

# 2022-23 REPORT

## DEAR DISTRICT 99 COMMUNITY:

Over 100 years ago, on February 17, 1923, residents in our community voted to form District 99 as a separate high school district.

The world has changed since 1923, and we must keep changing, too. We offer comprehensive academic programs to meet the needs of all students. Advanced Placement, honors and dual-credit courses give those who are college bound both a head start and a financial advantage. For students pursuing a vocation, our career and technical education offerings and internships show them the breadth of possibilities. We want students to experience choice while still in high school, so that they can realize their full potential.

Supporting our vision is the hybrid block schedule, which alternates and extends class periods two days per week. Introduced this year, the schedule gives students more time for deeper learning and greater flexibility throughout the week. Our new facilities, funded by the community, give us the space required to implement the schedule and better prepare students for settings they'll encounter after high school.

By providing quality academic programs in a schedule that allows for student freedom and choice, we are confident that every student will be prepared for their next chapter in life.

Thank you for your support,

**Dr. Hank Thiele**, Superintendent

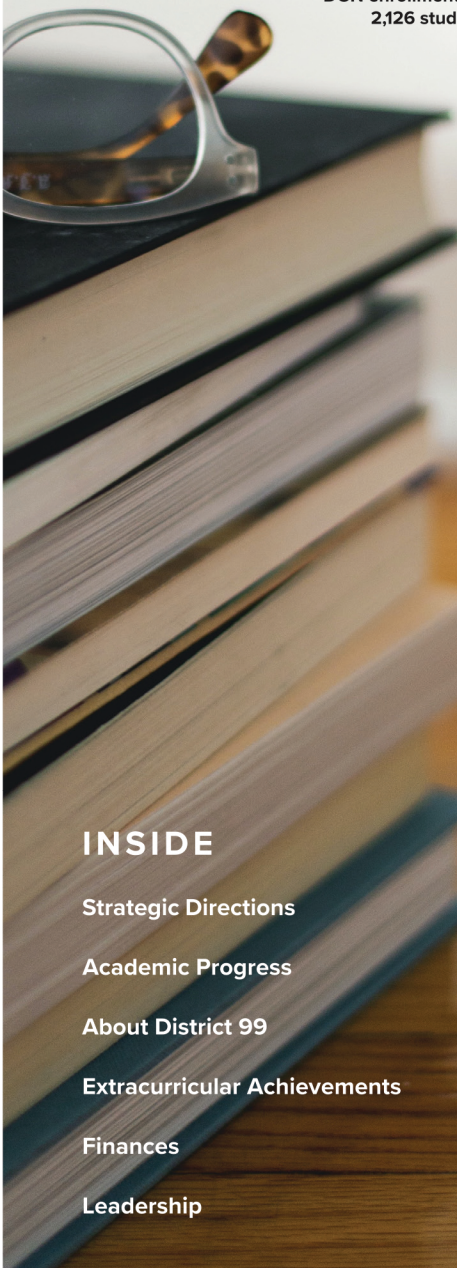
District 99 Board of Education: **Kara Casten, Ken Dawson, Christopher Espinoza, Sherell Fuller, Jennie Hagstrom, Terry Pavesich, Don Renner**



Follow us on social media to take a look back at some of District 99's **100 years of moments and milestones.**



DGN enrollment was 2,126 students.



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## Our Mission

Every day, the District 99 community works to provide a foundation for students to confidently pursue a future of their choosing.

## Our Vision

District 99 will graduate students who are equipped to realize their potential and positively impact their community and the larger world.

## Our Values

We care.  
We trust.  
We belong.  
We prepare.  
We evolve.





# Strategic Directions

Our Strategic Plan – **Future Focused, Future Ready** – describes how we want every student to graduate from District 99:

**Equipped with a foundation to realize their potential and make a positive impact.**

DGS enrollment was 2,682 students.

Four strategic directions guide our plan. Read examples of this year's progress below and the full plan at [www.csd99.org/strategicplan](http://www.csd99.org/strategicplan).

## 1

### An Equitable & Supportive Environment

**“Build community, foster belonging and value the diverse perspectives of every member of our community.”** Students and staff connected with one another during story and idea exchanges. These intergenerational learning experiences provide everyone a time and place to learn more about—and gain empathy for—one another.

**“Ensure safe and sustainable opportunities for all students and families, including access to District resources.”** Enrollment continues to rise at the Transition 99 Center, our program for older students with special needs, and we are expanding the facility to accommodate students with a \$4.9 million funding plan that includes over \$1 million in interest income from the 2018 Master Facility Plan. We also added a new 6 p.m. Activity/ Athletics bus to increase access for students to participate in after-school activities.

## 2

### Growth of Student Ownership & Agency

**“Demonstrate students are valued partners by integrating student voice and choice in their learning and personal growth.”** Principals have formed student advisory teams to provide regular input on important topics; students have also served on interview committees to help select school leaders.

**“Develop experiences that foster an understanding of their role as global citizens.”** Our new schedule creates time for more service opportunities. This year, students made paracord bracelets and wrote letters to those serving overseas for Operation Gratitude.

## 3

### Increased Student Engagement in Post-Secondary Planning

**“Engage and support the role of families in post-secondary planning.”** Families who may not have historically attended post-secondary planning nights were invited to travel to Chicago to attend an HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) night.

**“Increase student awareness of and exposure to a variety of options for life after high school.”** Students had the chance to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB), allowing them to consider and explore potential careers in the military.

## 4

### Recruitment, Retention and Support of High-Quality Teachers & Staff

**“Provide professional learning that aligns with teacher/staff needs, the district's mission and student needs.”** In addition to supporting teachers with meaningful development activities and time to plan, we offered support staff access to quality training sessions and certification opportunities.

We are always recruiting for our vital support staff positions; **41%** of our support staff members are also community members, who receive benefits and most follow the school schedule.

**DID YOU KNOW**

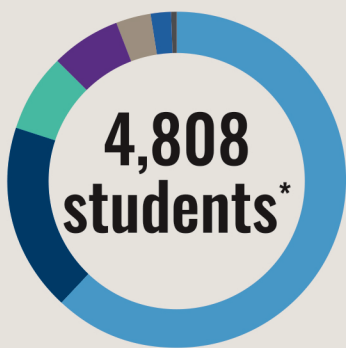
Scan for applications and current postings:





# About District 99

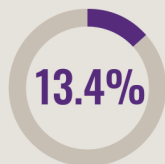
Community High School District 99 (D99) includes **Downers Grove North High School** (DGN), **Downers Grove South High School** (DGS) and the **Transition 99 Center**. We serve residents from Downers Grove and Woodridge as well as sections of Bolingbrook, Darien, Lisle, Oak Brook and Westmont. Our students come to us from public school districts (Districts 58, 60, 61, 66 and 68) and private schools.



- 62%** White
- 18%** Hispanic
- 7.7%** Black
- 6.5%** Asian
- 3.3%** Two or More Races
- 2.2%** American Indian
- .3%** Pacific Islander

\* A 2016 report of housing and population trends prepared by a professional demographer predicts enrollment will remain level through 2032.

**265** students participate in our English Learners (EL) program, representing **35 different languages**. EL students need extra assistance learning English in order to increase their overall academic performance.



come from what are considered to be low-income households

**75%** Teachers, principals, deans, counselors, psychologists, paraprofessionals, and classroom support staff



The average experience of certified faculty members is **15 years** and **85%** hold advanced degrees

**21%** Other support staff, including campus security, technology support, office staff, custodial, maintenance and grounds personnel

**4%** Administrative leaders, professionals and technical staff

# Academic Progress

District 99 students outperform DuPage County in every category, every year. **The overall rank** by the Illinois State Board of Education is **CO**

## English Learner Progress to Proficiency

Measures the extent to which a multilingual student is on track to reach **proficiency** within five years.

## Climate survey response

Schools are rated by **response rates** to the survey, not by feedback.

## SAT in English-Language Arts

**D99 11th grade student average: 518.5**

Compare to state: 486.4; compare to national: 480. **41%** of D99 students are in the **top third** of SAT test takers.

## SAT in Math D99 11th grade student average: 529.7

Compare to state: 473.8; compare to national: 510. **48%** of D99 students are in the **top third** of SAT test takers.

## 9th graders on track to graduate: 96.1%

## A return to pre-pandemic levels

### DID YOU KNOW

The State of Illinois calculates proficiency differently and **higher** than the College Board, the national organization that issues the SAT. Read more at [www.illinoisreportcard.com](http://www.illinoisreportcard.com).

**Chronic absenteeism: 23.3%**

*Defined as the absence average*

The pandemic in place student



## Other Mea

**1,269** students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses

**1,220** students enrolled in dual credit courses

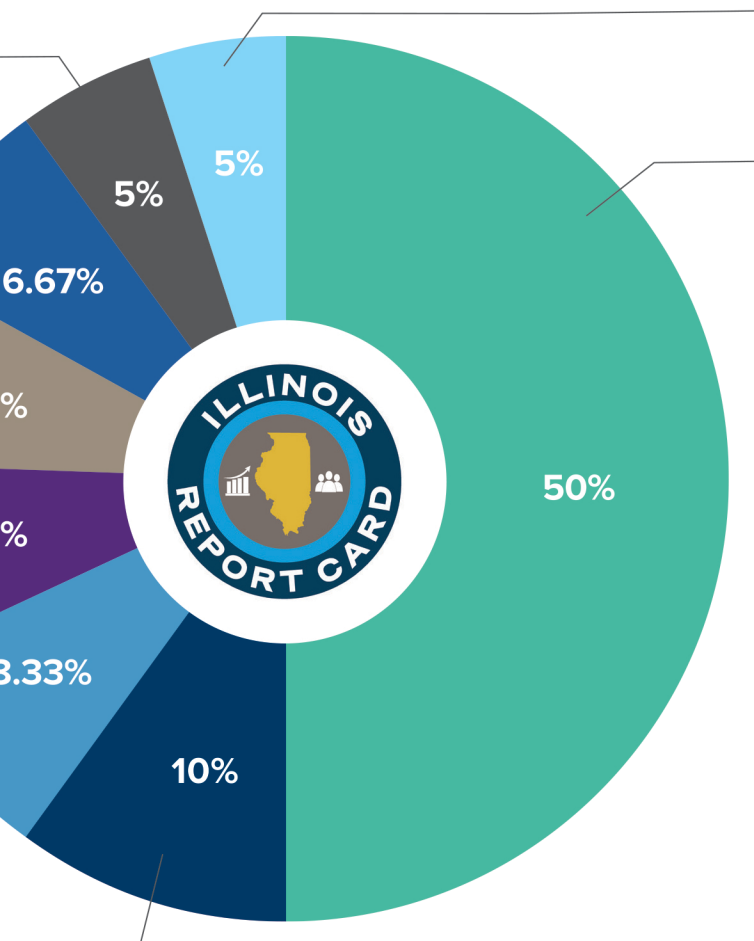
**1,661** students enrolled in Capstone Course

**2,216** students enrolled in Career and Technical Education Courses, preparing students to work in high-demand occupations

**186** students participate in learning, including internships



county, state and national averages  
**rating** for both DGN and DGS  
**commendable.**



and as a student who misses 10% or more school days, whether  
 absence is excused or not. Compare to DuPage County high school  
 average: 29%; compare to state: 29.8%

the pandemic made attendance a crisis nationwide, and we have systems  
 in place to improve. **Research shows that regular attendance promotes  
 student achievement, belonging and improved relationships.**

### Science proficiency participation

The State developed and requires this exam for 11th grade students. This year, participation was measured instead of proficiency.

**4-year graduation rate: 93.8%**

Compare to state: 86.8%

**A return to pre-pandemic levels**

### How the State of Illinois determines ratings:

- 50%** Composite graduation rate
- 10%** Chronic absenteeism
- 8.33%** 9th graders on track to graduate
- 7.5%** Math proficiency
- 7.5%** English-language arts proficiency
- 6.67%** Climate survey
- 5%** English learner progress to proficiency
- 5%** Science proficiency

For details and to compare District 99 to other districts and schools in Illinois, visit [www.illinoisreportcard.com](http://www.illinoisreportcard.com).

**DID YOU KNOW**

## Measures of Success

enrolled in at least one  
 dual credit course

enrolled in a Dual Credit course

enrolled in a Dual Enrollment

enrolled in at least one Career  
 and Technical Education Course, enabling  
 students to earn college credit, high-wage, high-skill and

participated in work-based  
 learning experiences

**167** students enrolled at the  
 Technology Center of DuPage,  
 which offers 20 career and technical  
 education programs, up from  
 107 last year

D99 is **one of 16** schools in the state  
 to award College and Career Pathway  
 Endorsements, which provide  
 career-focused learning opportunities  
 in areas like Finance and Business  
 Services, Education, Information  
 Technology and Architecture  
 and Design.

## NOTES OF DISTINCTION

National Merit Scholars: **Jonathan Hogg** (DGN),  
**Alan Kwak** (DGS), **Greta Serniute** (DGN)

**2** National African American Recognition  
 Award Recipients

**7** National Hispanic Recognition Award Recipients

**20** National Merit Commended Scholars

**186** Illinois State Scholars

**68** 12th grade students designated  
 “distinguished honors” with a career GPA 4.4 or  
 higher (on a 4 point scale)

**612** 12th grade students designated “high  
 honors” or “honors” with a career GPA 4.0 or  
 higher or a 3.4 or higher (on a 4 point scale)







# Extracurricular Achievements

**DGN/DGS Girls CO-OP Gymnastics** – State Champions

**D99 Hoops**, Team One, Division 7 – State Champions

**DGN Ben Bielawski** – State Champion in Wrestling

**DGS Juliana Conyer** – First Place in Yearbook Caption Writing in Illinois High School Association (IHSA) State Journalism Competition

**6** National Medalists in the 2023 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards – Gold Medalists

**DGN Emma Salman, DGN Aiden Robinson, DGS Catherine Liceaga**

**DGN Boys Cross Country** – Third Place in State

**DGS Journalism** – Third Place in the IHSA State Journalism competition

For the first time in DGN's history, the **Boys Basketball** team competed in the State's Final Four tournament

**22** students performed in the 2022-23 Illinois Music Education Association All-State bands, orchestras, choirs, jazz bands and vocal jazz ensembles

A **DGN theatre** production, "Bomb-itty of Errors," – selected to perform at the 2023 Illinois High School Theatre Fest, one of the country's largest festivals

**10** students placed in the Top Ten at State DECA Competition; Individual State Champion **DGS Nahla Mokkath** in both Sports and Entertainment Marketing and Business Solution Project

As part of a team with other DuPage area culinary students, **DGN Salvador Ontiveros, DGS Abby Jongsma** and **DGS Lizzy Hayes** won first place in the Illinois Prostart Invitational, where students are judged on their cooking and restaurant management skills.

In addition to individual medalists and state team representation,

DGN teams were: Conference Co-Champions in **Wrestling**, Sectional Champions in **Boys Cross Country**, Conference, Regional, Sectional, and State Champions in **Girls CO-OP Gymnastics** and Regional, Sectional and Super Sectional Champions in **Boys Basketball**.

DGS teams were: Conference Champions in **Football, Boys Golf, Girls Cross Country, Girls Tennis, Girls Swim and Dive, Boys Cross Country, Boys Swim and Dive** and **Girls Basketball**; Conference, Regional, Sectional, and State Champions in **Girls CO-OP Gymnastics**; and Conference and Regional Champions in **Wrestling**.



# Staff Accomplishments

DGN Teacher **Karen Spahr-Thomas** – Award of Meritorious Service from the Illinois State Board of Education for her extraordinary contributions to education; University of Chicago Outstanding Educator Award for a second time

DGS Teacher **Nathaniel Haywood** – selected to direct the 2024 All-State Production, part of the Illinois High School Theatre Festival

DGN Teacher **Jeffrey Grant** – one of six educators nationwide to receive The Robert E. Yager Exemplary Teaching Award from the National Science Teaching Association

D99 Technology Director **Rod Russeau** – two national awards from the Consortium for School Networking

DGN Principal **Dr. Courtney DeMent** – Illinois Principal Association Herman Graves Award winner for DuPage County

DGS nurse **Gloria E. Barrera** – one of 24 nurses nationwide selected for The Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments Fellowship

Board of Education Secretary **Juli Gniadek** – received the Holly Jack Award from the Illinois Association of School Boards, recognizing her extraordinary work and service

District 99 and Wight & Company – **2022 Exhibition of Educational Environments: Award of Distinction** for the Master Facility Plan projects, outstanding examples of school design and planning to meet the educational needs of students





## Leadership

The District 99 Board of Education governs the district and elected members are unpaid volunteers. Board Members are elected to represent the voices and opinions of the community, and set the policies of the district.

**Kara Casten\***, **Ken Dawson\***,  
**Christopher Espinoza**, **Sherell Fuller**, **Jennie Hagstrom**, **Terry Pavesich**, **Don Renner\***

Learn more at [www.csd99.org/boe](http://www.csd99.org/boe) and watch meetings live at [www.youtube.com/csd99media](http://www.youtube.com/csd99media).

Many thanks to outgoing members **Dr. Nancy Kupka** (2011-23), **Michael Davenport** (2011-23) and **Joanna Vazquez Drexler** (2019-23) for their service and to student board members **Luka Paulauskas** (DGN) and **Kaitlyn Vincent** (DGS) for serving in 2022-23.

\*New members in 2023

## FINANCES

District 99's 2022 total tax rate is **\$1.9215**, the second lowest of all high schools in DuPage County, making it a good value to taxpayers. Investments in capital improvements keep our buildings safe, efficient and working properly.



### DID YOU KNOW

For over 25 years, the D99 Foundation ([www.d99ef.org](http://www.d99ef.org)) has granted **over \$300,000** to teachers with **innovative ideas** to improve their work with students and provided **scholarship help** to students who need assistance for college. Since COVID arrived, it expanded its mission to provide monetary aid to D99 families and students in need. These worthy programs would not be possible without generous donations from the many people and businesses who want to help.

## Connect with District 99

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