

District Leadership Team Meeting
Monday, May 11, 2026 3:45 PM Central

Downers Grove Civic Center
850 Curtiss Street
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Approval of Minutes
 - 2.A. Minutes of the February 23, 2026 meeting
3. Review Goals Progress
 - 3.A. May 2026 Progress Update
4. Public Comment
5. Adjournment
 - 5.A. Adjournment

Downers Grove Grade School District 58

District Leadership Team Committee Meeting February 23, 2026

The District Leadership Team (DLT) met on Monday, February 23, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. at the Downers Grove Civic Center.

Call to Order

Kirat Doshi called the meeting to order at 3:57 p.m.

Present

Co-Chair Kirat Doshi, Brent Borchelt, Liz Ehrhart, James Eichmiller, Greg Harris, Katie Hurckes, Melissa Jerves, Brennan Lazzaretto, Lisa Niforatos, Jackie Olkiewicz, Nicole Pieranunzi, Julie Relihan, Kevin Russell, Justin Sisul, Jessica Stewart, Craig Young.

Approval of Minutes

Justin Sisul moved and Greg Harris seconded the motion to approve the minutes from the October 27, 2025 meeting. Motion carried.

February 2026 Strategic Plan Progress Update

Goal 1: Focusing on Learning

The administrative team continues its book study on professional learning communities (PLC+) and is developing systems for whole staff rollout, with a focus on planning for instruction that is supported by data. The District's MTSS K-5 Guidance Document has been implemented, along with professional learning for specialists and resource staff. Staff are using the guidance document to make informed decisions about students and intervention support. A similar process is being developed for middle school.

ISBE has put all districts on the same timeline to implement a mental health screening assessment in grades 3-8. District leaders have been participating in ISBE professional learning on best practices for implementing and responding to a mental health screener.

Seven of 13 buildings have trained staff in Classroom Cultures, an evidence-based framework for classroom instruction and management. Building-level positive behavioral support teams continue to promote positive behavior in a variety of ways.

Tier 1 and Tier 2&3 data meetings at each school support using data to drive instructional design. Staff have increased capacity in understanding and using the ECRA platform.

The technology skills framework was shared at grade-level meetings. Teacher librarians are gathering resources to support digital citizenship.

The Curriculum Department is evaluating the current curriculum review schedule and will adjust the calendar if needed. They are also considering including non-core content classes into the curriculum review schedule. Middle school exploratory offerings are finalized and next year's students have selected their electives.

Goal 2: Connecting the Community

The District continues to expand ParentSquare usage, sending out 100-day attendance letters and assessment scores via the platform. A middle school pilot for teachers to explore communicating with ParentSquare is being implemented.

Schools continue to implement the new student induction program. A brochure for incoming families is being drafted. A short survey will be sent to families this spring via ParentSquare about parent education opportunities. Newsletter feature items continue to highlight outstanding work of students and staff.

Goal 3: Securing the Future

All referendum projects remain on time and on budget; Phase I and II projects at the elementary schools are complete. Middle school projects are on target to finish this spring. Phase III projects have been approved and are scheduled for completion before the start of next school year.

The Board approved a balanced budget for FY 2026; however, low fund balances will make it difficult for the District to meet its payroll and accounts payable obligations in the month of May, prior to receiving early tax receipts in late May/early June. For the next two years, the District will leverage its arbitrage profit from the referendum bond sale to cover the low cash point. The administration recommended a \$1.5 million reduction in expenditures from the FY 2027 budget, which will put the District in a better financial position through 2031. Options for raising money to cover the low cash point after 2028 include issuing non-referendum debt.

The District has revised its budgeting and forecasting methods, calculating year-end fund balances on a cash basis instead of a modified accruals method. The new method reveals that the FY 2026 budget cannot meet the Board's fund balance policy or invest in capital improvements. With the guidance of the Financial Advisory Committee, the administration will recommend revised policies to the Board at the March meeting. The policies will reflect the District's current financial reality and guide the District toward the Board's goals regarding fund balances and infrastructure investment.

To increase revenue, the District participates in the National School Lunch Program to offset the costs of free and reduced lunches; secured a \$500,000 grant to purchase kitchen equipment that will be used to expand hot lunch programs to elementary schools; and received a \$50,000 state grant for school building maintenance. The administration continues to pursue funding from DuPage County and the Illinois State Board of Education to offset rising costs associated with transporting and educating students from the Interim Housing Center. The District has found savings from efficiencies in transportation services and is bringing in new revenue from facility rentals.

The District has included an annual investment of \$750,000 for infrastructure in its five-year plan. A demographic survey has been commissioned to ensure buildings are being utilized to their full extent. Additional spaces have been identified to rent to SASED for special education classrooms.

Goal 4: Building for Success

Conversations have been held with all staff who will be moving to the middle schools for the upcoming school year. A middle school open house was held to welcome these new colleagues. All incoming middle school families received welcome letters and information about selecting performing music and world language classes; with class selections complete, master scheduling can begin. A middle school transition dashboard has been added to the District website, including an FAQ that is updated regularly. Dates for welcome activities for middle schoolers have been shared with families.

Building principals are planning for the upcoming school year using building utilization targets to ensure equitable use of space in all elementary schools; building maps will be reviewed and adjusted. Building Leadership Teams also provide input.

The transition planning committee for the consolidation of Grove Children's Preschool at Henry Puffer has advised on shared spaces, arrival and dismissal procedures, and mentorship opportunities between intermediate students and preschoolers. The Buildings & Grounds Department has begun relocation logistics and site readiness preparations.

Goal 5: Cultivating Talent

The process for determining class configurations for the 2026-2027 school year was shared with the Board in December. Class size targets will be maintained, though class sizes at individual schools may vary. New middle school staff will receive training and support as they transition.

The District Equity Leadership Team (DELT) is developing a student survey for intermediate and middle school students regarding their activity interests. The PTA One Community committee

continues to gather background information from PTAs across the District, including funding and offerings at different schools.

The District continues to expand its recognition and celebration efforts, seeking new community partnerships to recognize staff. Proposals for ways the Board can recognize staff and students on a regular basis will be brought forth by the end of the year. A DELT subcommittee will discuss recruitment and retention strategies to focus on casting a wide net across candidate pools for all positions. Partnerships with colleges and universities have been initiated, as well as plans to participate in spring job fairs. An outreach event for all the District's community partners is planned to look for further opportunities to connect community resources with students and families.

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Adjourn

Greg Harris moved and Katie Hurckes seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.



May 2026 District 58 Strategic Plan Progress Update

Strategic Plan Progress Update: May 2026

View District 58's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan:

- [View Vision 58 Document](#)
- [View Strategic Plan Website](#)
- [View Strategic Plan Prior Progress Updates](#)

Status:

- Not Yet Begun
- Not Making Expected Progress
- Making Progress on Amended Timeline
- Making Expected Progress
- Complete

Strategic Goal 1: Focusing on Learning: Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction

Leaders - [Jessica Stewart](#), [Liz Ehrhart](#), [James Eichmiller](#)

- Objective 1.1** District 58 will set high expectations for all learners that are designed to meet their individual needs.
- Objective 1.2:** Ensure students' availability for learning by measuring and supporting their behavioral needs, while also supporting mental health.
- Objective 1.3:** District 58 will implement a systematic review of (multiple forms of) data to inform transparent instructional decision-making.
- Objective 1.4:** Support students in the intentional use of technology to build digital literacy and citizenship.
- Objective 1.5:** Commit to regularly evaluating and improving upon our curricular offerings to ensure that students have equitable access to broader areas of learning.

May 2026 Update:

1.1: The PLC+ Administrative book study through Module 5 is complete. The staff professional learning plan and implementation is ready for the 2026-2027 school year, including an overview during the June Teacher Institute Days. The building administrators will bring the PLC+ model to their Instructional Leadership Teams to support this work at the building level, which will include incorporating PLCs in the School Improvement process.

The Elementary MTSS Guidance Document has been implemented throughout the school year. We saw consistent practices in identifying students for intervention, structuring interventions based on diagnostic assessment data and student skill deficits, and setting progress monitoring goals to track student progress and determine the effectiveness of our intervention materials. The middle school MTSS subcommittee has determined a consistent set of criteria to identify students for intervention at the middle school level.



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Additionally, the new middle school schedule allows students to participate in intervention without missing the opportunity for an exploratory class in their schedule.

1.2 The District continues to strengthen systems designed to ensure students are available for learning by proactively supporting behavioral, social-emotional, and mental health needs. Classroom Culture buildings for the 2026-27 school year have now been identified, and training dates are currently being finalized to support implementation and build consistent, supportive learning environments across schools. In addition, key leaders responsible for the implementation of the Universal Mental Health Screener continue to participate in the DuPage Mental Health Leaders Network, engaging in professional learning focused on best practices, readiness, and implementation planning for Universal Mental Health Screening. Positive Behavioral Support Systems continue to be implemented and supported as a foundational component of proactively addressing student behavior across all of our schools.

1.3: We continue to hold Tier 1 and 2/3 data meetings at each school, which supports the process of using data in determining student needs and instructional design. By focusing on all students throughout the tiers, this assists us in ensuring equitable practices. This has supported the staff's increased capacity in understanding the ECRA platform. We continue to monitor the use of Forefront at the elementary level and curricular resource platforms at the middle school level to ensure student classroom data is reflective of the student's learning progression. This practice will lend itself to enhancing our data review during PLCs.

1.4: The technology skills progression is no longer in the draft phase. It has now been shared with the community and with staff. Staff will begin to work to ensure students are developing these skills next school year. The District will continue to monitor student progress towards these skills. Additionally, the District is building the Technology and Learning exploratory course, which will incorporate digital citizenship and internet safety at the middle school level. These concepts are introduced at the elementary schools through library skills lessons.

1.5: The middle school exploratory classes continue to be built out with input from staff. The courses offer a variety of opportunities for our students to engage in performing music, world language, technology and library skills, career exploration, art, music, FACS and STEM. The PE department also worked to develop a 6th grade health education sequence to support the current 7/8 health course. Additionally, we have built an enhanced advisory lesson sequence to expand SEL and executive functioning instruction, as well as opportunities for team building. The elementary art and music teams have also reviewed their current scope and sequence to adjust lessons based on 6th graders being at the middle schools.

February 2026 Update:

1.1: The administrative team continues to participate in our PLC+ book study. We are working through the 5 questions of PLC+ and developing systems for whole staff rollout. We will place focus on planning for



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instruction that uses data to support decisions and reviews student successes and challenges to drive learning forward.

Additionally, the MTSS K-5 Guidance Document implementation and professional learning for Specialists and Resource staff have been occurring throughout the year. Staff are utilizing the guidance document to make informed decisions about their students and using progress monitoring data to recommend intervention support. We are currently in the beginning stages of developing a similar process for middle school.

1.2: The Illinois State Board of Education has adjusted its timeline to support all Illinois Districts in implementing a mental health screening assessment for students in grades 3 through 8 by the end of the 2027-28 school year, with a parent opt-out option. In preparation, key District 58 leaders have been actively participating in ISBE-sponsored professional learning focused on best practices for implementing and responding to a mental health screener. This work includes careful attention to systems of support, staff training, family communication, data privacy, and clear response protocols. Mental health support staff (social workers, psychologists, and counselors) have been reviewing and prioritizing six preparedness domains to inform the work ahead.

Seven of 13 buildings have trained at least two teachers and administration as Classroom Cultures trainers. Classroom Cultures, developed by Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), is an evidence-based framework that returns to the core elements of strong classroom instruction and management. It reinforces predictable routines, clear expectations, and consistent adult responses, strengthening the foundational practices that support student regulation and engagement. This work complements our District's PBSS model and supports our goal of elevating calm, structured classrooms that remain productive, supportive places for teaching and learning.

Building-level positive behavioral support teams continue to promote positive behavior through monthly celebrations and recognition systems, while reviewing and responding to student behavior, strengthening our proactive support systems.

1.3: We continue to hold Tier 1 and 2/3 data meetings at each school, which supports the process of using data in determining student needs and instructional design. By focusing on all students throughout the tiers, this assists us in ensuring equitable practices. This has supported the staff's increased capacity in understanding the ECRA platform. Classroom teachers were supported in creating custom groups in their ECRA dashboard to allow them to focus on their individual class, as well as talk about grade-level data as a whole.

1.4: The technology skills framework was shared with staff at grade-level meetings, with emphasis on grade-level skills that are introduced and mastered across content areas. Additionally, teacher librarians are procuring resources to support digital citizenship and building lessons to address students' understanding of how to contribute in a digital world.



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1.5: The Curriculum Department continues to evaluate the current curriculum review schedule and determine if adjustments to the calendar are needed. We are also looking at incorporating non-core content classes into the schedule, aligning specific programs with core content when appropriate. We will share this information with the Curriculum Council in April.

We have finalized the Middle School exploratory offerings and continue building content for each class, enhancing current offerings and building our new classes as well. Performing music and world language selections were due from next year's middle school students on February 20. We are in the process of connecting with the remaining families to ensure everyone is signed up for the correct courses.

October 2025 Update:

1.1: District 58 building administrators started their professional learning for the PLC+ model. This includes the introduction of the PLC+ model and discussions about how this can look in our current data review process. The District completed a review of our intervention systems and has begun refinement of the process.

1.2: ISBE announced that our District was selected as part of the statewide cohort to implement a mental health screening assessment by the end of the 2026–27 school year. In preparation, the District formed a working group to explore how best to implement this initiative in a manner that reflects our community's values and priorities.

1.3: The District conducted a review of the collective use of Forefront at the elementary level, including principal review of data. Plans for continued support were developed and will be implemented this school year. The Curriculum Department developed updated letters for notification of assessment scores, including information regarding the new NWEA MAP Assessment norms.

1.4: The District developed a framework for Seesaw use, including artifact examples and updated commitments for posting frequency. This framework was shared with staff and feedback was gathered to refine practices. Additionally, a draft technology framework will be developed to ensure coverage of standards and the cadence of introducing tools and applications to students.

1.5: The District gathered feedback regarding current exploratory classes and ideas for future planning of programming at the middle schools. Working groups have convened to build curriculum maps for our current offerings and the expansion of those offerings as well.



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Strategic Goal 2: Connecting the Community

Leaders - [James Eichmiller](#), [Julie Relihan](#)

- **Objective 2.1** - District 58 will build and enhance two-way communication that is equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive.
- **Objective 2.2:** District 58 will foster strong relationships with all families and the extended community.
- **Objective 2.3:** District 58 will provide families with opportunities for parent/guardian education and collaboration based on needs.
- **Objective 2.4:** District 58 will provide and receive support from community partners to help with District 58 initiatives and resources.
- **Objective 2.5:** District 58 will build consistent collaboration opportunities between neighborhood schools to celebrate successes and shared learnings.

May 2026 Update:

2.1: We have been piloting ParentSquare with select middle school staff. We will gather feedback from these staff members and develop an implementation plan for more widespread middle school staff usage for next school year.

2.2: Our buildings have continued to implement the new student program. We had a discussion at our principal meeting regarding implementation, and the group felt the program was being effectively implemented. We have drafted a brochure for incoming families that we reviewed with our committee in March. We received excellent feedback, and we will have a brochure ready to share next school year. This brochure could be shared with real estate agents, preschools, and a variety of other stakeholders and community organizations.

2.3: We will survey families about parent education opportunities this month. We shared draft questions with our committee at the March meeting.

2.4: The work of this goal is aligned with Goal 5.

2.5: We are continuing to work on newsletter feature items that highlight the outstanding work happening in our District. Current examples include the staff shout-outs and student celebration features in 58 Connects and Communicate 58. The staff shout-outs continue to be frequently utilized and well-received.

February 2026 Update:

2.1: We continue to enhance our ParentSquare usage. This includes pushing out our 100-day attendance letters and assessment scores via ParentSquare, which improves our efficiency and ensures more families see this important information. We are also in the early stages of implementing a middle school pilot for teachers to explore using this as a communications tool.



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2.2: Our buildings have continued to implement the new student program. We are also in the process of drafting a brochure for incoming families that we will review with our committee in March.

2.3: We will survey families about parent education opportunities this spring. We will draft questions with our committee at the March meeting. We anticipate a few simple questions that will be sent via ParentSquare.

2.4: The work of this goal is aligned with Goal 5.

2.5: We are continuing to work on newsletter feature items that highlight the outstanding work happening in our District. Current examples include the staff shout-outs and student celebration features in 58 Connects and Communicate 58.

October 2025 Update:

2.1: The initial phase of our ParentSquare deployment was completed. Our engagement levels have been extremely high as our community becomes more familiar with the new platform. This school year, we will begin testing the platform with selected classroom teachers, clubs, and other areas that could benefit from improved translation tools.

2.2: The District has established new student induction guidelines. While each school maintains some autonomy in welcoming new students and families, these guidelines create a consistent set of components across the District. This school year, we will also develop a welcome publication to share with real estate agents and other community organizations.

2.3: This school year, the District will review existing survey data and develop additional questions to identify the parent education programs and topics families would like to see offered. The District will also continue to share existing opportunities, such as the Glenbard Parent Series.

2.4: This plan has some overlap with work being completed in Goal 5. The Committee will monitor that work and determine if it aligns with this goal.

2.5: The District will continue to leverage existing newsletters and explore additional ways to share our successes, both internally and externally.



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Strategic Goal 3: Securing the Future: Finance and Facilities

Leaders - [Greg Harris](#), [Kevin Russell](#)

- **Objective 3.1:** District 58 shall oversee and ensure referendum resources with an eye on timely and efficient project completion.
- **Objective 3.2:** District 58 shall continually plan to make sure resources are available to support District initiatives.
- **Objective 3.3:** District 58 shall maintain balanced budgets by complying with existing Board policies and implementing a capital policy
- **Objective 3.4:** District 58 shall explore possible revenue sources and achieve savings.
- **Objective 3.5:** District 58 shall preserve buildings long-term with appropriate investment and efficient utilization.

May 2026 Update:

3.1: To date, all referendum projects remain on time and on budget. The District has successfully completed Phase I and II projects at the elementary level. The District has also substantially completed the construction projects at O'Neill and Herrick. Phase III projects have been approved, and all of the work is scheduled to be completed before the start of next school year. The Board of Education will receive an update on the Phase III schedule for the Summer of 2026 on Monday, May 11, at the regularly scheduled Board meeting.

3.2: A major focus in the current fiscal year has been cash flow. Because of the timing of when school districts receive their property taxes, May is the month when districts across the state (not just D58) hit their low cash points and oftentimes have to take out loans just to meet obligations until the county disburses property taxes. This cash flow issue is directly related to the fund balance policy (see 3.3) because the more the District has in reserves at the beginning of each year, the less it has to worry about running out of cash in May. The District is pursuing options for increasing fund balances through spending cuts, leveraging excess interest dollars from the referendum, and considering working cash bonds.

3.3: At the April meeting, the Board of Education adopted revised versions of its fund balance and capital policies. The former sets a range of 33% to 35% for the ratio of year-end fund balances to annual expenditures. The latter sets a mandatory \$750,000 transfer from operating funds to the Capital Projects fund. This amount will grow annually by the consumer price index. Although the 2026-2027 budget will not be approved by the Board of Education until September, the administration expresses early confidence in achieving a balanced budget and making the required investment in capital. Fund balance projections for June 30, 2027, are not expected to meet board policy, however. Conversations around increasing fund balances will need to take place over the next year and will involve capturing excess interest revenue from the referendum fund and working cash bonds.



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3.4: The District continues to pursue efficiencies wherever possible, no matter how small the amount. As the end of the fiscal year approaches, the District is starting to see the possibility of substantial savings due to the hard work of the administrative team. In addition to successes reported in previous updates, the District is pleased to share news that will potentially save quite a bit of money in energy costs. The administration is currently working to engage in a community solar project that could cut down electricity costs by as much as 10%. Additionally, there is the real possibility of a collaboration with Rep. Casten's office that would make available funds to install solar panels on some of the District's buildings.

3.5: The revised capital policy that the Board of Education recently adopted will strategically guide the District's investment in school buildings. Each year, the Board of Education will be presented with a five-year capital improvement plan. This plan will be completed in consultation with the District's architect and will incorporate the master facility plan and the most recent ten-year survey. This plan will be a map for how the District should be earmarking funds in the Capital Projects fund to complete pending projects over the next several years.

February 2026 Update:

3.1: To date, all referendum projects remain on time and on budget. The District has successfully completed Phase I and II projects at the elementary level. The District is also on target to complete the middle school work this spring. Phase III projects have been approved, and all of the work is scheduled to be completed before the start of next school year.

3.2: The Board of Education approved a balanced budget for FY 2026 in September. Since that time, the administration has been focused on cash flow and five-year planning. Despite having a balanced budget, the low fund balances at the beginning of the year make it difficult for the District to meet all of its payroll and accounts payable obligations in the month of May (prior to receiving early tax receipts in late May/early June). The District has solved the problem for the next two fiscal years by leveraging the arbitrage profit from the referendum bond sale. This money is available for the District until it is due to the IRS in February of 2028. In order to understand the trajectory of this low cash problem, the District conducted a sophisticated analysis of revenues and expenditures over the next five years to understand the impact on year-end fund balances. After consulting with the Financial Advisory Committee, the administration recommended a \$1.5 million cut in expenditures from the FY 2027 budget. These cuts put the District in a much better financial position through Fiscal Year 2031 with projected surpluses and more dollars set aside for capital improvements.

3.3: With new leadership in the business office as of the current fiscal year, the District has revised its methods for budgeting and forecasting. By calculating year-end fund balances on a cash basis instead of employing a modified accruals method, the District's financial data portrays a different picture of the overall financial health of the organization. With fund balances calculated on a cash basis, it is apparent that the FY 2026 budget is far from meeting the Board of Education's fund balance policy. And with only a slim surplus in the operating funds, an investment of District resources in capital improvements was not likely in the current



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fiscal year, given the available resources. Following the guidance of the Financial Advisory Committee, the administration will be recommending revised policies to the Board of Education at the March regular meeting. These policies will comport with the District's current financial reality and provide the guidance necessary to meet the Board's goals when it comes to fund balances and investment in infrastructure.

3:4: The District has successfully pursued several options to increase revenue over the past year. The District has availed itself of funds from the National School Lunch Program to help offset the costs of lunches for students who qualify for free or reduced lunches. The District has secured a \$500,000 grant with the help of Representative Anne Stava that will be used to purchase kitchen equipment, which will be used to expand hot lunch programs to all elementary schools. The District has also been awarded a \$50,000 state grant to be used for the maintenance of school buildings. The administration continues to pursue funding opportunities from DuPage County and the Illinois State Board of Education to offset the rising costs associated with educating students from the Interim Housing Center. Thanks to new and updated facilities paid for by the 2022 referendum, the District is also bringing in new revenue from renting out school spaces (gymnasias, etc.) to groups in the community. The administration is also scrutinizing every dollar spent in order to achieve savings, small and large. Of note, the District's efforts to find efficiencies in transportation services have been a big success, yielding considerable savings in the current fiscal year alone.

3:5: The last dollars from the proceeds of the 2022 referendum bond sales will be spent within the next year. Despite an enormous amount of investment in the schools, the District understands that regular maintenance is required to keep the buildings looking as good as they do when all the referendum work is completed. The District has structured its five-year planning to include an annual investment in infrastructure of \$750,000 (with a CPI-based escalator). The District has commissioned a demographic survey to ensure that buildings are being utilized to the fullest extent possible. Where the administration identifies some available spaces based on expected usage by District 58 students, agreements are being made with SASSED to rent out classrooms for the use of students enrolled with the special education cooperative.

October 2025 Update:

3.1: Phase II Elementary schools are nearing completion (only punch list items remain). Phase II was on budget and on time (elementary schools). The District anticipates a surplus from Phase II that will be returned to "owners' contingency." This surplus will help address cost overruns (construction contingency funds) at the middle schools. Bids for Phase III are currently being reviewed. A detailed presentation of the current status of all construction projects (including budget) will be given at the Board meeting on 11/10. The District anticipates that the bids for Phase III (elementary schools) will also come in under or at budget (the review process is ongoing). Overall, the total budget for the referendum is in good shape and will continue to be closely monitored.

3.2: The District presented a detailed tentative budget at the August meeting prior to a final budget being approved in September. The budget is balanced and has a surplus of funds. Due to increased costs and



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proration from ISBE, the District is unable to meet the Board's 35% fund balance and capital policies. Consequently, the District does not project that it will be able to have sufficient cash on hand to endure its low cash point in May. The administration is working closely with the FAC and Board to address this issue (in the short and long terms). While the District believes it will be able to continue to support its initiatives in subsequent years, further reductions will have to be made. The District no longer receives COVID revenue, state funding for transportation and special education is being prorated, and inflation is causing costs to continue to rise well past new revenue. The temporary fix will be to utilize the arbitrage funds from the referendum to cover the low cash point.

3.3: The Board of Education passed a surplus budget in September. The FAC is working closely with the administration to revise the fund balance and capital policies to ensure long-term fiscal stability. This work is ongoing and will be completed by the spring.

3.4: The District is pursuing alternate revenue streams. Examples include seeking assistance from the DuPage County Board to offset the rising costs associated with the Interim Housing Center (IHC) and revamping the District's facility rental practices. The District has also requested additional funds from ISBE. The District was recently awarded the School Maintenance Grant from ISBE totaling \$50,000. The District also received another grant from Representative Anne Stava-Murray for \$500,000 to purchase kitchen equipment. These funds will allow the District to serve hot lunch at the elementary schools next fall. In addition to continually exploring alternative funding sources, the District is actively reducing areas of its budget. Reductions were made this school year, and further reductions will have to be made next school year. The reason budget reductions must continue to take place is that the revenue streams the District receives are outpaced by expenses. There is no longer additional funding from the federal government tied to the COVID pandemic, and ISBE continues to prorate the District's reimbursements for transportation and special education costs. In order to maintain fiscal stability, reductions must be made.

3.5: The 2022 referendum funds, coupled with a long-term capital policy, will assist the District in meeting this objective. Additionally, the District has commissioned a demographic study to ensure buildings are being utilized to the fullest extent possible. In the event a building is not fully utilized, the District partners with SASSED to rent out available space(s). Looking beyond the referendum-related construction projects, the District will begin planning for five years' worth of capital projects to keep the community's new and improved school spaces in the great condition that they are in now. A five-year budget will be drawn up for capital improvements for post-referendum work, and the District will plan strategically to make sure enough money is available each year to afford progress towards these objectives.

The District has changed leadership in the Business Office and hired a new Chief School Business Official. Previous projection models have proved unreliable. Dr. Harris has and will continue to create new projection models based on cash and not accruals to ensure accuracy.



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Strategic Goal 4: Building for Success: Implementing the New PK-5 and 6-8 Models

Leaders - [Jessica Stewart](#), [Liz Ehrhart](#)

- **Objective 4.1:** District 58 will work to ensure smooth transitions to a 6-8 middle school model for all stakeholders, especially in the first year of transition.
- **Objective 4.2:** District 58 will work to ensure equitable access to curricular, programmatic and instructional resources, through the examination of school boundaries based on building utilization.
- **Objective 4.3:** The District will examine the use and implementation of resources that provide intervention and enrichment to the student experience (curricular and extra-curricular).
- **Objective 4.4:** The pre-k/5 elementary structure will be examined in order to optimize opportunities and innovative experiences.
- **Objective 4.5:** Middle school structure will be examined in order to optimize opportunities and innovative experiences.

May 2026 Update:

4.1: Continued work is occurring to support new staff who will join the middle schools next year. Dedicated District and Building Directed PLMs have ensured opportunities for staff to meet and collaborate, including review of building-wide procedures and scheduling. Staff will continue to meet through the end of the school year. 5th and 6th grade students and families were welcomed to Future Senator and Future Spartan nights last week, which allowed new middle school students to hear from building leadership and see the buildings as they make the transition to middle school. Additionally, 6th grade students are attending Outdoor Education as their final District field trip in elementary school.

As part of the District's middle school transition work, teams continue collaborating closely with families of students with special needs to refine supports, anticipate individual needs, and ensure a positive and successful start to each child's middle school experience. Final scheduling and staffing decisions are underway to ensure students have access to appropriate classes and supports aligned to their unique learning needs, while also fully participating in the wide range of academic, extracurricular, and social opportunities that middle school has to offer.

4.2: Elementary school building maps have been reviewed to ensure instructional spaces are available for our space prioritization across all 11 schools. This exercise is directly related to the realized space for 6th grade students moving to the middle schools. Prioritization includes a dedicated conference room, small group instructional spaces, both individual and shared, to accommodate interventions, related services and resources, and a dedicated art and music space. The middle schools have also finalized their building maps to support the additional staff joining their teams next year.

4.3: The District has completed the development of the 6th grade gifted ELA scope and sequence, as well as made revisions to the elementary gifted scope and sequence. This refinement supports the daily elementary gifted instruction and ensures continuity of programming over two years. Additionally, the District finalized



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gifted and math acceleration placements for the 2026-2027 school year and communications have been sent to families.

4.4: Final plans are in place to support the preschool's transition to a singular school community for the 2026-27 school year. Staff continues to collaborate closely to ensure smooth systems, thoughtful supports, and a positive experience for students and families as we move into this exciting new chapter. There is also growing excitement surrounding the school's revised name, which has helped build a strong sense of identity, pride, and anticipation for the future.

4.5: The middle school exploratory classes continue to be built out with input from staff. The courses offer a variety of opportunities for our students to engage in performing music, world language, technology and library skills, career exploration, art, music, FACS and STEM. The PE department also worked to develop a 6th grade health education sequence to support the current 7/8 health course. Additionally, we have built an enhanced advisory lesson sequence to expand SEL and executive functioning instruction, as well as opportunities for team building.

February 2026 Update:

4.1: The District has held staffing conversations with all certified staff who will be moving to the Middle School for the upcoming school year. Staff were welcomed with an open house opportunity to meet and connect with new colleagues. Welcome letters were sent to all incoming students from the District and the schools. We shared information about selecting performing music and world language classes, and we are wrapping up those forms. Master scheduling will occur now that we have the number of students for specific classes, including math, gifted ELA, performing music, world language and others.

We also created a Middle School transition dashboard, which includes important information for families and provides an opportunity to ask questions, which have been built into an FAQ. PTAs are planning for 5th and 6th grade end of the year experiences. Dates for Future Senator and Spartan nights, as well as Sneak Preview and Middle School Locker Night, have been shared with families.

4.2: Building principals have used the building utilization targets to plan for the upcoming school year. The building maps will be reviewed and adjusted since the initial discussion. This will ensure an equitable use of space in each of our elementary schools. The District is currently awaiting review of the District demographer to determine if there is a need to review elementary school boundaries.

4.3: MTSS K-5 Guidance Document implementation and professional learning for Specialists and Resource staff have been occurring throughout the year. Staff are utilizing the guidance document to make informed decisions about their students and using progress monitoring data to recommend intervention support. We are currently in the beginning stages of developing a similar process for middle school.



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4.4: Grove Children’s Preschool and Henry Puffer School’s transition planning committee has examined and advised on shared spaces, arrival and dismissal procedures, as well as mentorship opportunities between intermediate students and our preschool classrooms. Early next month, the committee will solidify plans for promoting a shared culture of collaboration among the adults. Relocation logistics and site readiness preparations with the District’s Buildings and Grounds Department are underway.

4.5: We have finalized the Middle School exploratory offerings and continue building content for each class, enhancing current offerings and building our new classes as well. Performing music and world language selections were due from next year’s middle school students on February 20. We are in the process of connecting with the remaining families to ensure everyone is signed up for the correct courses.

October 2025 Update:

4.1: The District remains on track and is actively implementing the middle school transition plan, which includes ongoing support for both staff, students, and families to ensure a smooth shift in our grade level configurations.

4.2: The District shared building utilization targets with the Board of Education. This will ensure an equitable use of space in each of our elementary schools. The District is currently awaiting review of the District demographer to determine if there is a need to review elementary school boundaries.

4.3: The District created a flowchart to identify appropriate diagnostic assessments and match interventions to skill deficits to ensure a robust MTSS process that is consistent across all schools. Additionally, the year 2 elementary gifted program curriculum is being utilized in our school-based programming model.

4.4: Grove Children’s Preschool and Henry Puffer School are implementing a joint committee to explore opportunities and plan for potential areas of focus, as the preschool will be hosted exclusively at Henry Puffer next school year.

4.5: The new middle school schedule offers opportunities to enhance student experiences. New and existing exploratory classes are being revised and built to engage students during the school day.



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Goal 5: Cultivating Talent (Maximizing the Potential of Students, Staff, and Families)

Leader - [Justin Sisul](#)

- **Objective 5.1:** District 58 will analyze and explore our existing and potential staffing practices and structures in order to achieve more equitable experiences for all students.
- **Objective 5.2:** District 58 will review, expand, and support equitable opportunities for students to explore and develop their individual talents
- **Objective 5.3:** District 58 will establish a culture that recognizes, celebrates, develops, and supports the talents that exist within the District to promote the retention of staff.
- **Objective 5.4:** District 58 will recruit and attract high-quality staff who are representative of the larger community (for all positions).
- **Objective 5.5:** District 58 will engage with the local community to enhance the student, staff, and school experience

May 2026 Update:

5.1: The District continues to focus on staffing allocation as we move into the 2026-27 school year. We will present at the Board meeting again on May 11th our philosophy and approach on classroom section allocations, anchored in our class size targets that were developed as part of the previous strategic plan in 2018. This time of year also sees significant efforts to ensure student supports through resource, intervention, EL, related services, etc. are also allocated based upon review of student data and student needs. We strive to do this in a staffing-neutral way particularly this year, and are finalizing our tentative plans, which will be shared more broadly with the community just before the end of the school year.

5.2: A survey has been administered to current 2nd-4th grade students and current 5th-7th grade students, asking about their interest in clubs and activities. The survey also attempts, in student-friendly language, to identify any barriers to participation for our students so that we might work to remove those wherever possible. The results will be shared with the teachers at each building so that teachers might consider over the summer the development of new clubs that may align with student interests.

Additionally, we have shared the numerous opportunities that will be available to students at the middle school, including additional clubs (which will be identified based on some of the students' interests from surveys) as well as an enhanced intramural program.

5.3: During this time of year, we see a number of recognition opportunities across the District. Our Distinguished Service Awards have reached a record number of nominees, which is an exciting milestone. In smaller ways, our staff newsletter includes “shout outs” from other staff members (this is a practice that occurs often in our buildings as well). We anticipated proposing a broader student and staff recognition opportunity at Board meetings beginning in the fall of 2026.



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5.4: District 58 participated in the first-ever DuPage Regional Office of Education job fair, which saw more than 200 educators attend! We collected over a hundred resumes from interested candidates and are able to use those initial contacts as we continue to post positions for next school year. The DELT subcommittee on recruitment and retention meets the week of May 14th and will be reviewing interview questions as well as discussing recruitment strategies. We continue to grow our relationships with local colleges and universities as well.

5.5: We have shifted to a summer plan for our outreach meeting with our community partners; this will allow us to coordinate efforts with new teacher week, as well as hopefully gathering information to inform plans for next school year as supports from our partners are available and appropriate.

February 2026 Update:

5.1: In December, we shared a presentation with the Board of Education that walked through the process that will be used to determine class configurations for the 2026-27 school year. In January, we outlined budgetary reductions that, while impactful to staffing across the District, maintain the ability to provide equitable experiences for students. Notably, we are emphasizing the maintenance of class size targets across the District. While neighborhood schools make it nearly impossible to equalize class sizes, we want to ensure basic, consistent guardrails that are applicable district-wide.

As we move closer to the K-5 / 6-8 model, additional time and focus are being placed on ensuring that our soon-to-be new middle school staff receive training and support as they prepare for next school year. While generally these teachers will be in curricular areas that are familiar, the model and environment will be different and we are committed to supporting them throughout this transition.

5.2: The District Equity Leadership Team (DELTA) is in the final stages of developing a student survey for incoming intermediate students (current 2nd-4th grades) and incoming middle school students (current 5th-7th graders) regarding their interests in activities, etc. to be administered in the spring in an effort to ensure that our offerings are truly aligned with student interests. At the Curriculum Workshop, we will discuss at a high level the offerings for middle school students in the new 6-8 model as well.

The PTA One Community committee continues its work this year, gathering background information across the PTAs in the District. At a recent meeting, we reviewed the budgets of individual school PTAs to gain a more thorough understanding of funding levels and offerings at different buildings. The group continues to gain momentum, and at our spring meetings, we expect to narrow the focus toward some tangible, implementable ideas that can help ensure equity of student opportunities provided through the PTA across the District.

5.3: We are continuing to expand our recognition and celebratory efforts. The addition of Julie Relihan to our team has brought a high level of professionalism and quality to our social media postings, as well as the characterization of recognition (Principal Appreciation Month, for example, was expanded and very well



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received). We also continue to seek and celebrate new community partnerships that recognize our staff - the Castle Teacher of the Year program is something that we worked closely to help launch, and we were proud to see many of our teachers honored (and the winner, in fact, being a District 58 teacher!) Work will continue in this area throughout the year; we hope to bring forward a Board recognition concept for staff before the end of the school year, as well as looking to continue to find ways for the Board to recognize individual students and groups of students on a much more regular, public basis.

5:4: A subcommittee of administrators from the District Equity Leadership Team has been formed to discuss recruitment and retention strategies, with a focus on hiring processes and procedures to ensure that we are casting the widest possible net across our candidate pools for all positions. We have initiated conversations to build deliberate partnerships with several colleges and universities that have not typically sent students to District 58 for observation, practicum or student teaching hours in the hope that we might encourage a further diverse pool of pre-service teachers to experience what we have to offer in District 58. We also plan to participate in at least two job fairs this spring. While we expect to be hiring a smaller group of educators this fall than in typical years, we want to increase our presence and visibility at these events, recognizing that each appearance has a financial and resource cost to the District. The DELT reviewed data from ISBE's Equity Journey Continuum, and while we recognize a goal of recruiting staff members who are more representative of our student demographic population, we also acknowledge that from a state lens, this is actually an area where we are recognized for having "minimal gaps" - that is, based on their measurements, the comparison of staff/student demographics is a minimal gap in equity for District 58 as compared to much of the state of Illinois. This doesn't change our focus in this area, but does provide some perspective.

5.5: We are planning an outreach/connection event for all of our community partners before the end of this school year, with a goal of both celebrating those partnerships and looking for further opportunities and connections to support our students and families. The District 58 community is always willing to step up when needed, and we hope to continue to provide new opportunities to connect their generosity and support with the students, families and programs that can most benefit from those resources.

October 2025 Update:

5.1: The District began the school year with class sizes that more closely align with our published targets across our schools, as reported at the September Board meeting. In some cases, spring planning and projections did not unfold exactly as anticipated, and a few areas (particularly in middle school) are exceeding targets more than we had hoped. Plans are being developed to reduce a couple of larger classes (over 30 students), and as we approach the 6–8 transition, we will place significant emphasis on ensuring equitable class sizes and access to staff resources across all 13 buildings as we implement the new K–5 / 6–8 model.

5.2: In June, the District reviewed the revised stipend structure, which supports all extracurricular activities (including sports, clubs, and music outside the school day etc.) and developed supporting documents to provide additional clarity for staff. This information was shared with staff this fall. In early spring, the District will release a student and staff survey to help guide planning for next year's activity offerings.



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Additionally, the One Community Committee - comprised of PTA leadership and administrators - met for the first time in September. The group's charge is to review PTA offerings and explore opportunities to ensure equitable funding for comparable activities across the District, while continuing to honor the unique character and composition of each school community. The first meeting focused on brainstorming ideas and the committee looks forward to developing recommendations for implementation in the 2026–27 school year.

5.3: With the addition of Julie Relihan as our Community Relations Coordinator, we have already seen some redesign of staff celebrations, notably our Principal Spotlight during October. We are beginning to explore additional opportunities to recognize staff across all roles and buildings throughout the year — both formally and informally, and in more public ways. We look forward to sharing more about these efforts in the coming months!

5.4: District 58 welcomed a smaller group of certified staff this year compared to previous years, but we continue to take pride in both our new hires and our onboarding processes. We are currently exploring spring job fairs to attend and developing partnerships with universities whose student populations can help diversify our future applicant pool. These partnerships may also include expanded student teaching opportunities within District 58.

The District has identified a list of staff to invite to participate in “stay interviews,” based on recommendations from our administrative team. These interviews are typically conducted with staff members we hope to retain in District 58 who may be at a point in their career (or possess specific qualifications) that could make them more mobile. The purpose of a stay interview is to better understand what motivates an employee to remain in their role and what improvements could enhance their experience. Our goal is to complete these interviews during the first half of the year so that any feedback received can be acted upon before the end of the school year.

5.5: In considering this objective, we recognize that District 58 already has strong and growing partnerships with many community organizations. The Downers Grove Fire Department, Police Department, Public Library, grit2, the Downers Grove Lions Club, and many others actively support our staff and students in both visible and behind-the-scenes ways. We are also deeply grateful for the generosity of local organizations, sometimes through large gestures, such as the Office Depot shopping spree for our middle school staff, and sometimes through smaller but equally meaningful acts, like donations of supplies and gifts for families in need. This spring, we hope to host an event that brings these partners together to express our gratitude and to collaborate on future goals to support District 58 students.