

DID YOU KNOW

The District 99 Board of Education governs the district and elected members are **unpaid volunteers**. Learn more at www.csd99.org/boe and watch meetings live at www.youtube.com/csd99media.

The Board approved a five-year contract, through June 2029, with Superintendent **Dr. Hank Thiele**, noting his innovation and fiscal responsibility since joining District 99 in July 2016.

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.

DGN and DGS were listed as one of U.S. News & World Report's 2024 **America's Best High Schools** out of over 17,000 high schools nationwide.

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YEAR IN REVIEW: 2023-24

DEAR DISTRICT 99 COMMUNITY:

It was an incredible year for District 99. Our talented and hard-working students and staff made impressive accomplishments throughout the school year, and we are excited to share highlights in this community report.

District 99 continued its steadfast focus on academic excellence. With 200+ unique courses to choose from, students can explore more engaging and challenging options than ever before. New this year, we embedded additional learning opportunities, including a drone certification course and standardized test prep sessions, into our flexible hybrid block schedule.

The high school experience extends far beyond the classroom. Our extensive extracurricular and athletic programs give students the chance to compete, explore new interests and develop new skills. Students also gave back through philanthropic activities to help those less fortunate; for example, both schools raised money to close the "weekend hunger gap" for local elementary school students.

The success of our students reflects the efforts of our entire community and our united focus on doing what's best for students. Thank you to the teachers, staff, families and volunteers who challenge, motivate and encourage our students every day, helping them to prepare for what's next.

We hope this report gives you a better sense of what happens inside the walls of our schools and the stability of our school district. If you ever have a question or suggestion, please reach out to us.

Thank you for your support,

Dr. Hank Thiele, Superintendent, hthiele@csd99.org

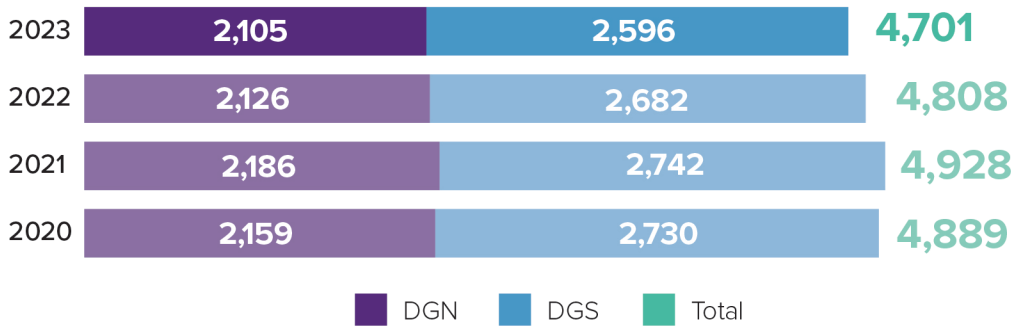
Don Renner (President), **Terry Pavesich** (Vice President), **Kara Casten**, **Ken Dawson**, **Christopher Espinoza**, **Sherell Fuller** and **Jennie Hagstrom**, District 99 Board of Education, boardmembers@csd99.org

Many thanks to student board members **Gianna Hunsche** (DGN) and **Nahla Makkath** (DGS) for serving in 2023-24.

Our Students

Community High School District 99 (D99) includes **Downers Grove North High School** (DGN) and **Downers Grove South High School** (DGS). It also includes the **Transition 99 Center**, which serves 70 students with special needs after they finish high school, empowering them to become contributing, productive members in our community.

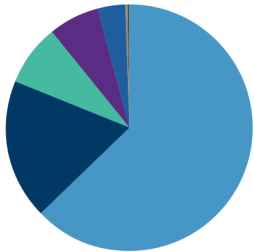
ENROLLMENT TRENDS



■ DGN ■ DGS ■ Total

Due to declining student enrollment, D99 reduced the number of full-time employees for the 2024-25 school year.

STUDENT PROFILE



62.8% White **3.7%** Two or More Races
18.4% Hispanic **.3%** Pacific Islander
8.1% Black **.1%** American Indian
6.6% Asian

The percentage of D99's Hispanic population has grown from 15.8 in 2018 to 18.4 in 2023.

D99 ENGLISH LEARNERS

5.1% of students

are English Learners (EL), up from 4.2% in 2022. Our families speak 35 different languages. The EL program helps students learn English in order to increase their academic performance.

DGN EL students representing Syria, India, Mexico, Egypt, Ukraine, Serbia, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Lithuania, Venezuela and the Philippines hosted a **"fall fest"** this year for staff, sharing food that represented their culture.

Illinois public colleges and universities provide college credit for students proficient in English and a second language, and in 2023, **37 D99 students** were awarded the Seal of Biliteracy.

DID YOU KNOW



Extracurricular Achievements



DGS **Gianna Caponigro** - Speech State Champion, Humorous Interpretation



Academic Progress

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) rated DGN and DGS as “**Commendable.**” This rating is based on a possible 100 points measuring success, including graduation rate, attendance, 9th grade students on track to graduate, SAT scores and other measures.

- DGN received **87.28 points** and DGS received **84.09 points**
- High schools rated “Exemplary,” the highest designation, received 91.24 points or higher
- ISBE compares schools to each other by designating the top 10% of high schools as “Exemplary” each year; the points needed to attain this level changes annually

Percentage of students that meet (as measured by SAT)

D99 students rank higher than DuPage high schools

	D99 average	State average	D99 above average
Reading	45.7%	33.6%	▲ 12.1%
Math	46.2%	26.7%	▲ 19.5%

Source: Illinois State Board of Education

Chronic absenteeism—students who miss 10% or more of school days—higher than the State (28.3%) and other schools in the region. **In place to improve attendance, which**

FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

COLLEGE PATH

Enrollment is growing and performance is strong in courses that prepare students for college, which can potentially save substantial tuition costs.

34%
(2,580 students)

enrolled in a Capstone Course—the most rigorous levels of study across all content areas.

27%
(1,273 students)

enrolled in an Advanced Placement Course.

15%
(690 students)

enrolled in a Dual Credit course.

CAREER PATH

By taking career-focused courses

4.1%
(192 students)

enrolled in work-based learning, including internships, apprenticeships, or businesses through the community.



An average of **95% of 9th grade students** at D99 were on track to graduate over the last five years. We closely monitor attendance, grade and discipline data to intervene with those students who need academic support.

DID YOU KNOW



DGS Students **Sophia Lodhi** and **Rylee Monroe** - DECA State Champions, Project Management Business Solutions

DGS **Speech Team** - Second Place in State

23 students performed in the 2023-24

Illinois Music Education Association All-State bands, orchestras, choirs, jazz bands and vocal jazz ensembles

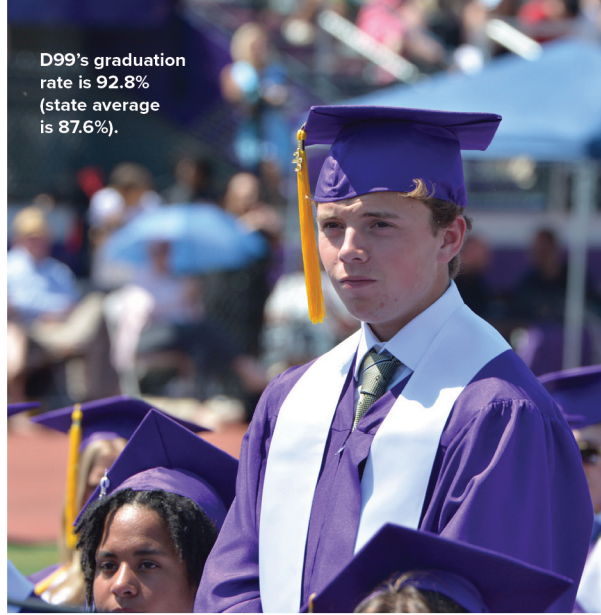
DGS **Journalism Students** - Golden Eagle Award, Northern Illinois Scholastic Press Association, for southblueprint.com website

ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENT



DGN **Boys Cross Country Team**

D99's graduation rate is 92.8% (state average is 87.6%).



met/exceed in reading and math

high schools and state averages

D99's % above state average	DuPage district average	D99's % above DuPage average
▲ 12.1%	37.4%	▲ 8.3%
▲ 19.5%	34.7%	▲ 11.5%

Illinois Report Card; see www.illinoisreportcard.com

miss 10% or more school days—continues to rise. In 2023 our rate was 29.7%, higher than other DuPage County high school districts (29.4%). **D99 has extensive interventions** which promotes achievement and connectedness.

DID YOU KNOW

CAREER PATH

career-focused coursework, students can prepare to work in high-wage, high-skill and in-demand occupations.

3.4%
(162 students)

enrolled at Technology Center of DuPage, training to become medical technicians, automotive technicians, welders and more. This year, 80 students were designated "Career Tech Elite."

58.6%
(2,758 students)

enrolled in at least one Career and Technical Education Course.

1.6%
(26 students)

received a "College/Career Pathway Endorsement" for skills in areas like manufacturing, education, engineering and technology.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

National Merit Scholars

William Beatty (DGN)
Dylan Hogg (DGN)
Joseph Leckie (DGN)
Joshua Poeschel (DGS)
Audrey Slavkin (DGN)
Paul Spang (DGS)
Ethan Weingust (DGN)

2 National African American Recognition Award Recipients

6 National Hispanic Recognition Award Recipients

23 National Merit Commended Students

206 students recognized as Illinois State Scholars

72 12th grade students designated "distinguished honors" with a career GPA 4.4 or higher (on a 4 point scale)

488 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)

ACHIEVEMENTS



Track Team - State Champions

DGS
Genevieve Herion -
State Champion,
Balance Beam



DGN/DGS **Girls CO-OP Gymnastics** -
Second Place in State

DGN **Football**, Division 7A -
Second Place in State

DGN **Girls Cross Country Team** -
Second Place in State

D99 **Hoops, Team 2**, Division 7 -
Second Place in State

Strategic Directions in Action

District 99's Strategic Plan outlines **four strategic directions** to guide our plan to graduate students who are equipped with a foundation to realize their potential and make a positive impact. Find details at www.csd99.org/strategic-plan. Highlights of our work this year include:



AN EQUITABLE AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Creating an environment that fosters positive mental health of our students is critical. In addition to providing meaningful professional development, we've also invested in counseling staff to support student needs.

- District 99 was one of 40 grant recipients to receive \$249,000 to expand student wellness and mental health support.
- D99 leaders **Dr. Erin Ludwick** and **Sara Courington** received the Illinois Principals Association "Reaching Out and Building Bridges Award" for their community partnership with grit2, a local non-profit organization.



GROWTH OF STUDENT OWNERSHIP AND AGENCY

The hybrid block schedule is intended to cultivate student independence, and new this year is the "Student Choice" program, which allows students to choose where they spend a period one day per week. Whether meeting with a teacher for extra help or playing dodgeball in the gym, it's up to students to be responsible and spend their time wisely.

- New this year, we offered additional learning opportunities to students within the new schedule, including a drone certification course and SAT math and English preparation sessions.



INCREASED STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN POST-SECONDARY PLANNING

Planning for life after high school starts well before graduation day in May. Whether connecting students with college, career or military representatives, hosting webinars on college costs or chaperoning field trips to learn from local businesses, our team strives to present students with options.

- Students taking Anatomy & Physiology met with medical, dental, optometry and pharmacy students at Northwestern University.
- DGS students received first place at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers STEM competition focused on renewable energy.



RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND SUPPORT OF HIGH QUALITY TEACHERS AND STAFF

Teachers and staff at D99 receive meaningful and regular training as well as time to focus on topics that interest them in their professional growth. Topics for staff development sessions are aligned with our values, and how adults can increase the level of care, trust and belonging throughout our system for every student.

- To ensure that students receive a common experience, our work continues to update and align our grading and assessment practices across both schools throughout all departments.

Our Staff

73% are teachers, principals, deans, counselors, psychologists, paraprofessionals and classroom support staff

21% are other support staff, including security, technology, office staff, custodial, and maintenance and grounds personnel

6% are administrative leaders, professionals and technical staff

711
Full-Time
Staff
Members



During an institute day, DGS Science Teacher **Michelle Sachtleben** attended a training on how to teach students about climate change; DGN hosted the training, which drew over 400 science teachers from the area.



Scan for current job postings for our vital support staff positions.

STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- DGN Teacher **Keith Dvorkin** - Award for Meritorious Service for Teachers from the Illinois Board of Education
- DGS Nurse **Gloria Barrera** - Award for Meritorious Service for Student Support Personnel from ISBE
- DGS Teacher and Coach **Kristyn Campos** - Illinois High School Girls Gymnastics Coaches Association Coach of the Year
- DGS Teacher and Coach **Doug Plunkett** - Illinois Track and Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame inductee
- DGS Teacher **Paul Krick** - Marketing Educator of the Year, Illinois Foundation for Marketing Education
- DGS Teacher **Nathaniel Haywood** - All-State Director at TheatreFest
- DGN Dept. Chair **Michael Roethler** - University of Chicago Outstanding Educator Award
- D99 Communications Officer **Jill Browning** - Distinguished Communicator of the Year, Illinois Chapter of the National School Public Relations Association

DID YOU KNOW

Average experience of certified faculty members is **16 years** and **96%** hold advanced degrees.

District Financials

District 99 manages its finances and budget of **\$108 million** conservatively and transparently. For 24 years in a row, we received the “Excellence in Financial Reporting” award from the Association of School Business Officials International.

FUNDING SOURCES

- 83%** Local Property Tax
- 8%** Other Local Sources
- 7%** State
- 2%** Federal

EXPENDITURES

- 77%** Salary and Benefits
- 11%** Purchased Services (includes transportation and food)
- 5%** Tuition (for special education and vocational opportunities)
- 5%** Supplies and Materials (includes textbooks and utilities)
- 2%** Routine Repairs and Maintenance (to keep our buildings safe, efficient and working properly)

DID YOU KNOW

D99's 2023 total tax rate is **\$1.7250**, down from \$1.9215 in 2022. Our low rate makes D99 a good value to taxpayers.

Since its inception in 1998, enrollment at the Transition 99 Center for students with special needs continues to rise. To accommodate, we **expanded the facility** at 4232 Venard Road in Downers Grove by 6,000 square feet. The \$5 million investment was funded in part by over \$1 million in interest income from the 2018 Master Facility Plan. At the T99 Center, students learn skills for independent living, including financial management, cooking and cleaning, and work at organizations throughout the community.

This summer, state-of-the-art digital scoreboards and sound systems will be installed at outdoor stadiums and indoor gyms at both schools. District 99 is seeking advertising partnerships to offset the cost of the improvements. See www.csd99.org/strategicpartnership for details.

Note: The cost to produce and send this publication to 45,000 households is ~44 cents per household. To save costs, we mail this via USPS carrier routes. We apologize if you received this and live outside of our boundaries. Thank you for taking the time to learn about District 99.



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