. "The staff is friendly and generous. They are willing to lend a helping hand if you ever need anything. The students are hardworking. They come to school every day ready to learn. The parents are active participants in their children's education."

Mr. Marquez grew up in Chicago Ridge and enjoys attending sporting events—especially White Sox and Blackhawks' games—with friends, bowling, movies, and spending time with his family, including his two younger sisters.

Introducing the

## Hillside School Business Manager

On July 1, a new chief fiscal officer began working for Hillside School District 93. Ms. Sarah Johnson-Millon came to the position with 28 years of experience in finance and accounting, including 13 years in school business management. Ms. Johnson-Millon has worked for Bank of America (15 years in pension/401K accounting), Proviso Township High School District 209 (8½ years in school business finance/management) and for Community Consolidated School District 168, Sauk Village, IL (4½ years in school business finance/management).

Ms. Johnson-Millon earned a B.S. in Management from the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, and went on to achieve an M.S. in Education from Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, with an emphasis on School Business Management.

"From my first day with the District I found the administration and staff to be warm, welcoming and professional," Ms. Johnson-Millon stated. "Superintendent Molby is very supportive and respects my advice and expertise as a school business official. I am very grateful to the Hillside School District 93 Board of Education

for giving me the opportunity to serve. I look forward to many years at Hillside School District 93. I will give my best efforts in all that I do to strive to be a good steward of the District's finances."

Ms. Johnson-Millon is the proud parent of a 21-year-old son who is attending college. She is a very active member of her church, where she participates in a number of activities. She is also very health conscious, exercises regularly, and takes clog dancing classes.

In addition, she participates in a number of professional organizations as a presenter and committee member in order to contribute to her profession, and to keep abreast of best practices and issues that impact school business management.



SARAH JOHNSON-MILLON

## Message from the Superintendent

To the Hillside School Community:

The 2010-11 school year brings forth an array of new opportunities for children at Hillside School, as we continue in our ongoing commitment to create a learning environment that best meets the academic, social, and developmental needs of all students. We have established high expectations for success, as our strides toward school improvement continue to be reflected in our efforts at raising levels of student performance on state and national assessments.

District 93's website includes the District's 2010 Illinois School Report Card, which shows the most recent data reflecting demographics, financial aspects of the District, and results from last spring's Illinois Standards Achievement Tests (ISATs). We are always working toward improved performance and curricular enhancement, while balancing the financial restraints of public education in Illinois. The federally-mandated No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation has set additional parameters to which we are required to adhere, while we strive to provide the quality programs necessary to educate each child.

We continue to upgrade our school environment with features that can make learning happen and provide an inviting appearance. Recently, the exterior fencing was replaced with a more secure style and contemporary look, and new landscaping at the front of the building adds to that look. Similarly, the Outdoor Education Center has been upgraded with additional lighting, new benches, and new landscaping.

We will continue to look for ways to maximize all of what is needed to be the catalyst for your child's education. Your support of our efforts continues to be appreciated, and we welcome you as we make Hillside School a great place to learn!

Sincerely,  
Alan Molby, Superintendent

### Some Good Things to Know:

Our diversity is a major strength – current enrollment indicates

- 48% African-American
- 40% Hispanic
- 5% White
- 2% Asian
- 5% Multiracial

✓ 54% of our students throughout grades 1-8 started kindergarten at Hillside School

✓ The majority of Hillside School students perform at or above grade level on nationally-normed achievement tests and make at least one year or more measured academic growth annually.

✓ The majority of students at Hillside School meet or exceed Illinois State Performance Standards on the ISATs, and our statistical growth in achievement levels over the last five years exceeds the improvement attained across the state.

## High School INFORMATION NIGHT

On the evening of October 4, families came to Hillside School to get information that will help seventh and eighth grade students make great choices for their future. During High School Information Night, representatives from nine local public and private schools were available to answer questions, hand out literature, and tell students and families everything they need to know to help students choose the high school that best meets their needs.

"This year's event had the biggest turnout in three years," stated Principal Steven Bogren. "It is wonderful that students are planning for their educational future. Many students have already taken advantage of invitations to 'shadow' at the high schools."

This year also marks the first time that families of seventh grade students were invited to attend. In organizing the event, school administrators recognized the need for early awareness and planning prior to deciding on a high school. The program has become a tremendous benefit to meeting the needs of students and their families.

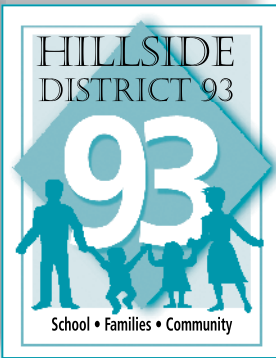


STUDENTS AND PARENTS OBTAIN INFORMATION FROM A HIGH SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE.

## CHARACTER COUNTS! at Hillside School

Hillside School educators assume an important role in creating a safe and caring environment in which students can express their feelings or concerns. Through the CHARACTER COUNTS! initiative, the educators help students become trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring, and good citizens. Hillside School staff members promote these traits on a daily basis and recognize the importance of linking the traits to the school's anti-bullying efforts.

In accordance with requirements established by the State of Illinois, the District 93 Board of Education has adopted a policy with an anti-bullying framework that provides clear guidelines and expectations. Titled "Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment," it is a detailed Board Policy that defines and prohibits inappropriate behaviors and lists clear consequences and outcomes. Parents receive a copy of the policy in the Student Expectations Guide. CONTINUES ON PAGE 4



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4804 HARRISON STREET  
HILLSIDE, ILLINOIS 60162

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## THE MARVELOUS MATHEMATICAL CIRCUS

continues from p. 1



SOAP BUBBLES DEMONSTRATE  
A MATH THEORY.

bubbles and learned that bubbles behave according to mathematical rules. Bubble film will always try to make the smallest possible surface. Bubbles are a real-world example of what mathematicians call a minimal surface. There is a whole field of mathematics called Minimal Surface Theory that deals with the types of shapes that bubbles form!

Visit the District 93 website for a list of math activities and links to helpful math websites: [www.hillside93.org/math.html](http://www.hillside93.org/math.html).

Hillside School is grateful to all of the teachers, administrators, parents and volunteers who made the *Marvelous Mathematical Circus*

such a huge success for families. A special thank you goes to District 93's community partners Inland Bank, Fifth Third Bank, and Target for their support, and to the volunteers from those businesses.

According to its website, The Illinois State Board of Education adopted the new Math and English Language Arts Standards for K-12 education earlier this year. These are known as the "New Illinois Learning Standards Incorporating the Common Core." The goal is to better prepare Illinois students for success in college and the workforce in a competitive global economy. Why new learning standards? Expectations for what students must know and be able to demonstrate were different in 1997 when Illinois adopted the current learning standards. The new standards will now become the framework for future curriculum development and student assessment for all schools.

## CHARACTER COUNTS! at Hillside School

continues from p. 3

The policy begins with the statement, "Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors is an important District goal..."

"We take great pride in our efforts to educate students about bullying and the damage it can cause," explained Assistant Principal Jennifer McGuire. "We post anti-bullying messages throughout the school and our guidance counselor and school social worker conduct anti-bullying activities in classrooms each week. The CHARACTER COUNTS! Committee meets regularly to create new activities that support our efforts to eliminate bullying. Our goal is to involve the community, parents, and the entire student body in assisting in these efforts. It is important to provide the students with ownership of the anti-bullying philosophy so they can take pride in being part of an initiative that affects us all and creates a better learning environment."