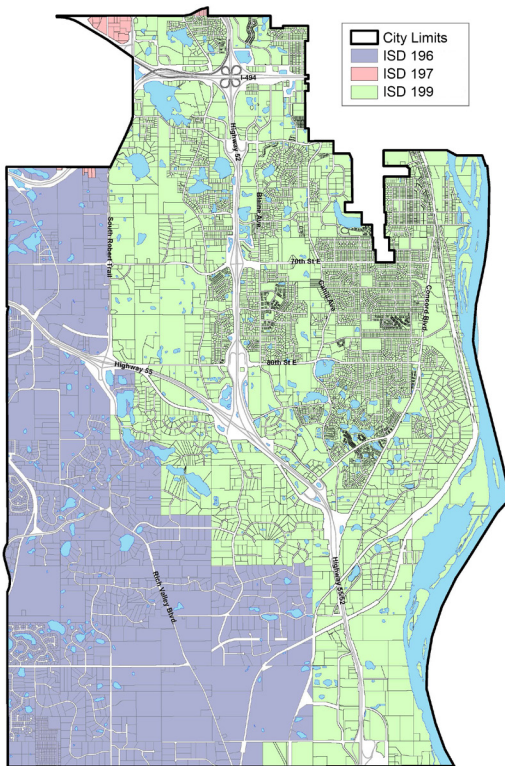


# 199 REPORTER

INVER GROVE HEIGHTS SCHOOLS | SPRING 2020

## The History of Minnesota School District Boundaries



We are often asked why the city and school district boundaries in Inver Grove Heights are not the same. Three public school districts serve Inver Grove Heights: Inver Grove Heights Schools (ISD 199), Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Schools (ISD 196), and West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools (ISD 197). Within the Twin Cities Metropolitan area, it is common for multiple school districts to serve one city and for one school district to serve multiple cities. This is because most school district boundaries have not been changed since Minnesota's beginning.

In the early days of Minnesota, it was determined that every township with five or more families should establish a school district. When Minnesota became a state, school districts were allowed to be established ignoring township lines. School districts began to be organized by the farm property lines of families that had children attending the schools. Typically, these school district boundary lines are still in place today, and many look very strange considering the development that has taken place since they were drawn.

Changes in school district boundaries are extremely rare because the change process is so involved. First, school districts must arrive at a mutual resolution and have it approved by both school boards. Then, legislative action is required for the change to take place. In most recent history, school district boundary changes have involved a land exchange of roughly equal taxable value.

Regards,

Dave

### 2020-2021 Preschool Registration Now Open



ISD 199's Early Learning Program offers welcoming preschool classes that will allow your 3- or 4-year-old to explore, create, and learn. Students build confidence and skills as they participate in engaging, play-based learning activities. Caring licensed teachers help children develop social, cognitive, physical, and creative skills with a balanced curriculum.

Preschool classes for 3-year-olds are held at the Inver Grove Heights Early Learning Center, a mixed-age class is held at Salem Hills Elementary School, and preschool for 4-year-olds is available at Hilltop, Pine Bend, and Salem Hills elementary schools. Morning, afternoon, and all day classes are available. Visit [www.IGHEarlyLearning.org](http://www.IGHEarlyLearning.org) to register and for more information.

# INSPIRE. INNOVATE. EXCEL.

## 199 REPORTER

## Inver Grove Heights Schools

2990 80th Street East  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076  
651-306-7800  
www.isd199.org

Monday-Friday, 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM

The 199 Reporter is a quarterly publication that is mailed to every household in School District 199 to keep all of our community members informed about district news.

If you have questions about this publication, please contact:

**Katie Sheridan**  
Communications Coordinator  
SheridanK@isd199.org

## 2020-2023 Board Members Sworn In, 2020 Officers Chosen



During the November 2019 School Board Election, four candidates were chosen to serve on the Inver Grove Heights School Board during the 2020-2023 term: one new member, Mary Frances Clardy, and three incumbents, Rachel Hanson, Matt Schaefer, and Sherry Warrick. At the district's January 6 special meeting, the four members were sworn in.

The board also voted on officials for the new year. Matt Schaefer was voted in as the board chair and Rachel Hanson was voted in as the board clerk, both members continuing their positions from last year. Sherry Warrick took over for Cindy Nordstrom as the board's vice chair and treasurer for 2020. Congratulations to the 2020-2023 board members, and thank you to everyone who voted in the November election.

## Simley Students Get Hands-on Look at Careers in the Trades



Simley High School strives to prepare every student for lifelong success, academically, personally, and professionally. The school provides numerous opportunities for immersive career exploration, including a recent field trip to a Construct Tomorrow event. Construct Tomorrow provides hands-on activities and interactions with professionals in licensed, unlicensed, and specialty trades to give students an in-depth understanding of the industry.

Nearly 100 9th- through 12th-grade Simley students attended a Construct Tomorrow event this year to explore their future options. They were able to try different tasks, from setting tiles and hammering nails to wiring circuits and using a virtual welder, to gain an understanding of the opportunities in construction. Students also met with union representatives and current apprentices to explore whether a certain profession fit their own goals and abilities. Students learned about different career paths and apprenticeship opportunities, and they were able to ask questions about each path's education and skills requirements, daily responsibilities, average salary and benefits, and how to move up the career ladder in the trades.

## Simley English Teacher Chosen as Teacher of the Year Candidate



Inver Grove Heights Schools has had numerous teachers chosen as candidates for the Education Minnesota Teacher of the Year Award in past years. The award recognizes outstanding educators across the state and invites select candidates to submit portfolios and videos and participate in interviews to demonstrate why they should be named Teacher of the Year. Out of this year's 134 candidates, Simley High School English Teacher Matthew Corey is in the running for the honor.

Over the next few months, candidates will have a chance to submit materials to a panel of Minnesota education, business, and government leaders who will determine how each candidate will progress through the semifinalist and finalist rounds until a winner is announced in May. The winner of the 2020 Teacher of the Year Award will become an advocate for education and a spokesperson for teachers during the following school year. They will be responsible for meeting with policymakers and stakeholders, presenting to key groups, and representing the best interests of students and staff to move education forward. Congratulations to Mr. Corey on his nomination, and good luck to him as he competes with other outstanding educators around the state!

## CONNECT WITH US

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## GET INVOLVED

ISD 199 is seeking community members for district-level committees and advisory councils. Provide your perspective and feedback on decisions to help the school district move forward. If interested, please visit [www.isd199.org/community/give](https://www.isd199.org/community/give), and click "Committee Signup."

*Inver Grove Heights Schools does not discriminate in employment or in any of its programs and activities, including vocational opportunities, on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, familial status, membership or activity in a commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age. Inver Grove Heights Schools provides equal access to designated youth groups. Student-related inquiries about non-discrimination policies should be sent to Mary Garrison at 2990 80th Street East in Inver Grove Heights, GarrisonM@isd199.org, or 651-306-7827. More information is available at [www.isd199.org/nondiscrimination](https://www.isd199.org/nondiscrimination).*

## Salem Hills and Atheneum Students Donate to Help Rebuild Australia After Fires



Each year, 4th graders from Salem Hills Elementary School and its Atheneum Gifted Magnet Program organize a garage sale as a fundraiser to address a real-world problem. Students bring toys, books, and snacks to sell for up to \$1. During the event, 4th graders practice their math and business skills as students from other classes visit the garage sale and purchase items.

Their classes also choose an organization to donate the funds to as part of the school's Ashoka Changemaker curriculum, which develops students into global citizens and teaches leadership. This year, students raised more than \$1,000. After hearing about the wildfires in Australia, they decided their donations should go to organizations that are supporting Australian residents and wildlife affected by the fires. Great job to students for their work and generosity.

## What is Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) & How Does it Set Up Families for Lifelong Success?



In addition to providing preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds, IGH Early Learning offers Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) classes for parents and other caretakers of children birth through age 5 in ISD 199. According to the Minnesota Association for Family

and Early Education, "Brain research confirms that the first three years are an extremely critical period in a child's development," and ECFE helps parents make the most of those years.

ISD 199's ECFE classes focus on developing each child's language and communication, learning, social-emotional, and motor skills. However, they also focus on parents, who are children's first and most important teachers. Parents learn about and practice important parenting and family life skills and build supportive relationships with other parents in the community. The skills learned and resources gained in ECFE classes allow parents to provide the best possible environment for the

healthy growth of their children, paving the way for success in school and life.

Every ISD 199 ECFE class includes a licensed parent educator to provide parents with the most current research and techniques and an educator trained in early childhood development who provides a learning-rich, play-based environment for children to explore while their parents learn. The staff's training also means that they can identify developmental concerns so they can be addressed early for better results. The program's Family Support Team also offers visits to address individual concerns.

The main goal of ISD 199's ECFE classes is connection. Parents connect with their children, research-based parenting information, and each other, setting up every family and student for lifelong success. Registration for spring ECFE classes and 2020-2021 Preschool is open now. Visit [www.IGHEarlyLearning.org](http://www.IGHEarlyLearning.org) for more information and to register. To encourage enrollment for all families, class fees are based on a sliding scale and financial assistance is available.

## HOUR OF CODE FAMILIARIZES EVERY STUDENT WITH COMPUTER SCIENCE



Students in nearly 200 countries participate in Code.org's Hour of Code each year. The annual event aims to give students of all ages the opportunity to learn computer science. The event offers hundreds of interactive coding tutorials that students can

do independently, as a group, online, or offline to learn how coding works. Hilltop, Pine Bend, and Salem Hills elementary schools and the Atheneum Gifted Magnet Program held Hour of Code activities this year to introduce students to computer science careers and to build their coding skills.

Pine Bend students worked individually and as partners to complete Code.org activities. Each activity taught students how to determine what they needed to do to complete an objective and then how to combine commands so the computer would know what steps to take to achieve the correct result. Kindergarteners learned how to combine simple commands while older students built large lists of code to finish entire game levels.

At Hilltop, older students, or Big Buddies, met with their younger Little

Buddies to do Code.org activities, too. Big Buddies showed their Little Buddies how to code and Little Buddies helped do some activities, such as coding a dance party.

Earlier in the day, video game developer Shawn Wignall visited Hilltop to talk about his job. Mr. Wignall told students about how he taught himself how to code and now has created multiple games, some of which became more popular than others. He told students that a lot of his work involves repeatedly testing his games to find and correct issues, and he advised students who are interested in a computer science career to stay determined because finding issues can be discouraging.

"The goal is not for your work to be perfect on your first try, but for you to be brave and keep trying, even when something fails," Mr. Wignall said.

Application developers from Solution Design Group visited Salem Hills and Atheneum to talk about the history of computers and how they work. Students did an offline activity with the speaker to show how computers need code to tell them what to do, as students saw with the Code.org activities. The speakers also talked about the different coding languages and what they do as developers.

## Rep. Angie Craig Visits ISD 199 to Learn About Meals & Education



This January, U.S. Rep. Angie Craig visited Inver Grove Heights Schools to discuss school meal programs and their importance to education. Rep. Craig met with district administrators who explained why the district is committed to providing nutritious meals for every student as part of its focus on academics.

“When a student is hungry, it’s going to be harder for them to focus on learning,” ISD 199 Superintendent Dave Bernhardson said. “So we want to make sure that we can provide nutritious meals for them so they have the best chance of being successful.”

ISD 199 Director of Food Service Glen Ritter talked about how his department has been focused on providing nutritious options for students and preparing more dishes that are made from scratch to give students the best fuel for learning.

Rep. Craig also accompanied district staff to Cahill Court, Inver Grove Heights Middle School and Simley High School’s cafeteria, to see lunch in action. She saw the many fresh options available in the lunch line and talked to students eating lunch, many of whom recognized her.

Thank you to Rep. Craig for visiting Inver Grove Heights Schools to gain a better understanding of school meals and how they help students learn.

## Simley Art Students Create Mural for Assisted Living Community



In December, the Presbyterian Home & Services, located in Timber Hills in Inver Grove Heights, contacted Simley High School’s art department asking for a wall mural for their building.

Leah Forrest, a former Simley graduate and now a director at the home, asked if Simley students could paint a Minnesota scene for them. Simley senior Norah Larson took charge of the project and got help from Anna Ahern, Jenna Bezek, Danielle Norsten, and Emma Raab to complete the mural. The piece was unveiled on January 24.

## Science Wizard at Hilltop

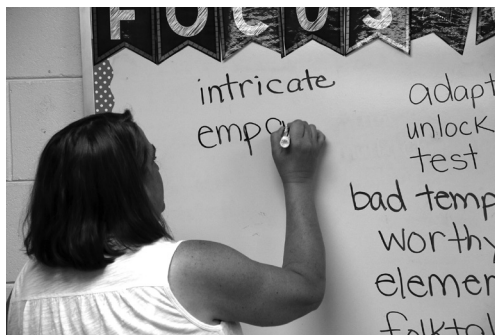


This November through February, Hilltop Elementary School had its own 3M Visiting Wizard! 3M Visiting Wizards are employees from 3M who volunteer to put on fun, hands-on science presentations at local schools. The experiments encourage students to take an interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math).

Visiting Wizard Brian Amberg volunteered to work with each grade at Hilltop, teaching students about science concepts and helping them discover concepts for themselves in engaging activities. Mr. Amberg spent an hour with each grade, starting with teaching kindergarten students the Magic of Science, which included simple experiments to illustrate basic concepts. He also covered magnets, circuits, electricity, simple machines, and the power of observation. Thank you to Mr. Amberg for volunteering with Hilltop and providing fun, hands-on science learning for all of the students!

## ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL SUMMER ACADEMY 2020

Elementary Summer Academy for current kindergarten through 5th-grade students and Middle School Summer Academy for current 6th-through 8th-grade students provides opportunities to build academic, social, and emotional skills for the next school year. Students who are invited and who register by March 20 will receive free busing, breakfast, and lunch.



### Elementary Summer Academy (Grades K-5)

Mondays-Thursdays from 7:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Monday, June 15 - Thursday, July 9

at Hilltop Elementary School (3201 68th Street East in Inver Grove Heights)

For questions, please contact Sarah Zaiser at ZaiserS@isd199.org or 651-306-7454.

### Middle School Summer Academy (Grades 6-8)

Mondays-Thursdays from 8:30 AM - 12:50 PM

Monday, June 15 - Thursday, July 9

at Inver Grove Heights Middle School (8167 Cahill Avenue in Inver Grove Heights)

For questions, please contact the IGH Middle School Office at 651-306-7200.

Students are recommended to these summer programs based on a variety of criteria. If your child is recommended, an invitation and registration were delivered at conferences or will be mailed home. Elementary Summer Academy registration forms should be returned to your child’s teacher. Middle School Summer Academy registration forms should be returned to the middle school main office. **Registration forms must be turned in by March 20.** Information is also available at [www.isd199.org/parents/summer\\_school](http://www.isd199.org/parents/summer_school).

## Spartan Pathways Class Prepares 8th Graders for High School & Future Success

This school year, Inver Grove Heights Middle School introduced the Spartan Pathways class for all 8th-grade students. The second trimester class focuses on helping students transition to high school and gives them a roadmap for their paths from high school to college and career. The class consists of three main topics: how to effectively think, learn, and communicate; a college and career project; and high school registration.

During the college and career project, students create an achievable plan for their future. After researching and choosing a career that they would be interested in, students work backwards. They learn what requirements the job has and explore colleges that would help them fulfill those requirements. Students also make sure that they

are considering the logistics of attending each college, including cost, available opportunities, distance, and more. From there, students look at Simley High School's class offerings and determine what classes to take to get into their college of choice.

Spartan Pathways also supports students as they register for high school classes for the first time. Students meet with counselors three times. Counselors have a chance to present class information to students, work with them on what classes they might want to register for, and finally help them register for freshman year. The goal of Spartan Pathways is to help students create a plan for lifelong success.

## Opportunities for New IGH Babies

Have you registered your baby, toddler, or preschooler with the Inver Grove Heights School District census? With census information, ISD 199 can help you get your child on the path to success! Having your child's name on the census will ensure that you receive:

- all Early Childhood Program mailings
- early childhood screening information
- kindergarten registration packets

To provide census information, visit the district website at [www.isd199.org/new\\_families](http://www.isd199.org/new_families) and complete the "Census Form" or call 651-306-7503. If you have moved to or within Inver Grove Heights School District 199, changed your phone number, or had a new baby, you will need to update the census information.

*Census information is for educational purposes only and the release of this information is governed by State and Federal laws as well as School Board policy. Your address and phone number are considered private data.*

## Immunization Requirements for Enrollment

Minnesota state law requires that students receive vaccinations to enroll in child care, early childhood programs, and school. Parents must submit written proof of vaccinations before enrolling. Please make sure your child has the proper immunizations at every age.

Please visit [www.health.state.mn.us/immunize](http://www.health.state.mn.us/immunize) for everything you need to know about required immunizations. Parents can use this website to learn more about which immunizations are necessary at specific ages.

## Retreats Encourage Reflection, Build Interpersonal Skills



Each winter, 5th and 7th graders develop their core life skills and reflect at Youth Frontiers retreats. Youth Frontiers is a non-profit organization that promotes positive school culture. The organization visits schools to hold Kindness Retreats for 5th graders and Courage Retreat for 7th graders. During retreats, students play games to build teamwork, listen to stories about how to stand up for oneself and others, and demonstrate what

they learned with skits and small group discussions.

At the end of each retreat, students commit to one act of kindness or courage, such as inviting someone to play or talking to someone who seems lonely. While Youth Frontiers hosted the events, Simley High School students in the academic activity National Honor Society volunteered to lead small groups of students in activities and reflection while also acting as role models.

## Enroll Any Time



Families can enroll their students at ISD 199 schools any time. Right now, parents can enroll their student for the 2020-2021 school year in preschool through 5th-grade at Hilltop, Pine Bend, or Salem Hills elementary schools, in 6th- through 8th-grade at Inver Grove Heights Middle School, and in 9th- through 12th-grade at Simley High School.

Parents who have newborn babies through 5-year-old children can also enroll in Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) classes for spring. ECFE classes help parents connect with their children, research-based parenting techniques, and other parents who can offer support and experience.

Parents and guardians can complete their student's elementary enrollment at the ISD 199 District Office, 2990 80th Street East in Inver Grove Heights. Middle school enrollments can be completed at IGH Middle, 8167 Cahill Avenue, and high school enrollments can be completed at Simley, 2920 80th Street East. ECFE and preschool enrollments can be done at the IGH Early Learning Center, 3203 68th Street East, next to Hilltop Elementary School.

Visit [www.isd199.org/enroll](http://www.isd199.org/enroll) to download enrollment forms and see requirements for incoming students.

## Growth From Honors to Advanced Learning & Acceleration Increases Rigor for All



Advanced learning and acceleration at Inver Grove Heights Middle School is giving every student in every classroom more access to challenging and engaging learning than ever before. By extending the use of differentiation and advanced coursework, which were previously used in honors classes, to every middle school classroom, IGH Middle School is giving all students the best chance to excel and prepare for Simley High School's college and career courses. The school also provides the extra challenge of subject acceleration for academically gifted students. Advanced learning and acceleration ensure increased rigor for every student, at every level, in every classroom.

### Advanced Learning

#### *Differentiation (Content – Process – Product)*

All IGH Middle School students experience differentiation in their classrooms every day. Differentiation affects what a student learns (content), how they learn it (process), or how they demonstrate their understanding (product). The type of differentiation may change from lesson to lesson, but each lesson is customized for each student's readiness, interests, and learning preferences. Throughout the school year, teachers will put students with different strengths in groups so they can help their peers or learn from them. At other times, teachers may group students who prefer learning with others and allow students who prefer to learn and work at their own pace to work independently.

#### *Advanced Coursework (Tiered and Advanced Tasks and Assignments)*

Unlike differentiation, advanced coursework is not used every day, but it is used in every classroom during the school year. Tiered and advanced tasks and assignments are provided only after teachers introduce the whole class to a new unit's content, skills, or process. Over the course of a lesson, teachers may offer advanced coursework through tiered or advanced tasks and assignments to challenge students and support their learning differences.

#### Tiered Tasks & Assignments

- Assigned by teacher
- Designed to support differences in student readiness, interests, or learning preferences
- May be tiered by readiness, challenge and complexity, degree of support, or learning preference
- Provide opportunities to practice content, skills, or processes that are aligned with student learning needs
- May be completed individually, with a partner who has similar strengths, or in a small group
- Used to support learning differences and to challenge students *only after teachers introduce content, skills, or processes*

#### Advanced Tasks & Assignments

- Available to all learners
- Designed as guided opportunities for students to select advanced tasks and assignments
- Based on previous learning and practice opportunities with clear expectations for performance
- Provide opportunities to extend thinking beyond standard grade-level application
- Require greater complexity and depth of knowledge
- Used to empower all students to begin to self-direct and stretch their learning based on their interests, needs, and goals
- Prepare students to take advanced and college coursework when they transition to Simley High School

### Acceleration

#### *Subject Acceleration with Cluster Grouping*

Subject acceleration is an additional opportunity for academically gifted students to ensure that they are being challenged at the appropriate level. It allows students to move up one year or more in a subject they excel in. Multiple data points including Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs), NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and course grades and performance help determine students whose needs would be best met through subject acceleration. Subject acceleration could also include the opportunity to earn Simley High School credit.

IGH Middle School offers subject acceleration with clustered grouping, which few other schools do. Clustered grouping allows gifted and talented students to be in a mixed-ability class that challenges them while keeping them with age-group peers who have similar abilities, interests, and learning styles.

With the expertise of ISD 199 Gifted and Talented Services Coordinator Rachel McLaughlin, a former Atheneum Gifted Magnet Program teacher, IGH Middle School and the district are always working to improve learning opportunities for every student. However, IGH Middle School is proud to be one of the only intermediate schools in the area to offer the rigor and equity that advanced learning for all students and acceleration for academically gifted students provide. The middle school's system of advanced learning and acceleration is also only the beginning for students who go on to enroll at Simley High School, which offers nearly 50 immersive career exploration and college readiness courses.

## Student Advisory Gets Hands-on Preview of STEAMM Class



The Inver Grove Heights Schools Student Advisory Council is a group of 4th-, 7th-, and 11th-grade students who meet to provide a student perspective on district decisions and initiatives. During their second meeting, students visited Salem Hills Elementary School to learn more about elementary STEAMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math, and Media) classes.

Starting this year, Media classes at Salem Hills were expanded into STEAMM classes. Next school year, Media classes at Hilltop Elementary School and Pine Bend Elementary School will also expand into STEAMM classes. Before the other two elementary schools make the change, the Student Advisory Council had a chance to experience the class for themselves and offer their thoughts.

Council members worked with a 4th-grade STEAMM class on their project: build a floating train using magnets. Once the STEAMM class ended, ISD 199's Director of Learning, Teajai Anderson Schmidt, and Director of Instructional Technology, Caroline Little, explained to council members how Media classes evolved into STEAMM classes when engineering, computer science, coding, media arts, and more were added to the Media class skills of research, basic computer skills, literature, and library skills.

Mrs. Anderson Schmidt and Mrs. Little also talked to council members about the goal of STEAMM classes.

"You're going to have jobs that we can't even imagine right now," Mrs. Anderson Schmidt said. "So our goal is to prepare you to be successful in those new jobs by teaching core life skills like communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity."



Student Advisory Council members then discussed what they liked most about the STEAMM class and what suggestions they had to improve it before classes start at Hilltop and Pine Bend in the 2020-2021 school year.

## Simley Theatre Students Shine at 3AA One Act Competition



Each year, Simley Theatre presents Winter One Acts. The performance includes three one act plays featuring Simley High School and Inver Grove Heights Middle School students. One play is directed by a high school student and features only middle school actors. Recently, Simley Theatre also entered one of the plays into the statewide MSHSL One Act Play Competition.

Simley Theatre entered the play "Tracks" into the competition. The play follows the story of a group of strangers who meet in a subway station. They soon learn that they are all dead, and they reason that the train arriving will take them to either heaven or hell. Each person must grapple with which side of the platform to board the train from, reflecting upon their lives and past deeds. Ultimately, the subway train approaches, and they must decide whether to stay and ponder their actions further or to have faith and climb aboard to their final destination. The Simley Theatre MSHSL performance and actors were judged based on character authenticity, costuming, script difficulty, and other factors. The cast's performance tied for 3rd place in the MSHSL 3AA One Act Play sectionals!

Congratulations to the Winter One Act cast and crew on a job well done! Don't miss Simley Theatre's musical this spring, too. Check [www.SimleyTheatre.org](http://www.SimleyTheatre.org) for updates about this year's musical, "The Drowsy Chaperone," coming this April.

## All-Conference Honor Band



Each year, band directors from the nine Metro East schools nominate students to perform in the annual All-Conference Honor Band Festival. This year, 12 Simley High School band students were selected for the All-Conference Jazz Band and the All-Conference Concert Band:

### Concert Band

Carter Bollmann  
Emma Deyo  
Curtis Hance  
Cecelia Jorde  
Eryn McVay  
Maya Merritt  
Marisa Modica  
Jesiah Sanchez  
Daniel Williams  
Phil Workman

### Jazz Band

Will Hackerson  
Taylor Riess

Students rehearsed challenging pieces alongside the rest of the best musicians in the conference for seven hours. Then on January 13, Simley students performed with Hastings, Henry Sibley, Hill-Murray, Mahtomedi, North St. Paul, South St. Paul, St. Thomas Academy, and Tartan high school students for the festival.

## St. Paul Winter Carnival Honor



During Paraprofessional Recognition Week in January, the St. Paul Winter Carnival court visited Pine Bend Elementary School to honor special education paraprofessional Sherryll Seliga for her more than 20 years of service to students. The court also honored kindergarten teacher Lisa Ellison and a student, the child of this year's Winter Carnival King. After honoring the staff and student, the court performed for the school.

Stay informed of the current issues , challenges, and changes facing the Inver Grove Heights School District.

#1. PROPERTY TAX DECREASE

Inver Grove Heights Schools is proud to report a decrease of 3.88% for residents on the school district portion of their 2019 payable 2020 property taxes. With meticulous planning and financial management, the district has been able to decrease property taxes for four of the last five years. The brief rise came after the 2017 referendum when the community generously approved an operating levy increase and a capital projects levy. While the referendum funds are constantly helping maintain and expand learning opportunities for students, the district is working hard to find any opportunities to reduce the financial impact on residents each year.

#2. MINNESOTA SCHOOL DISTRICTS

As America moved into the 1900s, Minnesota had more than 8,000 school districts. Today, there are 336. Inver Grove Heights Schools is the 53rd largest district in the state with more than 3,600 students, seven buildings, and numerous programs. Our district’s student population puts it in the top 15% of districts in the state by size.

#3. MEALS FOR FAMILIES

Last year, more than 14 million households in the United States reported being food insecure, meaning that, at times throughout the year, they did not have enough money to purchase or resources to acquire enough

food to feed everyone in their household. The Sheridan Story is a nonprofit organization that combats child hunger through community and school partnerships. The organization provides bags of food to families so children have access to balanced, nutritious food for times when school is not in session.

Thanks to support from local businesses, Hilltop, Pine Bend, and Salem Hills families are able to sign up to receive bags of food for weekends and school breaks during Trimester 3. Bags are discreetly delivered to students each week, typically on Fridays. The program is free for all families, and no qualifications are required for enrollment. No information is collected either, and families can sign up at any time during Trimester 3. To learn more or sign up, families should contact their child’s elementary school.

Summer Care Registration Starts March 15

Summer opportunities at Spartan Kids’ Care, for students going into kindergarten through 5th grade, and in the IGH Youth Center, for students going into grades 6-9, include daily activities and field trips that keep kids engaged even while school is out. Registration for Spartan Kids’ Care summer and the IGH Youth Center opens Sunday, March 15. Visit [www.isd199.org/parents](http://www.isd199.org/parents) and click “Spartan Kids’ Care” or “IGH Youth Center” for more.

INVER GROVE HEIGHTS SCHOOLS WEATHER UPDATES: WWW.ISD199.ORG



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