2025-2026 Annual Community Report

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From the Superintendent



Dr. Andrew Wise
Superintendent

Greetings! Included is a mid-year update with progress made on the District's strategic initiatives. The Board of Education and I appreciate your support in creating schools which prepare students and generate pride within our community, today and in the future. Preparing students today is a bit different than when most of us went to school. With technological advancements occurring at speeds in which society struggles to process, schools must prepare students for a world that will look different tomorrow than what it does today. We do this by not only helping students acquire the essential skills currently required by the State in each core subject area, but teaching them to become learners with the ability to acquire new skills regardless of the generation they are in. We foster human development in brain science, focusing on the various modes of thinking, memory, self-control, and cognitive flexibility, so students can be self-directed learners who are creators, collaborators, communicators, risk-takers, and problem solvers, leading with perspective, empathy, and motivation to make our communities and world a better place. Thank you for reinforcing student accountability, responsibility, and ownership of learning. Together, we can help our students navigate the world ahead of them, or co-create a world yet to exist.

Center Cass Board of Education



From Left: Darren Spiegel, Tiffany Watson, Brian Liedtke, Adam Sage, Steve Dlugo, Doug Wiley, Megan DuPass

On May 7, 2025, new Board Members Steve Dlugo, Adam Sage, and Darren Spiegel joined re-elected Board Member Brian Liedtke, along with current Board Members Megan DuPass, Tiffany Watson, and Doug Wiley, to form the District 66 Board of Education. Since then, the board has toured schools with Superintendent Dr. Wise and engaged with staff to better understand district needs, focusing on building upon the strong work of the previous board and supporting all District 66 students.

Also, congratulations to the previous CCSD66 Board of Education for earning the **Illinois Association of School Boards 2025 School Board Governance Recognition**—one of only 42 school boards in Illinois to receive this honor! This achievement reflects two years of dedicated service and commitment to effective leadership.

Board of Education meetings are usually held at 6:30 p.m. on the first or second Wednesday of each month in the Lakeview Junior High LRC. A full meeting calendar is available on the CCSD66 website.

Challenge, Inspire, Empower
each learner to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally - today and always.

Welcome to

CENTER CASS SCHOOL DISTRICT 66



Skylar McGill
3rd Grade Teacher
Prairieview



Mary Claire Tupper
3rd Grade Teacher
Prairieview



Kristen Farmer
3rd Grade Teacher
Prairieview



Annalise Moritz
3rd Grade Teacher
Prairieview



Christina Miller
Special Ed Teacher
Prairieview



Shari Mitre
Special Ed Teacher
Prairieview



Anna Martynaitis
Paraprofessional
Prairieview



Palak Darji
Paraprofessional
Prairieview



Eli Stellwagen
Social Worker
Elizabeth Ide



Laura Gilmartin
Co-Principal
Elizabeth Ide



Anjali Glowacz
Paraprofessional
Prairieview

Familiar Faces, New Places



Melissa Mandru
5th grade Teacher
Prairieview



Erin Olsen
LRC Teacher
Elizabeth Ide



Kim Workman
ECE Teacher
Elizabeth Ide



Caroline Baginski
Speech Pathologist
Prairieview



Mark Pagel
Co-Principal
Elizabeth Ide

Recent Points of Pride

- Lakeview Boys Baseball secured the IESA Regional Championship, demonstrating strong fundamentals, smart play, and steady growth all season long. Their impressive run highlights the dedication of both players and coaches.
- Lakeview Girls Softball made program history by defeating Old Quarry for the first time in 18 years and earning a spot in the Championship game. Their resilience and breakthrough performance energized the community and marked a milestone season for the team.
- In the SDEAA Boys Varsity Golf Tournament, Max Heavrin took 1st place, while Lakeview golfers also had a strong showing at the Junior Varsity Golf Tournament—Rania Abadin took 1st place for the girls, Liliana Maldonado earned 3rd place, and Will DuPass finished 1st place for the boys.
- The Lakeview Homecoming Celebration on September 26th was filled with spirit and excitement as the marching band led a lively parade from Bruce Lake to the school, joined by representatives from the Board of Education, administration, clubs, and teams. Festivities continued with a pep assembly hosted by Mrs. Fitzgerald, featuring remarks from Dr. Wise, speeches by eighth graders Ayla Valcik and Collin Lesch, and a tribute to retiring Band Director Mr. Ohlsen. It was a memorable day showcasing Lakeview pride at its best!
- On September 27th, the Lakeview Choir proudly represented the community at the O'Hare Plane Pull benefiting Special Olympics Illinois. They opened the event with a powerful performance of the National Anthem, then successfully pulled a United Airlines 737 and raised over $1,800. Their teamwork and enthusiasm also earned them the event's coveted "Spirit Award."
- Congratulations to the District 66 Music Department for earning the 2025 NAMM Best Communities for Music Education recognition, marking the third time the district has received this honor for its outstanding commitment to high-quality music education.
- U.S. News & World Report ranked Lakeview 207th out of 1,173 Illinois middle schools with a score of 82.4, earning it a "Best Middle School" badge, and Prairieview 285th out of 1,893 Illinois elementary schools with a score of 84.99, earning a "Best Elementary School" badge, highlighting the strong academic performance of both schools.
- Congratulations to 8th Grader Emma Nielsen! Recently, Emma entered a writing contest for Young Writers USA. She wrote a 100 word story, asked for feedback, and rewrote it many times. Her hard work paid off - her story, "Stuck in Eternity" was selected to be published in their latest collection of short stories, Integers. Way to go Emma!





















Educational Vision

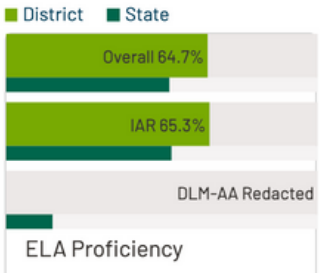


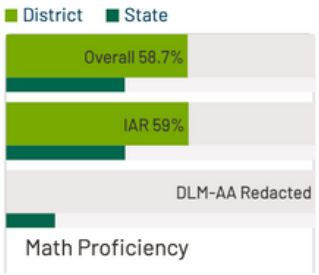
"The two most important people in a child's life are their parents and their school teachers, which makes parents and school teachers the most important people in the world."
–Fred Rogers





District 66 continues to demonstrate strong academic performance, with students exceeding state proficiency averages in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. According to the ISBE Report Card issued on October 30, District 66's ELA proficiency rate is 12% higher than the state average, reflecting the district's commitment to literacy, critical thinking, and high-quality instruction.





In Mathematics, District 66 students performed even more impressively—achieving a proficiency rate 20% higher than the state average. This significant gap highlights the district's focus on rigorous curriculum, targeted support, and innovative teaching practices that help students build strong foundational skills.

Principals for the 2026-2027 School Year



Carrie Fitzgerald
Elizabeth Ide



Jake Little
Prairieview



Dr. Kim Liles
Lakeview

Those Who Excel District Winners by Category



Meghan Aleo
Educational Service Personnel



Katie Finucane
Early Career Educator



Jen Maass
Teacher of the Year



Dr. Sean Rhoads
Administrator

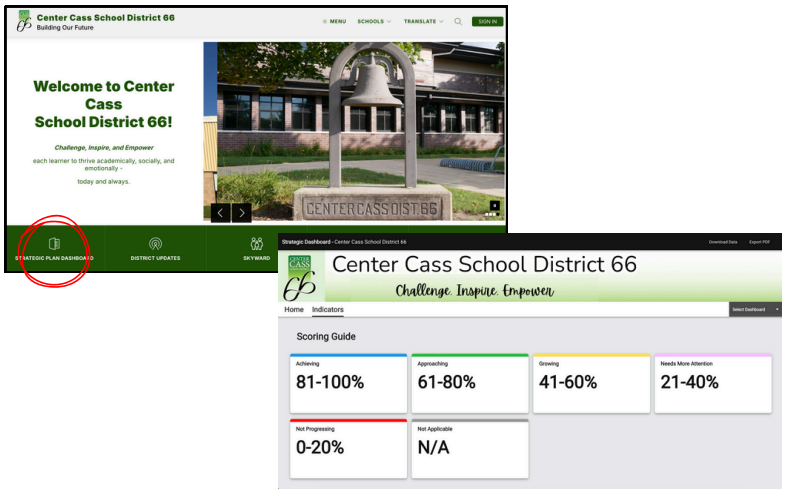


Maggie Kane
Student Support Personnel

Educational Vision

Public schools were designed as a place to provide students information to educate them and help them become successful adults. The world has changed and information is readily accessible to students at their fingertips, and preparing them to become successful adults is different in 2026, as it was in 1906, and will certainly be different in 2036. Schools must adapt to help students find accurate information, process the information, build skills based on learned information, and utilize those skills to function today and in the future.

This means kids have to think creatively and critically. They need to build and strengthen their working memory; be able to switch thinking and connect thinking; need to reflect and metacognate; demonstrate the ability to control their minds and bodies to set and achieve goals; communicate their learning and perspectives; understand others perspectives and collaborate with them to come up with synergistic solutions; demonstrate the self confidence to take risks; show agility and flexibility in the journey; and demonstrate focus and perseverance in the learning process. While these are complex concepts, when taught in an age appropriate way, they become more and more visible in our students as they become older. These learner characteristics/competencies, coupled with the subject area competencies, will prepare our students for the world in front of them, not behind them. **We appreciate your support as we methodically transform our classrooms into environments of learning as opposed to environments of compliance, memorization, regurgitation, and grades.** It takes time to change century-old systems. We are so proud of our teachers, students, and families for seeing school as a place to create, reflect, innovate, grow, and prepare students for the future.

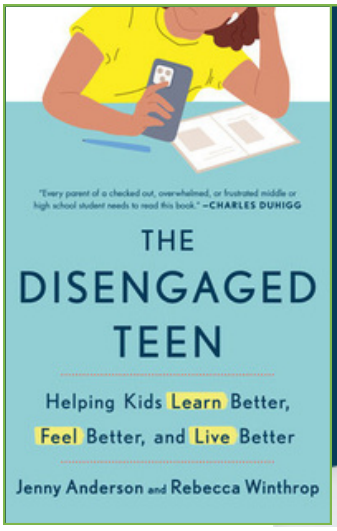


District 66 is excited to announce that it is now using ECRISS (Education Consulting Resource & Information Sharing System), a platform that helps school districts design and track community-driven Strategic Plans centered on student success, teacher growth, inclusive school culture, and meaningful community engagement. With ECRISS, the district has created an interactive dashboard to monitor progress on key goals, set priorities guided by stakeholder input, and foster collaboration, transparency, and ongoing improvement. Explore the District 66 Strategic Plan Dashboard anytime on the CCSD66 homepage.

To support teachers and parents in improving student engagement, achievement, attendance, and overall well-being, District 66 is partnering with **Dr. Rebecca Winthrop**, Director at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., and author of The Disengaged Teen. Dr. Winthrop will lead a free parent workshop addressing these important topics, including practical ways families can help students navigate the evolving world of Artificial Intelligence.

The event will be held the evening of **Thursday, February 26, at Lakeview Junior High**. Please save the date—this is an opportunity you won't want to miss.

For a preview of Dr. Winthrop's work with educators and families, you can watch her conversation on The Ezra Klein Show from The New York Times.





Essential Supports & Community









TEAM 66 Education Foundation is a nonprofit supporting District 66 by funding innovative programs, resources, and teacher development. It also strengthens connections among students, families, and the community. Last year, TEAM 66 awarded $21,930 in grants to fund six programs benefiting students and staff, including:

- **Flexible Seating Solutions in the Student Lobby** – Lakeview, Magen Newman, $12,565
- **Exploring Science through Play** – Elizabeth Ide, Amy Vano, $1,691
- **Buckets of Fun** – Lakeview, Kim Swaekauski, $2,272
- **SEL Art Integration Literacy** – Prairieview, Tara Herndon, $782
- **Embroidery Machines** – Lakeview, Brooke Zygmuntowicz, $2,609
- **Greenhouse for GATE** – Lakeview, Amy Burrows, $2,011

TEAM 66 also contributed $8,000 to transform the Lakeview lobby with new paint, graphics, and frames showcasing 50 years of class photos, creating a welcoming space that celebrates the school's history and fosters learning and community.

Community Inside & Outside Schools

Strong schools are built through meaningful connections—when the community is welcomed into our schools and when students are given opportunities to step beyond classroom walls and experience the world around them. These shared experiences deepen learning, strengthen relationships, and instill pride in both students and families. Throughout the year, events like Scholastic Book Fairs, Ice Cream Socials, and Family BINGO nights create joyful opportunities for families to gather at school and build lasting memories. One of our most cherished traditions is the annual 8th grade trip to Washington, DC, a milestone experience that Lakeview students have participated in every year since the school opened, allowing students to bring history and civics to life beyond textbooks.













Community-centered events continue with TEAM 66's Roar and Run Fun Run at Prairieview, where students from Elizabeth Ide were bussed over to join in a day focused on health, movement, and fun—complete with music, games, and lots of running. TEAM 66 also hosts the always-popular Trunk-or-Treat, an annual favorite for families with nearly 30 creatively decorated trunks, along with Halloween celebrations across all schools, from parent-led classroom parties at Ide and Prairieview to Fall Fest at Lakeview, all filled with music, games, friendship, and fun. The Arts & Crafts Festival provided another opportunity to strengthen

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connections between school and community, uniting students, families, and local residents in a warm and inclusive environment.

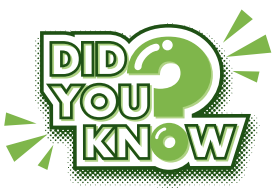
Equally meaningful are events that connect students to service, character, and pride. Food drives across all schools teach empathy and generosity, while Veterans Day celebrations are moments of shared honor and gratitude, with students performing for veterans and their families—songs at Ide, choir at Prairieview, and band performances at Lakeview—creating powerful, pride-filled memories for all involved. Special assemblies, such as BMX stunt rider Matt Wilhelm's performance at Prairieview, combine excitement with an impactful anti-bullying message that resonates long after the show ends. Rounding out the season, choir and band concerts leading into the holidays showcase the growth, dedication, and talent of our students during the first half of the school year, reinforcing the idea that education flourishes when schools and community learn, celebrate, and grow together.

Improving Communication



Parent Square - CCSD66 has begun rolling out ParentSquare, a new communication platform that streamlines how schools connect with families by bringing messages, updates, forms, and more into one easy-to-use system. The launch began at Lakeview with clubs and activities and is now expanding into classrooms, with district wide adoption expected in early 2026. ParentSquare offers automatic translation and flexible communication options—email, app, voice, or text—to make information more accessible and responsive. The district also plans to use the platform to communicate with community members beyond school families, strengthening connection and transparency across CCSD66. Download the app today!

Virtual Backpack - District 66's Virtual Backpack supports a greener community by giving approved organizations a digital way to share information—eliminating thousands of printed flyers while saving time, reducing costs, and cutting waste. Families can easily stay informed about events, programs, and opportunities that enrich student learning and school life. The Virtual Backpack is available for viewing on our website under the main menu or by scanning the QR code. Community members may also submit e-flyers through the online form found on the Virtual Backpack page at www.ccsd66.org/page/virtual-backpack



Board of Education meetings are available to view online for up to 45 days after each session. You can find them on the District website under the Board of Education section in the main menu.

New Official Facebook Pages - District 66 has created new official Facebook pages for each school to ensure families receive accurate, current information. Older pages made by former staff could no longer be updated, so verified pages managed by the district have been launched as our primary online presence. More social media platforms will be added over time.

Official pages:

- **Elizabeth Ide Elementary School– District 66**
- **Prairieview Elementary School – District 66**
- **Lakeview Junior High School – District 66**
- **Center Cass School District 66 (unchanged)**

Any other pages are not district-managed and should not be considered official.

District Finances

Financial Profile Score - Gorenz and Associates presented the District audit in November 2025. District 66 had a clean audit and exhibited strong controls. Due to fiscal leadership by the Board of Education, the District has their financial profile, while also taking steps forward to improve learning and facilities. Over the past years, the Board of Education has made gains on ISBE's Financial Profile Score in hopes of achieving the highest financial designation of Financial Recognition within the next couple of years.

- **2024-2025** = 3.45 Financial Review provided at District Audit in November 2025
- **2023-2024** = 3.20 Financial Review provided at District Audit in October 2024
- **2022-2023** = 2.75 Financial Early Warning provided at District Audit in October 2023

The primary reason for the rise in profile score is due to the Board putting at least $750,000 each school year into fund balance. WIth many needs, and a per pupil expenditure $4,000 less than the state average, placing a high priority on establishing district fiscal health through building fund balance is to be commended.

DuPage County
Tax Rates per PreK-8 School District

District	District Name	2024
15	Marquardt	$4.58
16	Queen Bee	$4.42
33	West Chicago	$4.24
25	Benjamin	$4.20
93	Bloomingdale	$4.08
68	Woodridge	$3.95
2	Bensenville	$3.83
44	Lombard	$3.75
89	Community Combined SD 89	$3.54
45	Villa Park	$3.48
20	Keeneyville	$3.33
12	Roselle	$3.32
41	Glen Ellyn	$3.29
13	Bloomingdale	$3.19
34	Winfield	$3.17
63	Cass	$2.93
60	Maercker	$2.92
61	Darien	$2.91
180	Burr Ridge	$2.70
66	Center Cass	$2.61
181	Hinsdale	$2.46
11	Medinah	$2.44
10	Itasca	$2.37
58	Downers Grove	$2.24
7	Wood Dale	$2.16
4	Addison	$2.13
62	Gower	$1.78
48	Salt Creek	$1.76
53	Butler	$1.24

Source: 2024 DuPage County Tax Rate Booklet

DuPage County
Operating Expense Per Pupil

	DuPage County Average	$19,917
	Illinois Average	$20,129
District #	**PK-8 School District Name**	**2024-2025**
53	Butler	$30,252
180	Burr Ridge	$28,233
48	Salt Creek	$27,409
93	Bloomingdale	$23,173
181	Hinsdale	$22,402
25	Benjamin	$22,171
15	Marquardt	$21,905
33	West Chicago	$21,831
34	Winfield	$21,805
7	Wood Dale	$21,343
2	Bensenville	$21,155
45	Villa Park	$19,935
58	Downers Grove	$19,593
44	Lombard	$19,552
62	Gower	$19,070
68	Woodridge	$18,416
16	Queen Bee	$18,312
20	Keeneyville	$18,125
60	Maercker	$17,999
89	Community Combined SD 89	$17,357
63	Cass	$17,278
41	Glen Ellyn	$17,116
4	Addison	$16,979
61	Darien	$16,845
11	Medinah	$16,720
12	Roselle	$15,978
66	Center Cass	$15,919
10	Itasca	$15,847
13	Bloomingdale	$14,860

Source: ISBE School Report Card 2024-2025 (data released 10/30/2025)

Navigating Upcoming District Challenges

Woodridge TIF District and Redevelopment – Over the past several months, District 66 has participated in Village of Woodridge meetings regarding a proposed Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district along the 75th Street Corridor. A TIF freezes the district's revenue from affected properties at current levels for up to 23 years, redirecting any additional tax dollars into a Village-controlled redevelopment fund. While the district cannot prevent a TIF if all legal requirements are met, we are working closely with Village officials to ensure they understand our space limitations, financial needs, and the importance of maintaining adequate funding to support any new students generated by future developments.

One major property within the proposed TIF is the privately owned Zigfield Troy Golf Course, which is currently listed for sale. A developer has shared a concept plan featuring 220 townhomes and five commercial outlots—development that could bring additional students to District 66. In response, the district has begun discussions with the Village about an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) that would allocate a portion of annual TIF revenue to support the district.

The Village Planner and Village Administrator have already visited our schools and attended a District 66 Board meeting to learn more about our needs. We remain hopeful that the Village Board will approve an agreement that supports both high-quality education and responsible community growth.



Drawing as of December 2025

Improvements Overview & Timeline









Improvements from Last Summer – Over the summer, District 66 completed several important facility improvements to ensure safe, comfortable, and effective learning environments in accordance with the Illinois Health/Life Safety Code for Public Schools. Major projects included replacing HVAC equipment at Lakeview, installing a new gym floor at Elizabeth Ide, and updating system controls across all campuses. These upgrades not only meet essential health and safety requirements but also enhance daily comfort and functionality for students, staff, and visitors.

Guided by the 2022 Health Life Safety report and supported by the recent referendum, these improvements reflect the District's ongoing commitment to providing high-quality, safe, and modern learning spaces while preparing for future growth.

Improvements to Come This Summer – Center Cass has been using referendum funds to upgrade building systems, improve campus infrastructure, and strengthen the overall learning environment across all schools. These improvements not only enhance daily experiences for students and staff but also add long-term value to the community and surrounding property base. Three major projects are scheduled to begin this summer:



Lakeview Roofs

A strong, reinforced, non-porous roof ensures students are protected from the elements while maintaining efficient heating in winter and cooling in summer. With half of Lakeview's roof already upgraded over the past four years, this summer's work will complete the remaining sections—bringing the entire roof up to modern standards and providing 20–30 years of stability.



Lakeview Gymnasium

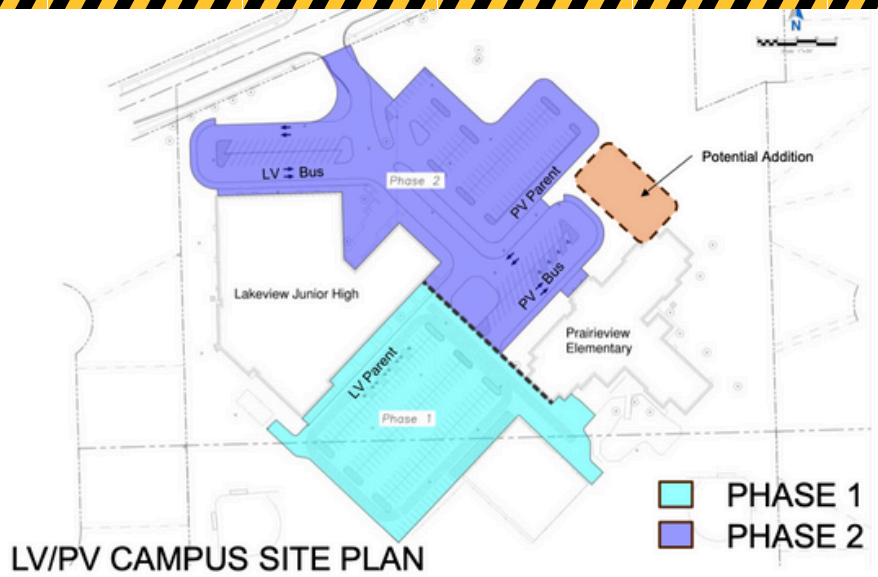
As the hub for District 66's music, arts, band, and athletic events, the Lakeview gym will undergo a much-needed overhaul. Planned improvements include a new gym floor, updated banners and flags, new digital display boards, upgraded lighting, enhanced sound, bleacher repairs, and key structural updates such as masonry work, new doors and frames, and improved accessibility. Many thanks to TEAM 66 for contributing $20,000 to this work.



Lakeview–Prairieview Campus Parking Lots and Sidewalks

A 28-month project will begin to improve traffic flow, expand parking for events, level sidewalks, reinforce asphalt, enhance drainage, and restore the student track. Pending County approval, the District plans to complete the Lakeview parking lot in summer 2026, the new lot in front of Lakeview between summer 2026 and summer 2027, and the Prairieview parking lot in summer 2027.

These projects reflect the District's ongoing commitment to safe, modern, and well-maintained learning spaces that support both students and the broader community.



LV/PV CAMPUS SITE PLAN

In an effort to separate buses, cars, walkers, and bikers more effectively on the Prairieview and Lakeview campus, the District is working with engineers to design a parking lot with improved spacing, queuing, and traffic flow. One aspect of the plan includes a new parking lot between Lakeview and Plainfield Road, which will also serve as staff parking and the Lakeview bus lane. Final designs will be presented to the Board in 2026.

Over the course of the first half of the school year, the Board has taken an indepth look at all aspects of our transportation service, including the nationwide bus driver shortage, state requirements, safe-hazardous road study, possible walkzones, customary transportation fees, and area bus programs. Through meeting their strategic initiative inside Goal 3 to attract and retain employees, the Board increased rates and obtained drivers. While no decision at this time has been made to deviate from the current transportation model, it is important to note that District 66 will continue to look at all aspects of our non-required transportation service to ensure that it is funded appropriately and equitably to deliver students to and from school safely.

Lakeview Drama Presents

Guys and Dolls

Friday, April 24th at 7pm &
Saturday, April 25th at 6pm

General Admission $8 | Student Ticket $4

Advance ticket sales begin Friday, April 3rd or are available at the door.

Scan for tickets and more information!

Elizabeth Ide
Elementary School

KINDERGARTEN Round Up

You are Invited!
Wednesday, May 13th

Click below or scan the QR code to RSVP and select a time slot to attend!

REGISTER HERE







Our Info

Contact Us
630-783-5201

Visit Our Website
ccsd66.org

Our Location
2000 Manning Rd. Darien 605



Save the Date

LAKEVIEW
Class of 2026

Graduation Commencement

Tuesday, May 26, 2026
at 7:00pm in the
Downers Grove
South Auditorium

Retiring from District 66



Janet Oliver
Elizabeth Ide
2nd Grade Teacher
25 YEARS



Tracey Cushing
Prairieview
PE Teacher
32 YEARS



Brian Ohlsen
Prairieview & Lakeview
Band Director
26 YEARS

Center Cass School District 66
699 Plainfield Road
Downers Grove, IL 60516

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Stay Connected

(630) 783-5000

Center Cass School District 66

www.ccsd66.org

Center Cass School District 66

@ccsd66

CCSD66 yt

Superintendent

Andrew S. Wise, Ph.D.

Directors

Learning - **Dr. Kim Liles**
Student Services - **Dr. Sean Rhoads**
Technology - **Keith Roberts**
Transportation & Maintenance - **Tom Tiede**

Principals

Elizabeth Ide Co-Principals - **Mark Pagel & Laura Gilmartin**
Prairieview - **Jake Little**
Lakeview - **Dr. Kim Liles**

Board of Education

President - **Brian Liedtke**
Vice President - **Tiffany Watson**
Treasurer - **Doug Wiley**
Secretary - **Adam Sage**
Board Member - **Steve Dlugo**
Board Member - **Megan DuPass**
Board Member - **Darren Spiegel**

District 66 Calendar Dates

February 13	No School
February 16	No School
February 27	No School
March 11	BOE Meeting
March 13	Early Dismissal
March 30 - April 3	Spring Break
April 11	BOE Meeting
April 22	Early Dismissal
May 6	BOE Meeting
May 13	Early Dismissal
May 25	No School
June 3	Early Dismissal & Last Day of School
June 10	BOE Meeting