

NEWS LETTER

KCSD 96

2022-23



END-OF-YEAR REFLECTIONS

Dear Staff:

As you leave for summer break, sail into retirement, or move onto a new adventure, please do so knowing that I am immensely grateful for your support during this school year. This school year has been an interesting one, to say the least, and just as we were hoping to get "back to normal" post-pandemic, we were collectively thrown more curve balls. And, we did find plenty of moments to highlight, we had lots of laughs, and many collective successes of both students and staff to celebrate. We did so because we are a resilient group ready to face any challenge when leaning into our synergistic tenacity.

(continues on Page 2)

FOR 2023-23

KEA Officers and Building Reps, Page 13

ESP Officers and Building Reps, Page 13

Summer Work, Page 13



INSIDE

Applause, Page 2-3

Retirees' Reflections, Pages 4-8

D96 Retirees 2022-23, Page 12

Recognition of Service, Pages 9-11



~ APPLAUSE ~

Congratulations to Kathleen Donegan, on her upcoming marriage to Brian Powell on June 17: The couple plans to tie the knot in their home state of Maryland.

Kudos to Jason Pazol, fourth-grade teacher at Kildeer, whose daughter Arielle graduated from The University of Toledo; she graduated Summa Cum Laude, with a B.S.Ed. degree in Early Childhood Education.

Congrats to Katie White, nurse at Country Meadows, whose daughter Emma graduated from Sarah Lawrence College with a BA in Liberal Arts; Emma's focus was a combination of psychology, early childhood development, and environmental studies.

Congrats to Barb Polan, HR Administrative Assistant, who weds Vince Napoli on July 22!

Kudos to Kimberly Yutakis, EC Coach / Inclusion Specialist at Willow Grove, whose son Androu graduated May 14 from University of Illinois with a Bachelor's degree in Consumer Economics and Finance.

Congrats to Clara Casas-Maya, Dual Language Kindergarten Teacher at Willow Grove. Her son Beno Maya (a former D96 student) graduated as a Mechanical Engineer from UIUC on May 13. Her daughter, Camila Maya (also a former D96 student), graduated from Stevenson High School. She will attend the University of Florida, to pursue a degree in Applied Physiology and Kinesiology.

Congratulations to Haley Veldhuizen, Ivy Hall 1st Grade teacher, who says 'I do' to Brent Rogers on June 30.

Congrats to Alexandra Carson, whose first grandchild, Madelyn Hart, was born June 15, 2022, to daughter Katie Carson (a D96 alum). Her daughter Clair Carson (another D96 alum) graduated from UIUC in May with a degree in Marketing and Communications.

Congratulations to Michelle Mizock, Instructional Aide at Twin Groves, whose daughter Samantha graduated from Adler University with an MS in Sport and Human Performance and MA In Counseling Specialization in Rehabilitation. She has accepted a position with Marks and Associates.

Kudos to Kerry Nowicki, whose son Evan just graduated from Libertyville High School and is headed to the University of Oregon in September.

Continued from Front Page

As I said to our 8th-grade graduates, resilience is a quality that lies within all of us, awakened when we face adversity. It's something that we develop through practice and experience. It is the tenacity to bounce back, rise above challenges, and keep moving forward even when we experience setbacks. Resilience is what enables us to *grow, learn, and ultimately, succeed*. I know I am more resilient because each of you has been on this team.

I am so grateful to be a partner with you and I am eager to see what we do together next.

Enjoy summer!

Katie

~ APPLAUSE ~

Congratulations to Ivy Hall 3rd grade teacher Nicole Dorfman and her husband, who welcomed Cooper on September 6.

Congratulations to Hanna Dimayuga, a Special Education teacher at Ivy Hall, and husband, who welcomed son Bryson Tae Yang Dimayuga, on March 12.

Congratulations to Joann Sherlock, a Speech/Language Pathologist at Ivy Hall, who welcomed Carson Joseph into the family on September 9. He is welcomed by big sisters Everly and Nora, who have loved cuddling and playing with him.

Congratulations to Courtney Aussem, a 6th grade teacher at Woodlawn, and her husband, new parents to Michael James Aussem Jr. He is already loved by his big sisters, Sophie and Grace.

Congratulations to Twin Groves 6th grade math teacher Jen Didech and husband Daniel, who welcomed future Twin Groves student Violet Didech in 2022!

Congratulations to Mina Wang, a Grade Level Coach at Ivy Hall, and her husband Joey, who welcomed their second son, James Isaac Wang, on October 29, 2022. Little James is also welcomed by his sweet older brother, Philip.

Congratulations to Kildeer 2nd grade teacher Alyson Lushpynskyj and husband Marcos, who welcomed a baby boy, Shane Ilias, on January 15! He and big brother, Logan, bring so much joy to the family!

Congrats to Prairie 2nd grade teacher Melanie Pawlow, new mother to Kendall Mara Pawlow, born March 16, 2023.

Congratulations to Kellie Goldberg, Structured Special Education teacher at Ivy Hall, who gave birth to Jacey Kay Goldberg on January 5, 2023.

Congratulations to Jeff Williams, a social studies teacher at Twin Groves, who spent almost six weeks last summer in East Africa, teaching students in Kenya and Tanzania. He made the trip as a Fulbright Scholar with Educate Global, a program he learned about while completing his Master's degree from NIU. He spent time in a public school in Tanzania and a private all-girls schools in Kenya. While there, the Twin Groves social studies teacher studied Swahili. He said the experience was invaluable in helping him to better understand what is like to learn another language while living in a different country.





Dawn Marie Bussert

31 Years in District
General Music/Chorus at Twin Groves

When I reflect on my time in the district, I'm just so incredibly grateful.

I remember how excited I was to be starting in D96. I started at Willow Grove part-time for a year, then on the last day of school at the staff party, I got a call asking if I wanted to move full time to the middle school. I was so excited!

So, I entered middle school and never left! I have loved my time at Twin Groves. The journey here has brought many changes. Administrator changes, staff changes, schedule changes, length of class changes, student class size changes, curriculum changes, and so much more.

The one constant has been the many children entering the doors of my classroom. They have brought joy, sadness, confusion, tons of laughter, tears, playfulness, and yes a struggle or two! But, nonetheless, I was so grateful to be impacted by each one.

One of the greatest skills I learned as a teacher was the art of flexibility-a lesson I wasn't always too excited to learn! But, it wasn't a lesson I learned on my own. You have all learned it as well, and knowing education, you will continue to learn in the future.

I have had the privilege of working alongside some of the greatest colleagues one could ask for. We "Fine Arts Types" are pretty "special," as we are sometimes called. Each of you will be greatly missed – lunches especially!!

As for me, as I leave these four walls, I enter a time of freedom and flexibility! It will be filled with travel for fun, opportunities to serve on short-term mission trips through the gift of music and just enjoying being off a schedule and the time clock!

I have always believed that teaching was a calling. A call to serve children through the gift of music. At this time, I feel released from this calling and look forward to a new journey. So, for those of you who will continue teaching the many students in your classroom, I leave you a few words from a song I wrote my second year of teaching for our Institute Day.

"The Heart of the Future" - Dawn Marie Bussert

*What a privilege to serve the children each day within our own four walls
Each word we speak, each look we give has the power to cut or to build
So, choose today how you will serve the children in your room
And when it's time to leave this place,
You know, you have served, the heart of the future.*

Thank you for the privilege I have had to work alongside each of you. I have been incredibly blessed. Grace and peace to each of you!

Linda Dolan

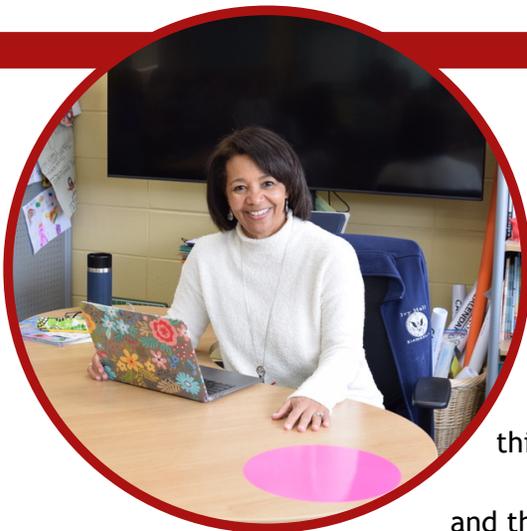
16 Years in District
Kindergarten Teacher

As I reflect back on my time in District 96, I feel so honored to have spent 16 years teaching here. I will always cherish the many friendships that I made during my time here. There are so many amazing people in this district and I am very lucky to have had the opportunity to work with so many of them. Colleagues who became friends who now feel like family. That is something I will cherish forever.



I was lucky enough to teach 3 different grade levels. I taught 3rd, 5th and then kindergarten. Each grade level that I taught, brought with it new challenges and so much joy. I loved the opportunity to dig into each of those levels and embrace the differences. I also got to teach several students twice, in 3rd grade and then again in 5th. I was amazed at the growth in just those two years. I am lucky to end my teaching career as a kindergarten teacher. The pure joy that 5 and 6 year olds show on a daily basis, is literally the best! They make me smile and laugh every single day, and I will miss that so much.

I look forward to spending more time being "Mimi" to my 3 wonderful grandchildren. I also look forward to more time with my mom and dad. Traveling, reading, volunteering and not getting up at 5:15 every morning all sound pretty great to me too. I plan on not making too many plans right away and see where my free time leads me. I look forward to this new chapter in my life.



Linda Litvan

22 Years in District
1st Grade Teacher

I have spent more than half of my teaching career here in District 96.

I am grateful for the opportunities I have been given as a reading assistant, special education teacher, tech coach and first, third, and fourth grade teacher. I am filled with gratitude when I think of the friends I have made, the amazing educators I have worked with, and the beautiful children and families who have trusted me to share my love of learning and life with them. My husband says that it is evident that my job brings me joy by the stories I share about my students and the teachers and staff with whom I work. I know most of us could write a book that would bring tears and laughter about our life as a teacher. Maybe that is what I will do in my retirement. Actually, I think I will try to finish my son's baby book, become a gym rat, or find an entirely new career path as some sort of performer doing interpretive dance. What I do know for sure is that I will spend more time with family and friends. I will travel to see old friends and hopefully make some new ones along the way. *I will do my best to stay in touch with all of you keeping it real in District 96.*

Thank you for the memories, support and laughter!

Todd Spangler

33 Years in District
Physical Education Teacher

I taught at Ivy Hall for all of my teaching career, and team-teaching with Jenni for 29 years. I will miss being with staff members, especially the Special's Team. We celebrated together and supported each other through difficult times. One of my favorite things about teaching was seeing and making children laugh during class.



My wife and I will be moving to Florida. We will be closer to our children and our 6-month-old granddaughter. We look forward to spending time with our family, being by the ocean, and playing golf year-round.



Teresa Samuels

25 Years in District
Special Education Aide, Twin Groves Middle School

When I began my career at District 96 back in '98, I would have never anticipated it being a 25-year run. I feel very fortunate to have spent all those years at Twin Groves, working with the most wonderful colleagues, many of which have become my dear friends.

While working with children comes with its share of challenges, it comes with an even greater share of smiles and laughter, of which I reflect fondly over.

Professionally, working so closely with students and witnessing their growth over a school year is such a special feeling. It has been inspiring to collaborate and learn from each other over the shared goal of educating our students. The respect and admiration for each other's value in the classroom was always very apparent. I watch with pride as the students I worked with continue on successfully, knowing that I have made a difference in each of their lives.

Personally, from watching each others' families grow and sharing many important milestones in our lives, I feel blessed to be leaving with 25 years of treasured memories and relationships that I will forever hold in my heart.

To think, when I began my career at Twin Groves, I was a parent to students attending Stevenson, Twin Groves and Prairie. As I am closing the door on this chapter in my life, I am now a grandparent to students attending the District 96 schools. So while I will truly miss my work family and what has become my home away from home, I am looking forward to having even more time to spend with my husband, children, their spouses and seven grandchildren.

To the most incredible Twin Groves staff - thank you for 25 amazing years.
I wish you all good health and happiness!

Chanille Savich

15 Years in District

Twin Groves Language Arts Teacher

My teaching career began at age 10 when my sister Tauria and I dressed our 3 year old brother up in one of our old dresses and plopped him into an ancient school-chair-and-desk combo facing a 3x5' chalkboard in our bedroom. We made him scribble on the old worksheets our mom had left over from her teaching days while we lectured him about math problems we wrote on the board. The student-to-teacher ratio was quite good, but Tauria and I were not familiar at the time with Kagan structures, so we provided very little in the way of engagement strategies during our lessons.



Later, I got my first paid position as a high school English teacher, then high school librarian, then (unpaid) homeschooling mom, then eventually back to work at Twin Groves as learning center and technology director in 2008, then information literacy coach, 6th grade LA and, finally, 7th grade LA teacher. I loved being the learning center media specialist best, I think. I forged great connections with staff and students in that position. Remember Poetry Slams using those old clickers to vote? Book talks? 10 minute media lessons? *We had some good fun.*

Over the years, I've had wonderful teammates as friends in D96, and I'll miss your energy, your collaboration and your invitation to hold students to high expectations and help them reach those goals. Thank you for helping me be the best teacher I could be. I couldn't have done it without my teammates.

Future plans? I'm full of ideas. First, spending more time with my husband (and not grading until 9 p.m.) and being there for my parents. I also want to tutor kids who can't afford it, bake, travel, maybe do some book-talking, and write a blog -- either called "A Fork in the Road" (travel and cooking after changing directions in life) or "Unpaid Adventures" (what to do when you retire for people who aren't idea people). Whatever it's called, you can think of me nestled in a robe with my feet up, drinking some coffee while I write it.

Thank you for 15 great years of companionship during our journey together in District 96. I've loved my job and the wonderful people I've gotten to work with. I wish you all the best in the future.

Louise Schmidt

18 Years in District

Dual Language Kindergarten Teacher
(Willow Grove Early Learning Center)

As I reflect on my time in District 96, my first thought is that I cannot believe how quickly the years have flown by! I distinctly remember beginning my career in a first grade classroom and thinking how lucky I was to be able to fulfill my childhood aspirations of becoming an educator.

Today, I still feel so fortunate and thankful to have had so many wonderful opportunities and experiences during my tenure in the district. I have had the opportunity to teach students in the classroom and also work alongside educators as an instructional coach, and this has allowed me to learn from, and with, so many outstanding educators throughout the years. I am also so thankful that I was allowed the opportunity to help launch our district dual language program and finish out my career the past four years with children in the classroom.



Throughout the years, I have been so amazed at the work ethic, commitment and knowledge that is abundantly represented by the staff in District 96! These colleagues are not only amazing educators, they are also such caring, supportive, and simply wonderful human beings that have come to mean so much to me. I know I will have relationships that last a lifetime.

The students ~ the reason we are here ~ have given me so many memories that I will always hold close. I will undoubtedly miss the hilarious comments that can only come out of the mouth of a 6-year-old. I love that I've had the opportunity to help these young children establish a love for school, a desire to learn, and a willingness to try their best and accept that it is Ok to make a mistake and learn from that mistake. Overall, I am amazed at how evident it is that the students throughout the district love coming to school to learn each and every day.

Thank you to all who have been there for me from my very early days, to those whom I may have just come to know and admire these last few years, and to those who have been there with me throughout all the years. Thank you all for your friendships, your kindness, and for making the tough moments better. I am definitely retiring with so many fond memories that will be with me forever.

Plans for the future:

It feels very strange to think that I will no longer be getting up at the crack of dawn every day to start my morning with a long commute. There are some things that I will definitely not miss: the sound of the alarm going off each morning, sub plans, report cards, or working on the weekends to get prepared for the upcoming week. I **AM** looking forward to not having a set schedule, traveling ~ especially to a warmer climate during the winter months ~ walking the dog each morning, remodeling our house, and spending more time with my family and friends. I am also really looking forward to spending more time with my grandson, whether it is just spending time together or maybe even some 1:1 teaching sessions (*as they say, once a teacher, always a teacher*). I'd also like to spend some time volunteering, maybe in a hospital NICU or anywhere that is in need of support. I am sure I will keep busy ~ and I'm looking forward to doing so without a set schedule.

RECOGNITION OF 10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Carly Hyman
Robert Hanrahan
George Panos
Lindsay Slivnick
Teaghan Hock
Rebecca Hitcho
Ashley Markiewicz
Carol Mullarkey
Ronald Zidron
Jessica Barnes
Courtney Aussem
Michelle Nadulek
Cynthia Pink
Megan Payne



RECOGNITION OF 15 YEARS OF SERVICE



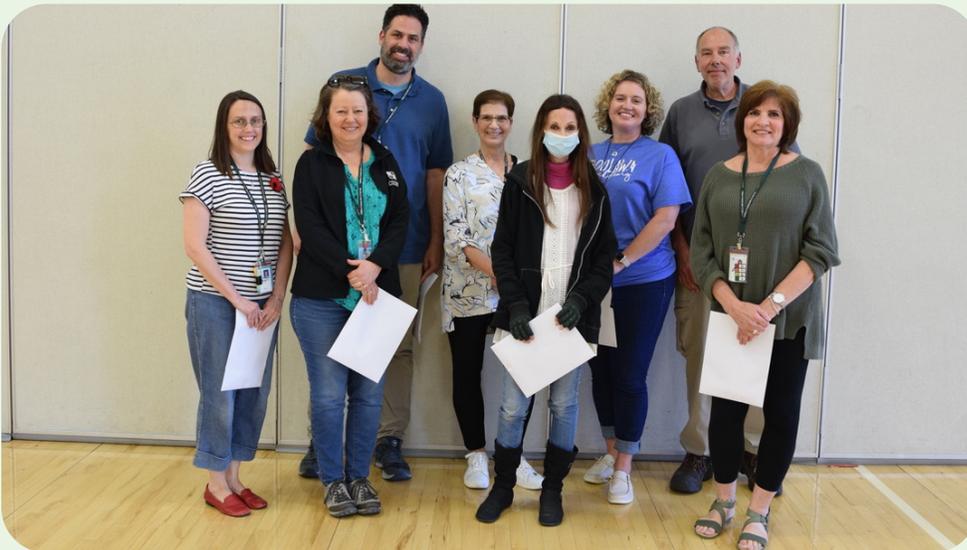
Michelle Garlick
Leslie Yu
Lisa Zimmerman
Michelle Zelek
Samantha Heinrich
Heidi Smith
Suzanne Cotter
Nancy O'Kerns
Jennifer Leverentz
Brenda Papson
Chanelle Savich
Jeffery Williams
Rebecca Shanks
Amanda Carpenter
Clara Casas-Maya

RECOGNITION OF 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Cheryl Kelly
Liv Grossman
Melissa Mark
Jason Keenon
Jennifer Grimmer
Enzie Pangilinan
Kimberly Strauss
Lisa Jones
Sharon Dinnerman
Beth Ann Dodge

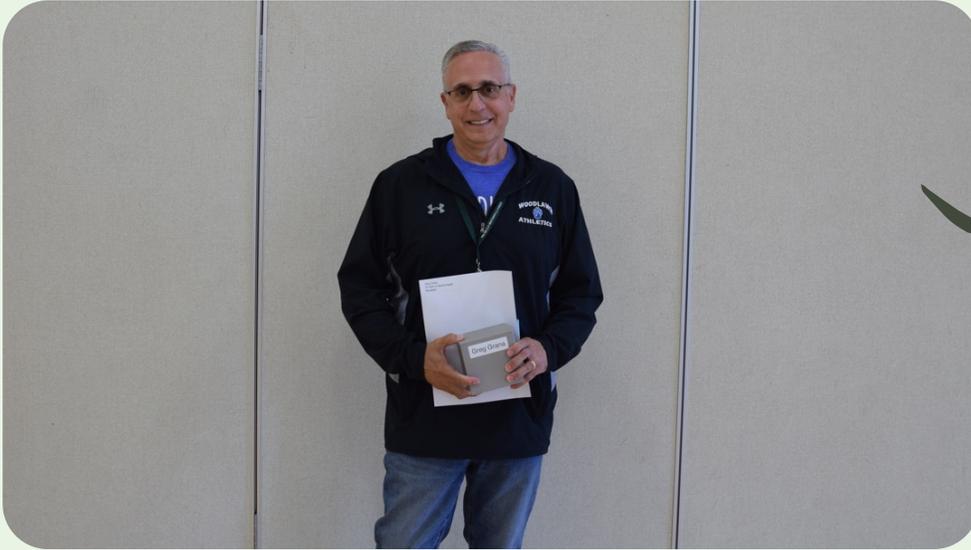


RECOGNITION OF 25 YEARS OF SERVICE



Megan Larson
Christina Rosenberg
David Felson
Christopher Morris
Teresa Samuels
Jennifer Zbylut
Therese Chiodo
Lynette Leonard

RECOGNITION OF 30 YEARS OF SERVICE



Greg Grana

Ashley Almdale
Mathew Boyd
Alexis Cannistra
Megan Chernich
Vrunda Desai
Kaitlyn Elfering
Breanna Esmael
Gina Filippo

RECOGNITION OF ADVANCED DEGREES

Alexandra Gorodiski
Lauren Hearn
Brittany Hibbs
Erica Jaeckel
Jessica Matulef
Timothy Kile
Carley Lynch
Morgan McHugh
Rachel Melamed
Marissa Ruchim
Samantha Sabin
Brooke Sadowski
Paige Treshansky
Taylor Weihe
Emma White
Jeffery Williams
Nicollette Wlodek



Recognition of Retirees

Linda Dolan
Linda Litvan
Kelly McNamara
Louise Schmidt
David Felson
Francisco Gonzalez
Teresa Samuels
James Cichowski
Todd Spangler
Chanelle Savich
Dawn Marie Bussert

RETIREES 2023



The 2023 D96 retirees are (left to right): Francisco Gonzalez, James Cichowski, Louise Schmidt, Linda Litvan, Todd Spangler, Kelly McNamara, Linda Dolan, David Felson, Dawn Marie Bussert, Chanelle M. Savich and Teresa Samuels.

KEA OFFICERS/BUILDING REPS FOR 2023-24

President: Liz Doherty
Vice President: Lanie Spivack
Treasurer: Jill Leone
Secretary: Samantha Schaefer

Regional Council

Representative:
Samatha Schaefer

Building Representatives

Willow Grove:

Jen Chappas
Clara Casas-Maya

Country Meadows:

Ashley Almdale
Heather Lockhart

Ivy Hall

Marci Fooden
Todd Halstead

Kildeer

Barb Satoh
Jason Pazol

Prairie

Ramona Smith
Chris Weede

Twin Groves

Ben Leven
Jeff Williams

Woodlawn

Tammy Franks
Eileen Wronkiewicz

ESP OFFICERS/BUILDING REPS FOR 2023-24

Co-President: Lorna Jaegers
Co-President: Scott Eichaker
Vice President: OPEN
Treasurer: Wendy Weiner
Secretary: OPEN

Regional Council

Representative: OPEN

Building Representatives

Willow Grove:

OPEN

Country Meadows:

OPEN

Ivy Hall

Wendy Weiner

Kildeer

Joleen Knutson

Prairie

Beth Bryan

Twin Groves

Cindy Borzych

Woodlawn

Terry Chiodo

SUMMER HOURS

During June and July, District Office and the Business Office will observe the following hours:

- * Monday to Thursday
- * 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

District Offices are closed on Monday, June 19, and Tuesday, July 4, 2023.

The District Office will be closed for a portion of the summer, as renovation work gets underway. The DO staff will work from Ivy Hall Elementary School, 1072 Ivy Hall Lane, Buffalo Grove, Ill.



Enjoy your summer!