



KCSD96 KILDEER COUNTRYSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT 96 DISTRICT REVIEW

EVERY CHILD, EVERY SCHOOL, EVERY DAY.

Our mission is to ensure every child achieves his or her maximum potential



A SOLAR CELEBRATION AT DISTRICT 96

In planning and making decisions, the Kildeer Countryside School District 96 (KCSD96) Board of Education takes a deliberate, thoughtful long-term view. What truly is best for our learning community today **and** tomorrow?

Beginning in November 2016, Board members' vision was to bring solar power to the school district. The path to that reality was not simple, but commitment to the work and persistence prevailed. Today the District celebrates that conversations begun more than four years ago culminated in a fully energized solar complex in Fall 2020.

1 The Country Meadows/Woodlawn Campus in Long Grove is home to the solar array, powered by 3068 ground-mounted solar panels. Distributed over three acres, the solar panels meet 92 percent of the electrical demand for the campus and approximately 28 percent of electrical costs district wide.

2 For our students and staff, the solar complex is a powerful onsite learning tool that is being added to our curriculum. Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning opportunities are plentiful, and the solar complex also included an opportunity for 32 young artists to contribute.

3 Guided by art teachers **Liv Grossman (Country Meadows)** and **Jeremy Martin (Woodlawn)**, KCSD96 elementary and middle school students created beautiful images of Illinois prairie wildlife, decorating 100 of the solar panels.

In addition to modeling energy stewardship and helping reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the solar array benefits taxpayers...



In 16 years, the \$3.7 million dollar cost for the system will have paid for itself.



Over a period of 20 years the District will earn over \$1.5 million Solar Renewable Energy Credits and over \$250K in ComEd rebates.



Locked-in energy rates help for accurate financial planning and serve to increase operational funds.



We invite you to enjoy the view:
<https://vimeo.com/477793146>

DISTRICT 96 HIGHLIGHTS



AAA rating

Sound financial stability and stewardship of taxpayer dollars.
—Moody's



Best Financial Management

Highest recognition for financial management for 16 consecutive years.
—Illinois State Board of Education



Eight U.S. Dept. of Education Blue Ribbon Awards

District 96 Schools have earned this coveted award which affirms the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content.



2018 DuFour Award Recipient

This national award recognizes Woodlawn Middle School as a Professional Learning Community model exemplifying the practices that lead to exceptional achievement levels for all students.



Internationally recognized PLC Model

All seven Kildeer Countryside School District schools—and the District itself—are internationally recognized as Professional Learning Community (PLC) models.

VIRTUAL, BUT CONNECTED

Kildeer Countryside School District 96 administrators, faculty, and staff are committed to helping every child in every school succeed every day. Indeed, that District value is our foundation. Circumstances surrounding the pandemic emphasized more than ever the significance of that commitment.

Because parents are important partners in our KCSD96 learning community, the District continued throughout the pandemic to offer them multiple opportunities to meet administrators and other District parents, increase their own understanding, and equip them for their parenting role.

THOUGHT EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIP (TEP)



Jeanne Spiller, Asst. Superintendent for Teaching & Learning, leads TEP

During six virtual opportunities in the school year, **Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning Jeanne Spiller** presented Thought Exchange Partnership members with information on District initiatives, curriculum, assessments, and other topics of interest. This active partnership gives opportunities to listen and learn together and—in constructive discussions—hear opinions and suggestions. TEP is 58 parent members strong, all giving KCSD96 their parent perspectives and serving as informed District ambassadors in our learning community.

PARENT-TO-PARENT NETWORK

As COVID-19 brought new challenges to families learning and working together, KCSD96 gave many virtual opportunities for parents to learn from experts and ask questions through the **Parent-to-Parent Network**. Throughout the year, parents filled 545 virtual “seats” to learn together.

One opportunity that earned their enthusiastic praise was the *Parenting in Place* masterclass series. Experts, authors, therapists, educators, and neuroscientists collaborated to create a series of eight weekly live masterclasses presented February–April. Sharing best strategies for families coping in COVID times, presenters discussed mindfulness and mental health, resilience, managing stress, and more. Parent programs wrapped up in May with a popular returning guest speaker discussing *Are We Ready for Normal?* to help parents equip their students to cope with anxiety and the return to normality.

“I feel empowered, enlightened, and that I am on my own journey to becoming a better parent.”

—DISTRICT 96 PARENTING IN PLACE MASTERCLASS PARTICIPANT



THANK YOU KCSD96 PTOs!

Our seven PTOs (led by 58 PTO Executive Board members) have been exceptional community partners throughout the pandemic. They provided **funds** via gift cards for District families in need. They provided **fun** through creative virtual programs and hands-on crafts.

KCSD96 kids composed music and coded, explored aquariums and zoos, and enjoyed STEM activities, too. And they provided **food and treats** to our faculty to show their appreciation.

Thank you to every determined and dedicated PTO leader and volunteer for brightening days this school year for KCSD96 families and faculty.

GUIDING COALITION OF INTERCULTURALISM (GCI)

School District 96 values and embraces our rich diversity. Reflecting that and building on the District's commitment to inclusion is the ongoing work of the **Guiding Coalition of Interculturalism**.

The GCI was conceived in 2015 by the Board of Education and District administrators to make instruction *meaningful and relevant to every child in every school, every day*—whatever the student's culture, language, and learning style. Membership has grown from seven founders to include 21 dedicated and diverse parents.

The question KCSD96 continually asks is...What do truly inclusive schools look and sound and feel like?

For our faculty and staff, professional learning opportunities using tools for framing understanding have been helpful for recognizing how life experiences affect individual perspectives. Culture Conversations, Newcomer Nights, Representation Walks in KCSD96 schools, and Curricular Audits are some of the ways that District 96 is elevating diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout our learning community.

Including students in the work is another significant way to increase understanding. At a presentation to the Board of Education on April 6, Board members



heard eighth graders **Maya Heller, Tanusha Santosh, and Rajan Sukhatme** share candidly.

These students noted that their awareness of their own and others' identities takes shape during middle school and highlighted the importance of structure and space in our classrooms to have critical civil conversations. Focusing on interculturalism helps prepare our students to find their voices.

Parents, faculty, and administrators are excited about a new opportunity developed to communicate and celebrate this significant work.

We invite you to see who we are and hear our stories by following the Guiding Coalition of Interculturalism on Instagram @d96gci.

In Chicago in November, at the Joint Annual Conference known as **Triple I**, District 96 faculty will make a presentation to school district administrators and boards of education statewide, sharing details of the journey in our ongoing work around equity and our commitment to inclusion.



KILDEER COUNTRYSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT 96
OUTGOING SUPERINTENDENT JULIE SCHMIDT

LEADERSHIP CHANGE AHEAD

The search is on! A new leader for Kildeer Countryside School District 96 will assume responsibility on July 1, 2022. This individual will be mentored by current **Superintendent Julie Schmidt**. Her focused work with her successor will ensure a smooth transition for families, faculty, and the Board of Education.

Superintendent Schmidt has led Kildeer Countryside School District 96 steadfastly and expertly in her current role since July 2010. To find her most highly qualified appropriate successor, the Board of Education selected national search and consulting firm **School Exec Connect**.

Beginning in late August, there will be opportunities for stakeholders' input via a community-wide survey, open forums, and by-invitation focus groups. Superintendent Schmidt's successor will be named at the Board of Education meeting on Dec. 14, 2021, and will begin the role on July 1, 2022.

Please watch for a postcard from KCSD96 in late summer with info about opportunities for community members to express their thoughts about qualities they'd like to see in Superintendent Schmidt's successor.

*****ECRWSEDDM*****
 Residential Customer

**SALUTING
 OUR
 BOARD OF
 EDUCATION**



TOP ROW: MARC TEPPER, BOARD PRESIDENT RENEE KASS, BOARD VICE PRESIDENT DINA MANKA, BOARD SECRETARY
BOTTOM ROW: MIKE BURNS JAMES STREZEWSKI MEG WOODMAN CYNTHIA ZARKOWSKY

Seven dedicated members—with 70 years of experience collectively—help equip our students and teachers to be the best they can be. They are the Kildeer Countryside School District 96 Board of Education: President Marc Tepper, Vice-President Renee Klass, Secretary Dina Manka, and Members Mike Burns, James Strezewski, Meg Woodman, and Cynthia Zarkowsky.

In challenging, changing times their dedication and receptiveness have been constant. These elected volunteers continue to invest many personal hours to consider and meet fundamental needs of District students, staff, and families.

Like our faculty, KCSD96 Board members are a collaborative team committed to growing as leaders and contributing to their field. All participate in ongoing professional development provided by the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB). Five members have achieved **Master Board Member status and recognition** and two newer members have achieved preliminary levels of that status.

Board of Education President Marc Tepper's leadership extends beyond School District 96 to his work as chairperson of the Lake Division of the Illinois Association of School

Boards (IASB) and as a delegate to the IASB Joint Annual Conference Assembly.

Board of Education Vice President Renee Klass also serves as Board President of the Exceptional Learners Collaborative, providing specialized educational services and support to students with exceptional needs.

In uncertain times such as those we have experienced, we are grateful for and appreciate these visionaries more than ever.