



ANNUAL REPORT 2007-08

ELMWOOD PARK COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #401

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The purpose of this report is to provide the Elmwood Park Community with highlights and an overview of the School District's status which connects to our *Educational Landscape Plan 2007-2011*. Goals and initiatives incorporated in the planning process include: financial, staffing, programming, academics, special events, recognition, and community connections. We take great pride in our accomplishments and with all those individuals who are a part of the Elmwood Park Community Unit School District #401: students, staff, parents, School Board Members, and community members at-large. Although this document is not intended to be all inclusive, you will glean that the "total educational experience" for our young people is outstanding.

**Douglas W. Rudig, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools**

School Board members

Office	Member	Committee
President:	Michael Marzullo	
Vice President:	Angela Stranges	IASB Governing Board/Legislative
Secretary:	Susan Capraro	
	Mary Bruscato	Village Liaison
	Patricia Cleary	
	Albert Fang, Jr.	Bldg. & Grounds IASB Conf. Delegate
	Frank Parisi	Bldg. & Grounds

Administration

Name	School	Position
Dr. Douglas Rudig	District Office	Superintendent
Dr. Paula Hlavacek	District Office	Assist. Superintendent
Tom Zelek	District Office	Business Manager
Nancy Serpico	Early Childhood Center	Director
Sue Ponzio	Elmwood School	Principal
Kevin Seibel	Elmwood School	Assist. Principal
Peter Herbert	John Mills School	Principal
Donna Kutrubis	John Mills School	Assist. Principal
Kathleen Patton	Elm Middle School	Principal
Daniel Schuth	Elm Middle School	Assist. Principal
Jim Jennings	High School	Principal
Pete Binder	High School	Assist. Principal
Al Bruscato	District	Director of Building & Grounds
Irina Ziemann	District	Director of Technology
Karen Katolick	High School	Dean of Students
Luis Arroyo	High School	Dean of Students
Valerie McCall	District	Director of Reading
Douglas Noyes	District	Athletic Director



I. ORGANIZATION:

Enrollment - (from State School report Card fall 2006)

- ECC – 161
- Elmwood – 512
- John Mills – 643
- Elm Middle School – 455
- EPHS – 1011
- District 2782

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Staffing – New, Additional Support Positions

2007

- Fulltime Elementary Art Teacher
- Fulltime Elementary Music Teacher
(each building now has fulltime art and music programs)
- Fulltime H.S. Counselor *(decreased the student /counselor ratio by approximately 200 students)*
- Third Grade Teacher *(reduced class size)*
- Fourth Grade Teacher *(reduced class size)*
- Fulltime nurse *(each building now has a fulltime nurse)*

2008

- Bilingual Elementary Teacher (2008) *(required by State to meet educational guidelines)*
- .5 Gifted / Enrichment Teacher *(increase support at all grade levels)*
- .5 Kindergarten Teacher *(reduced class size)*
- Security Monitor at E.P.H.S. *(now able to better monitor both genders)*
- Increased H.S. Italian to fulltime *(now able to offer levels 3 &4 in Italian)*
- Fulltime H. S. Teacher for English and PSAE Prep
- Reading Paraprofessional for ECC and Elmwood

- Fulltime Special Education H.S. Teacher to reduce class size
- .5 Special Education Teacher at Elmwood to reduce class size

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Business Management – Annual Data Highlights

2007-2008	Budget	Actual	% Budget to Actual
Revenue	\$34,323,788	\$34,703,806	1.01% Increase
Expenditures	\$34,674,905	\$33,960,771	1.02% Decrease

State of Illinois Financial Rating: 4.0 is the highest
 For year 2005-06 - 3.7
 For year 2006-07 - 3.8

The District received State Financial Recognition based on our financial ratings for two years in a row.

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School Board Highlights / Initiatives –

Thank you to all of our School Board members, who devote their time, energy, and talents for the improvement of education and for each and every youngster in Elmwood Park. Also, we would like to extend a special thanks to Joe Viverito, for his 11 years of dedication as a member (and President) of the Elmwood Park Board of Education. Joe, you are appreciated and will be missed.

Congratulations to our newest School Board Member, Frank Parisi, who was appointed this year. Thank you for your interest and dedication to the students of Elmwood Park.

Actions this year:

- Continued to collaborate and support the Educational Landscape Plan 2007 - 2011 which defines multi-year goals and initiatives for the entire School District
- Passed revised / updated policies – *School Accountability, Education of the Homeless, and Safety policies*
- Approval of Annual Tax Levy and Annual Budget
- Made final decision on any / all expulsion cases
- Approved the 10-year Life Safety Program for the District

- Continued to support the Energy Education program that has resulted in savings to the District of more than \$1,000,000, during the last 6 years
- Continued support for the Des Plaines Valley Regional Partnership with Triton College and surrounding School Districts
- Approved facility improvements in various buildings
- Voted to re-configure the Board Committee structure by having the Finance and Technology Committees meet as a Committee-of-the-Whole, rather than the two member sub-committee structure
- Selected a new Attorney firm to represent the District
- Approved Summer Staff Development projects
- Supported the Summer Academy Program, which now includes High School students
- Discussed and voiced support to improve the level of dress for some students and staff
- Supported Monthly Reports regarding finance, personnel, School Board minutes, and disciplinary issues
- Approved the installation of the Thor Guard Lightning Detection System
- Supported the Annual Village Freedom Fest which is held on our school grounds
- Supported initiatives to lower class sizes and increase programs for students (art, music, counseling, bilingual education, security, foreign language, technology, gifted education).

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Facilities / Life Safety

Projects completed during the summer, in addition to the regular maintenance, minor repairs and cleaning:

EARY CHILDHOOD CENTER

2007- 08

- **Replaced carpeting in all rooms with tile, due to water damage and mold in certain areas (2007-2008)**

ELMWOOD ELEMENTARY

2006-07

- **New Roof, new tile in all classrooms, replaced carpeting in the office and the media center (library), refurbished office, repaired front steps**

JOHN MILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2006-07

- **Completed an O'Hare Airport Noise Compatibility Project which improved the sound level in the building. The project added filters to all of the heating intake system and provided improved insulation for sound absorption**

ELM MIDDLE SCHOOL

2006-07

- **Sidewalk replacement, repainted and refurbished cafeteria**

2007 -08

- **New tile in classrooms**
- **New carpeting in main office and library**
- **Renovated lower level (new ceiling tiles as needed, replaced wallboard and baseboard as needed, HEPA vacuuming, EPA biocide cleaning, paint all walls.**
- **Tuckpoint outside of building as needed**
- **Remove planter and bushes near entrance**

ELMWOOD PARK H.S.

2006-07

- **Painted stairways and refurbished gymnasium floors, researched method to refurbish all lockers, replaced office carpeting**

2007-08

- **New roof over identified areas, as needed**
- **Refurbished lockers throughout building**
- **Painted walls above lockers and selected hallway areas**
- **Refurbished auditorium and added air-conditioning**

DISTRICT

2006-07

- Completed 10-Year Life Safety Study
- Refurbished Administration office space
- Installed Thor Guard Lightning Detection System covering all buildings
- Addressed and numbered the doors at all buildings for security

Energy Savings Award – The School District was honored by receiving the *Energy Star Award* for their six-year program to conserve energy in all five schools. The program included the retrofitting of all lighting, and the monitoring of all utility based systems: water, heat, air conditioning, electric appliances, computers, etc. Data has been recorded and assessed over this 6 year period, and the total savings has been more than one million dollars. We are very appreciative to have received this award, but more importantly we are proud of being energy efficient for the environment and for being fiscally responsible.

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II. INSTRUCTION/CURRICULUM:

School Improvement Committees

- Each building collects/analyzes, and evaluates data from major assessments (ISEL, ISAT, & PSAE)
- Follow-through on Reading Audit
- Emphasis remains on Reading, Writing, and Mathematics
- **Evaluation Committee** - This year a new committee of teachers and administrators was formed to research and make recommendations for a new process to evaluate certified staff. Areas of focus include different types of evaluations for different job descriptions and years of service, as well as a focus on performance outcomes.

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Staff Development (summer 2008)

Training for teachers in the following areas:

- **Curriculum Mapping** – Teachers learned the second phase of designing K-12 curriculum documents utilizing Tech Path software that can be implemented by grade level team members
- **AIMSweb[®]** – The program covers literacy assessment of students, so specific programming and instruction can be determined and tracked over time (regular and special education students)
- **Writing Workshop** – Writing traits connected to our new reading program which focused on practice and application
- **RTI (Response to Intervention)** – 3 tier model which will identify / determine a variety of programs to meet the needs of all students based on their learning needs. This is required by the State Board of Education
- **Essential Questions** – A method to drive the learning of all students by creating the most important, global questions in a certain unit which students will need to answer / understand
- **CRISS Training (Student Strategies)** – Students will acquire strategies that will help them become independent learners
- **Technology / Web Tools** – Blogging, Wikis, Digital Storytelling & Podcasting will be applied to teaching and student learning
- **Differentiated Instruction** - Designing engaging and meaningful lessons that meet the needs of diverse learners
- **Teaching in the Block** – Organization, lesson planning, classroom management, and effective instruction **ideas for teaching in the block schedule (extended timeframe)**
- **Leveled Readers** – Utilizing our new reading series to help students build fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension while in a flexible group structure.
- **PBIS** – “*Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports*” is a program for students to learn to take more responsibility for their own behavior
- **Go Green** – Teachers will learn about environmental concepts and practices.



Major District Assessments

- **CIP - Comprehensive Identification Process** - Preschool Screening
- **ISEL - Illinois Snapshots of Early Literacy-** Language based assessment for Pre-K & Kindergarten age students)
- **KRT – Kindergarten Readiness Test** – Assesses children’s preparedness for Kindergarten
- **ACCESS** –Assessment for English Language Learners
- **AIMSweb® (new in 2007-80)** – AimsWeb is a universal screening tool. The individually-administered oral fluency test was given to kindergarten through 9th grade students as well as to special education students in grades 10 through 12. Palms were used to quickly get data back to teachers. Another component is the MAZE, a comprehension test that was given to students within classrooms. There are also probes that allow teachers to check student progress every two weeks to make sure gaps in student learning are eliminated
- **ThinkLink (new in 2006-08)** - ThinkLink is a predictive assessment of student performance on the ISAT. It is administered to students from 1st through 8th grade two to three times a year. It is a web based assessment that allows teachers and administrators to access numerous reports on student, class, and building results that very day.
- **COGAT - Cognitive Ability Test** – Overall test to determine ability (potential) not achievement (grade 2)
- **QualityCore** - QualityCore is an instructional improvement program developed by ACT designed to assist us in assuring quality and consistency in our high school core preparatory courses. QualityCore test have been aligned to outcomes that indicate college readiness and is designed to establish a baseline value for

how much students learn in a typical high school course, and how well this prepares them for college.

- **EXPLORE** – ACT readiness test for 9th graders
- **PLAN** – ACT readiness test for 10th graders
- **PSAE – Prairie State Achievement Exam** – Tests reading, math, science and writing for 11th graders

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Grants

***Competitive Grants** – (certain criteria must be met in applying for these grants and, there is no guarantee for acceptance). We are proud of these accomplishments.*

- **Social & Emotional Learning Grant** - This grant for Elm Middle School students focused on student skills regarding self-management, interpersonal relations, decision making, and responsible behaviors in school and the community. (\$10,000 – submitted by Dr. McGarry, Middle School Principal)
- **Math Intervention Grant** – The focus was to improve elementary students’ mathematics problem solving skills. Specific mathematical skills were assessed and particular students were selected for the programs. (\$10,000 submitted by Dr. Hlavacek, Assistant Superintendent and Susan Ponzio, Elmwood Principal)
- **Headsprouts Reading Grant** – This program focused on improving various areas of reading literacy: vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. (\$10,000 submitted by Valerie McCall, Director of Reading)
- **Northern Illinois Computing Educators (NICE)** – This program was used to enhance social students through digital media. Students produced programs in a digital storytelling format to create the history of Elmwood Park through: maps, timelines, research, photographs, artwork, video, and narration. (\$825 Jamie Kanas, 4th grade teacher & Paul Uhler, Computer specialist)

Entitlement Grants – (If a school district applies and meets all necessary grant criteria, it will receive available funds (designated for that year) for the following Federal or State grants.)

- **A.D.A. Block** – State grant money based on Average Daily Attendance
- **Bilingual Ed** (Transitional Bilingual Education/Transitional Program of Instruction) – Funds for language learning
- **Career & Technical Educational Improvement** - High School
- **Career & Technical Educational Improvement** – Elementary
- **D.O.R.S** - (Department of Rehabilitation Services) – Assistance with career training for older high school students (19 – 21 yrs.)
- **Early Childhood Block** – Parental Training: 3-5/Pre-K At Risk
- **Early Childhood Block** – Parental Training: Birth to Three
- **Reading Improvement Block**- Reading paraprofessionals that assist teachers/students
- **School Library Per Capita Grant** - Library funds
- **Supplemental State Aid** - Additional state grant money based on average daily attendance
- **Tech Prep Federal** – Federal technology funds
- **Tech Prep Implementation** – State technology funds
- **Title I** – Disadvantaged Children – Low Income
- **Title IIA** – Teacher Quality
- **Title IID** – Ed-Tech Enhancing Education thru Technology
- **Title III** – Bilingual/Limited Instruction Programs for LEP Students
- **Title IVA** – Safe/Drug Free Schools
- **Title VA** – Innovated Programs - Gifted

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Summer Academy –

For the second year, we have offered a new, more extensive program for summer learning, which now includes credit courses for high school students. The following is the list of this summer’s offerings.

- **A Jumpstart to Second Grade & Jumpstart to 4th grade** - All “big five” areas of reading instruction were addressed – phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Math Trailblazers skills was also included and reinforced
- **Mad Scientist Academy** - Students participated in laboratory activities, practiced real scientific methods, made observations and predictions, and explored hand-on science (4th – 6th)

- **Reading, Writing and Math Workshop** - Students worked on comprehension skills, increased their vocabulary, and had book discussions. Students made their own pop-up books, a diary, wrote a commercial and video taped it (6th – 8th)
- **Back to Basics** - Students received a review or additional instruction in their basic reading and math skills in this course. Instruction was provided through different centers to reach individual needs (4th – 6th)
- **Animal Planet**- Student scientists got to: dissect a frog online, learned how to morph themselves into a favorite animal, create animations of a favorite animal, do animal origami, engage in a Google Earth scavenger hunt, make a ant farm, do web-quests, and much, much more (4th – 7th)
- **Academic Basic Skills** - Students reviewed skills for math and reading and learned new skills to get ready for the next year. Time was dedicated to ISAT practice and preparation (5th – 6th)
- **7th Grade Math Review & 8th Grade Math Review** - These courses offer a review of basic math skills for their particular grade level (examples include: algebra, similarity, integers, linear relationships, three-dimensional measurement, and probability)
- **Effective Communication I & Effective Communication II** - Students study a variety of communication techniques and public speaking skills - the major emphasis of this course focuses on the development of writing skills and public speaking: informative, persuasive, and demonstrative speeches and/or papers are produced (H.S)
- **Algebra I – Algebra Concepts & Skills – Geometry** - these courses in mathematics were offered for H. S. Credit
- **Chemistry I – World History – Physical Education, Freshman English - ACT Prep Course** – these were the additional H. S. courses which were offered for credit
- **DECA** – A business connected course which had high school students plan, design, and produce an independent business related plan.



Special, Curriculum Related School Programs - highlighted

- **ECC** – Family Reading Night, Young Authors, Monthly Parent Training Nights
- **Elmwood School** – Young Authors, Accelerated Reader, Mad Science, Spelling Bee, Write On Friday, Stamp Club, Family Reading, Safety Town
- **John Mills** – Spelling Bee, Choir sang at Elmbrook Senior Center, The Fire Department’s Smoke Alarm Show, Stamp Club, Family Reading, Safety Town
- **Elm Middle School** – Career Day, Civil War Days, Snowflake, 20’s & 30’s Day, Science Fair, Wild West Days, 50’s and 60’s Day, Museum Project

- **EPHS** – Concerts, plays, Athletic Award Assemblies, Annual Athletic Banquet, Snowball (drug education), DECA, College Nights. In addition, a new course will be offered the 2008-2009 school year which will focus on preparation of Juniors for the PSAE exam
- **PreK – 12th Grade** – Musical Programs, Honors Assemblies, Arts Festivals, Student Councils, Red Ribbon Week, District-wide Art Event.



Advanced Placement High School Coursework

AP courses are offered to high school Students who would like to challenge their learning and wish to take the advanced placement exams at the end of the course to earn college credit. We are very proud of the outcomes produced by our students and staff this year regarding the following AP courses. Our goal is to increase the number of students who take AP classes.

Students need to attain a score of 3 or higher, out of a possible 5, to earn college credit in each designed area.

2007-2008 Results

AP Course Title	# of Students	Avg. Score (5 max.)	% of Students passing	National Average Score	National Average % Passing
Calculus	16	4.375	100	2.94	58.6
English	19	3.125	79	2.87	61.2
Physics	9	3.33	77.7	2.88	60.3
Statistics	9	3.33	77.7	2.80	58.8
US History	15	4.133	100	2.75	53.2

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III. COMMUNICATION/CLIMATE/COMMUNITY

Communication Connections

- ***Newsletters from each school***
 - ECC** – Early Childhood Center News (weekly)
 - Elmwood** - Elmwood Express (weekly)
 - John Mills** – Mills Moments (weekly)
 - Elm Middle** – Parent Newsletter (monthly)
 - EPHS** – Tiger Pause (every 4 weeks – with progress reports / report cards)
- ***District Newsletter for the entire community*** – FOCUS on Education
- ***Community Newspaper*** – Elm Leaves
- ***District Website*** – <http://www.epcusd401.org/>
- ***School Open Houses***

- ***Board meetings- Examples of special presentations include:*** State School Report Card presentations, Staff Development, Finance, Levy Reports, Educational Landscape Planning, and Summer Academy.

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Climate Initiatives

- **Spirit Days**
- **Teddy Bear Day**
- **Patriot Day**
- **Honors assemblies**
- **Multicultural Days**
- **Sporting events**
- **After school activities**
- **District “World’s Greatest Art Event”**
- **District Band Fest**
- **Stamp Club**
- **Annual Yearbooks**
- **Pajama Day and Spring Bonnet Parade (ECC)**
- **Halloween Parades (ECC & Elementary)**
- **Student Council (grades 1st – 12th)**
- **Talent Shows**
- **Hoops for Heart / Jump Rope for Heart**
- **Above and Beyond Recognition for Students**
- **National Junior Honor Society**
- **National Honor Society**
- **Vocal and Drama Performances**

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Student Recognition- National, State, and Regional

- **20 Illinois State Scholars (EPHS)**
- **6 DECA National Marketing Competition Winners (EPHS)**
- **EPHS Band received IHSA Division I Ranking for music performance**
- **State Finalists in Penmanship (John Mills)**
- **Triton Art Competition – 18 Awards Winners (EPHS)**
- **1 West Suburban Art Festival Competition Winner**

- **SCOTY – Student Citizen of the Year Awards (All Schools)**

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Community Collaboration (a sample of programs)

- **Elmwood Park July 4th Freedom Fest**
- **Kiwanis Key Blood Drive**
- **Food Drives**
- **Easter Egg Hunt**
- **Knights of Columbus Food Pantry Drive**
- **Leyden Township Needy Fund**
- **Veterans Day Activities**
- **Key Club Halloween Night**
- **Triton College Adult Programs**
- **Triton College Dual Credit Programs (College Credit)**
- **Hepzibah Warm Clothing Drive**
- **Children’s Youth Theater Company**
- **DARE – Drug Abuse Resistance Education (Police program)**
- **Fire Prevention / Fire Safety**
- **Summer Academy / Elmwood Park Summer Camp**
- **Cancer Foundation Walk-a-thon at the H.S.**

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Parent Group Sponsored Events –(highlighted)

- **ECC – Parent Reading Nights, Book Fair, Fundraisers**
- **Elmwood – Fun Fair, Book Fair, Santa’s Workshop, Assemblies, Fundraisers, 6th Grade Honor’s Breakfast**
- **John Mills - Fun Fair, Santa’s Workshop, Target –“Take Charge of Education,” Book Fair, Wrap Pack (Supplies for students)**
- **Elm Middle School – Cancer Walk-a-thon, 8th Grade Dinner Dance**

- **EPHS – National Honor Society sponsored Adopt-a-Kid Program, DECA Community Service, Key Club decorated Elmwood Park Home for Autistic Children for the holidays, the Varsity Club raised money for the Anti-hunger Federation, *Operation Blizzard (drug education)***

