



the author

The purpose of District 21 schools is to provide a learning environment for all students to become life-long learners and productive citizens.

Community members,

Through this newsletter, I am happy to share just some of the news happening in District 21. Thanks to our engaged families, dedicated staff, and supportive community we are able to work every day to prepare all students for success. As always, you can find the most up-to-date information about the District on our website (www.ccsd21.org) and you are more than welcome to call (847-537-8270) or email (district21@ccsd21.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,
Kate Hyland, Ed.D.



SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Kate Hyland

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District balances fiscal responsibility while providing high-quality education

Community Consolidated School District 21 strives to responsibly steward the community's finances while offering a high-quality education to all students. Because of careful financial management, the District is able to attract highly-qualified teachers to meet the needs of all students.

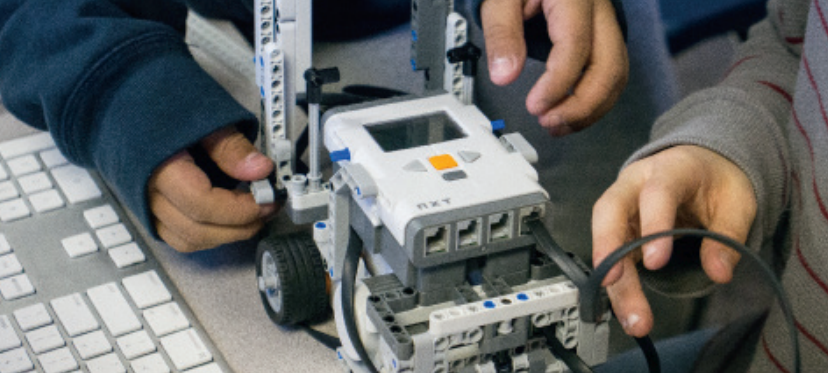
This spring, the District's teachers, administrators and Board of Education reached agreement on a new four-year contract. The new Collective Bargaining Agreement eliminated the teacher's salary schedule, which results in more transparency and equity for staff members. Employees also took on a greater share of health care costs. The Board of Education unanimously approved the new contract and 94 percent of the District 21 Education Association (DEA) membership voted in support.

Through its Energy Conservation Program, the District has reduced its energy consumption by

more than 28 percent. The savings - more than \$3 million over eight years - helps the District put more money back into the classroom and into student learning.

Moving forward, CCSD21 will continue to monitor state and federal proposals to reform education funding. Pending action at both the federal and state level could severely impact the District's annual budget. As the District works with its legislators, the community is encouraged to contact its senators and representatives to stress the importance of education funding in order to maintain high-quality programs in our schools.

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State Of The Schools Encouraged Families To Learn Together

This year's State of the Schools events were hosted at the middle schools during the last two weeks of October. The evenings gave students, families, and community members the opportunity to learn together and work on an authentic learning experience.

Superintendent Dr. Kate Hyland began by highlighting three issues currently facing CCSD21 and districts across the state: **Senate Bill 16**, **Common Core**, and the **PARCC assessment**. Dr. Hyland then presented the annual State of the Schools video which highlighted the work toward the District's Professional Learning Community goals.

Families were able to select one of several learning experiences in which to participate. Facilitated by students and teachers, each session modeled an authentic learning experience similar to those students engage in across the district.

Hundreds of students, family members, and CCSD21 friends engaged in the learning activities and got a peek into a student's life in District 21.



A parent and student engage in the "Clean Water: How Can You Make a Difference?" session. Participants conducted an experiment that explored the effects of pollution on a water supply.

CCSD21 Recommits To Authentic Learning, Inclusionary Practices

The mission of Community Consolidated School District 21 is to prepare all students for success. In order to be successful in the future, students will need to be able to think critically, apply facts to solving new problems, and collaborate with others from around the world.

In order to prepare students to be life-long learners and productive citizens, the District is committed to becoming a Professional

Learning Community. Through this process, the District identified two Areas of Focus to increase student performance and growth: Inclusionary Practices and Authentic Learning.

Professional Learning Community Areas of Focus

Inclusionary Practices:

All students learn in an environment with their peers that engages and challenges them.

Authentic Learning:

All students learn the curriculum by collaborating with their peers to solve real problems with real products that serve real audiences.

Inclusionary Practices ensure that each child feels a sense of belonging within the school community and that each student is appropriately challenged to ensure that he or she is growing in both academics and the Learner Qualities.

Authentic Learning opportunities provide students with highly motivating learning environments in which they become deeply engaged with new concepts and skills, directly impacting the students' lives and the lives of others. Guided by the Learning21 Principles, students become owners of their learning and create innovative solutions to problems.

With the District's focus on Inclusionary Practices and Authentic Learning, it ensures that all of its students will have the knowledge and skills to think critically, collaborate effectively, and contribute positively to the world, both now and in the future.



CCSD21 Urges Illinois General Assembly To Fully Fund Education Statewide

In July 2013, the **Illinois Senate Education Funding Advisory Committee** was tasked with recommending ways to improve public education funding in Illinois, which has remained unchanged since 1997. The result of the task force was the creation of Senate Bill 16 (SB 16).

Under this bill, the limited amount of money dedicated to educating children in Illinois would remain level. However, the way in which these funds are distributed to districts across the state would change dramatically. The sweeping changes outlined in SB 16 would have a negative impact on CCSD21.

Generally, school districts with higher assessed property values would receive much less state funding. Other districts would receive much more in state funding. The bill aims to provide greater equity among school districts across the state, however, does not address unfunded mandates

placed onto schools, or years worth of underfunding education statewide.

Illinois already ranks last in the nation in state dollars dedicated to education. Rather than shifting the funding shortfall from one area to another, the state should prioritize all children and fully fund education.

“If we were to lose nearly 10 percent of our budget under Senate Bill 16, we would have to make dramatic cuts to programs and services. The repercussions would be devastating for our students.”

Dr. Kate Hyland, Superintendent

If SB 16 passes, what could happen to CCSD21?

Based on calculations by the Illinois State Board of Education, CCSD21 would lose almost \$9 million of annual state funding if SB 16, as written, becomes law and is fully implemented.

This represents about 10 percent of CCSD21's annual overall budget.

Such a dramatic cut in funding would directly impact students and our learning community. CCSD21 has a long history of being fiscally responsible and protecting the community's resources. However, to bring district expenses in line with this

considerable reduction in revenue, CCSD21 would be forced to enact cuts to programs, personnel, activities and operations.

What's next?

The Illinois Senate and House will reconvene in Springfield in November and December for the fall session. The Senate has already approved SB 16 in its current form. Should the bill pass the House, it would move to the governor where he could sign it into law.

What can you do?

Check the District's website, www.ccsd21.org, for the latest information, and contact legislators that represent the CCSD21 community to express your concerns about SB 16:

Rep. David Harris

(224-764-2440; repharris@yahoo.com)

Rep. Elaine Nekritz

(847-229-5499; enekritz@repnekritz.org)

Rep. Carol Sente

(847-478-9909; repente@gmail.com)





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