

# Headlines

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

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## MATH NIGHT is all FUN AND GAMES

To highlight the many ways math can be both practical and fun—as well as to demonstrate real life math applications and involve parents in their children’s learning—Hillside School held its first Math Night for students and their families on October 29. “Before the event I believed that if 50 people attended then we could call Math Night a success,” stated Principal Steven Bogren. “I was surprised and delighted when nearly 300 people showed up.” They not only showed up, many stayed the entire two hours and families enjoyed working on activities together.

Math Night was based on an Indiana Jones style theme, “Passport to Arithmetic Adventure.” Upon entering the school each child received a passport that was stamped when they completed an activity. The last stop was Treasure Island, where students who presented a passport with six or more stamps—indicating participation in six or more themed areas—could select a prize.

The gym, Learning Resource Center, Technology Lab, music rooms and even some hallways were filled with students and families engaged in math activities. Students could choose age-appropriate activities from 10 themed areas, including, “Measurement Mountain,” “Algebraic Archipelago,” “Geometric Gulch,” “Rhythm River,” and others. Some of the activities included rhythm patterns, with students playing musical instruments to learn about music and math connections; board games and puzzles; math games from various websites; estimating the number of small items in a jar; creating origami objects; and much more. All of the activities were aligned to the grade-specific goals of the Illinois Learning Standards in math.

Thirty teachers and the school’s administrators volunteered their time to lead the games and activities. Community Partner Inland Bank generously donated pumpkins that were among the prizes.

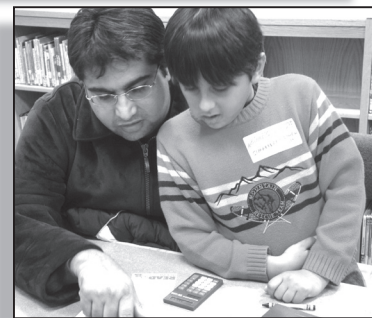
“Our students loved Math Night. It was great to see them excited about math. Because of the event’s success, we plan to make it an annual event,” Mr. Bogren concluded.

ALAN MOLBY,  
SUPERINTENDENT

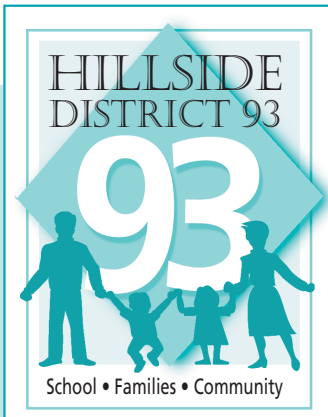
STEVEN BOGREN,  
PRINCIPAL

JENNIFER MORENZONI,  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

ROGER LEISTEN,  
BUSINESS  
COORDINATOR



PHOTOS: DURING MATH NIGHT, FAMILIES PARTICIPATED IN EVENTS THAT WERE BOTH EDUCATIONAL AND FUN.



## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES OFFERED FOR ADULTS

The Hillside District 93 Board of Education is offering English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for adults through Triton College. The class meets twice a week, for eight weeks, and is provided at no cost. The enrollment for the fall semester exceeded the district’s expectations, and with enough interest, another class will likely be offered in the spring semester. The course will also directly benefit Hillside School students and their families, as parents are able to enhance the means of communicating about their children’s education. More information will be available in the school office.

# Introducing the new STAFF MEMBERS

The new school year brought four new staff members to the district. Introducing:

## **Linda Bruns, Sixth Grade Teacher**

Mrs. Bruns has a long, personal association with Hillside School: Her six children are all Hillside School graduates! Her family's ties to the district continue into another generation, with two (of her seven) grandchildren currently attending the school.

Her professional experience includes 14 years as a teacher's assistant in Addison, where she worked with children with learning disabilities and with special needs. She earned a BA in Education with a minor in Psychology from Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, graduating with honors.

"My family has been involved with Hillside School for 21 consecutive years and I am honored to teach in this fine district. My children benefited from Hillside's friendly, family environment. The staff, administrators and teachers are very caring, helpful and dedicated. I am proud to be a faculty member. Everyone has made me feel at home as a teacher," Mrs. Bruns remarked.



NEW STAFF MEMBERS (L TO R): Jaime Kelley, Linda Bruns, Virgie Milner and Rosette Jarriett.

"Children are my life. I love working with children of all ages. I have been a daycare provider, Girl Scout leader/Cookie Mom (10 years), Cub/Webelos leader (six years) and was a Hillside Baseball League volunteer, managing the concession stand for many years. I love seeing children grow intellectually, socially and spiritually as they become lifelong learners." The teacher and her husband, Tim, have been married for 34 years. In her spare time, Mrs. Bruns enjoys spending time with her children and grandchildren, reading, baking and sewing.

## **Virgie Milner, Teacher's Aide**

Mrs. Milner previously worked at Hillside School for one year as a substitute teacher's aide and as a lunchroom supervisor. She attended Central YMCA Community College, Chicago, receiving an Associate's Degree in Business Administration. Mrs. Milner and her husband, Lorenzo, have been married for 25 years and have two children.

"Hillside School is a great place to work, with a good environment and friendly staff. I enjoy working with all of the students, especially the kindergartners," she stated.

## MESSAGE

### SUPERINTENDENT'S

To the Hillside School Community:

In Hillside District 93, we began the 2008-'09 school year intent on striving for success, and with an on-going commitment to provide the best possible learning environment. Our high expectations for student achievement continue to guide us in delivering continued school improvement.

In District 93, we make a determined effort to provide and maintain a safe and secure learning environment and we know we can always count on your support in making that happen. We have enhanced many of our policies and procedures to help create a setting that enhances learning, while focusing on what's best for helping children succeed in the classroom and beyond.

We are always working toward an improved level of student performance that reflects integrity in how we teach and learn, and character in how we act. We invite you to join us as we "focus" on educational excellence!

Sincerely,  
Alan Molby, Superintendent

## **Rosette Jarriett, Kindergarten Aide**

Ms. Jarriett achieved a BA in Theater Arts Education from Columbia College, Chicago. This is her first year of work in education.

"Hillside is a unique school where the teachers truly care about the students' learning," she commented.

## **Jaime Kelley, Teacher's Aide**

Ms. Kelley has 13 years of experience as a daycare teacher in Westchester and in Hillside. She attended Triton College, where she earned an Early Childhood Education certificate.

"This is a great school that encourages the children and gives them a good education. I am excited to be part of the Hillside School staff," Ms. Kelley remarked.

## Enrollment Facts

- ❑ Hillside School's official fall enrollment was 506, down somewhat from the prior school year, due to a large eighth grade class that graduated last spring.
- ❑ There are very few current class sizes with more than 20 students. Small class sizes are the ideal, especially at the primary level.
- ❑ The school still has the ability to maintain small class sizes, in comparison to surrounding districts.
- ❑ Hillside School is a diverse learning community, with a demographic breakdown of: Asian/Pacific—1%; Black—51%; Hispanic—39%; Multiracial—3%; White—6%.

# Higher state test scores reflect HILLSIDE SCHOOL'S commitment to improvement

Hillside School students showed significant improvement on the 2008 Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT), as indicated in the recently-released Illinois District Report Card. (The Report Card can be viewed at [www.hillside93.org](http://www.hillside93.org).) A printed copy is available by contacting the school office. Each year, Hillside School District 93—and every Illinois school district—receives its specific report from the state. The report includes student ISAT results for each school in that district, reported as percentages of the tested students who meet or exceed state performance levels. The report also breaks down student scores into different components, called “subgroups.” These include race/ethnicity, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency. Individual student scores do not appear on the report. The School Report Card also includes a variety of additional data that the state collects and uses in various comparative reports.

The ISAT is the primary assessment tool for Illinois public school students. The state uses the scores to measure how well students mastered the Illinois Learning Standards and to determine school compliance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). “As a district, we understand that the scores are not meant to measure how well a school supports social development, enthusiasm for learning, curiosity, creativity, parental involvement, or other intangible facets of the school environment,” stated Superintendent Alan Molby. “Our students are learning more than what can be measured by one test on a single day, though that testing does provide a snapshot of current performance levels. It is important for parents to consider and understand all aspects of a child’s day-to-day progress in the classroom, and for our staff to analyze and maximize the growth that takes place between assessments. As a district, we continue to enhance the means by which we monitor student progress and growth, using a variety of data effectively to improve instructional practice and affect student performance.”

not making AYP over a two-year period are designated “in need of improvement” at a level determined by the state.

Hillside School continues to be aggressive in its school improvement efforts, going beyond the necessary steps. Staff and administrators analyze ISAT data, set academic goals, and make decisions about instructional design and strategies, teacher develop-

ment, and establishing school improvement initiatives to enhance student achievement.

If the increments for gains set by NCLB are attained—which assumes all students are performing at the maxi-

imum level—a 15% increase in students meeting or exceeding state standards would be reflected over this four-year period (2005-2008). This also unrealistically assumes all students, regardless of learning disabilities or language barriers, are performing at or above the expected level to begin with.

As indicated by the data from the 2008 ISAT assessments, Hillside School showed significant improvement in each tested area and subgroup over this four-year period, with student growth in most categories either near or exceeding that 15% expectation.

The single area in which the growth shown, though statistically significant,

## Grade-Level Comparisons in Reading and Math, 2007-2008

Percent Meets/Exceeds, rounded:

Grade Level	Reading		Math	
	2007	2008	2007	2008
Three	76	76	87	91
Four	64	73	63	82
Five	51	64	71	67
Six	59	73	67	69
Seven	76	62	76	72
Eight	64	73	67	75

has not met the federal threshold considered as adequate is in the students with disabilities subgroup’s reading score. Many steps have already been taken to address this and gauge the progress that is anticipated, such as increasing the daily amount of direct reading instruction students receive, and focusing on reinforcement of various skills through instructional strategies to improve the students’ reading process.

In comparing Hillside School’s 2008 ISAT performance—by grade level—to the school’s 2007 ISAT results, the percentages of students meeting or exceeding state standards in the majority of tested areas increased, regardless of disabilities or language barriers. In all but one area, 62.5% or more of Hillside School students meet or exceed the Illinois State Performance Standards, the level at which schools are identified as making AYP. Also, for the first time, the 2008 test required all students to take the same test, regardless of their English language proficiency.

## Four-Year ISAT Comparison 2005-2008

Percent of Hillside Gr. 3-8 Students Meeting/Exceeding State Standards in Reading & Math, with percent gained over that period:

Subgroup	2005	2008	Rdg. %	2005	2008	Math %
	Rdg.	Rdg.	Gain	Math	Math	Gain
All students	58.6	71.9	13.3	62.1	78.6	16.5
Black	55.3	65.8	10.5	56.3	68.4	12.1
Hispanic	60.0	77.1	17.1	66.7	90.7	24.0
Disabilities	25.5	31.3	5.8	27.7	53.1	25.4
Econ.Disadv.	47.3	65.3	18.0	53.8	72.8	19.0

ISAT scores determine if students and the school district are making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward the state’s predefined academic goals. The target goal for making AYP in 2008 was 62.5% of students meeting or exceeding state standards in all subjects and subgroups. This target goal increases by 7.5% every year, and consequently, more schools fail to meet the target goal each year, despite making significant growth in the test areas. Regardless of those parameters that are set by the federal government’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, if Hillside School does not make AYP in every subgroup, that does not mean the school is considered failing. Rather, schools

## District improves emergency communication and parent outreach

In November, a new alert and notification service was implemented throughout Hillside District 93. “**Connect-ED**” enables the school to personally communicate with parents and guardians about emergency situations, school closings, school events, and important issues impacting each child. Connect-ED allows the district to send personalized voice messages to a family’s home, work, cell phones, e-mail communications, and even text messages. “We will be able to reach everyone in the school community within minutes,” stated Superintendent Alan Molby.

“The Board of Education recognizes the importance of immediate communication for the safety and security of a school, as well as the need for on-going parent outreach initiatives. We selected Connect-ED because of its successful track record and capabilities that will allow us to keep parents and staff informed using all possible means,” the Superintendent explained.

The new time-sensitive mass notification service will play a key role in emergency preparedness, and will be used in concert with the district’s other effective means of communication, including newsletters, letters to parents, the district website and the exterior signboard. Weather-related closings will also continue to be communicated through the local media outlets.

For Connect-ED to be successful, parents must assure that the school has all current telephone numbers and email addresses. When these numbers change, parents must contact the school office at (708) 449-6491, ext. 7102.

## Hillside students earn entry to MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY

Since the Proviso Township Mathematics and Science Academy’s (PMSA) inception in 2005, 43 Hillside School students have been accepted to attend this magnet school. PMSA accepts students through a rigorous admissions program that includes students’ results from standardized tests, grades, recommendations, and an essay. The high school’s curriculum is guided by that of the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, focusing on science, math, technology, arts, and foreign languages.

Recently, the *Chicago Tribune* ranked PMSA among the top 50 high schools in Illinois based on the results of the 2008 Prairie State Exam, the state’s standardized test for high school students.

As part of Proviso School District 209, PMSA is a public school. However, the number of students who qualify for entrance is very limited. Because PMSA’s student population is designed to be small (currently 437 students), it is significant that so many Hillside School students have been accepted.

Hillside School provides parents of eighth grade students with information about PMSA’s admission requirements. Interested parents are encouraged to discuss PMSA admissions policies with Hillside School guidance counselor Donna Falls.

4 HEADLINES

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