

# 199 REPORTER

INVER GROVE HEIGHTS SCHOOLS | WINTER 2020

## Learning Model Decisions Based on County & District COVID-19 Data

Throughout the fall, Inver Grove Heights Schools has been consistently monitoring multiple factors to help determine the safest and most effective learning model for students enrolled in the school building-based Attendance Option 1. These students may be in the In-person, Hybrid, or Distance Learning model throughout the school year, depending on a combination of factors:

- Dakota County's 14-day COVID-19 case rate
- Community spread
- Student and staff confirmed cases, quarantines, and close contacts
- Student and staff absences (illness with flu-like symptoms, etc.)
- Staff availability

### County Data

School districts must use their county's 14-day COVID-19 case rate, rather than the daily case data, to make decisions on learning model changes. Each Thursday, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) publishes Dakota County's 14-day COVID-19 case rate per 10,000 residents. The 14-day case rate is released two weeks after the data it reports on, which is why data for October 25 - November 7 was released on November 19. The time between data collection and the report's release allows health officials to complete contact tracing interviews and for lab results to be fully processed, making the 14-day case rate more reliable than the daily case data.

ISD 199 also monitors prediction models that are built from all of MDH's data. Our school district has been able to track whether rates are trending upward, downward, or staying steady in order to better plan for any model switches. In addition to prediction models, the school district hears directly from health officials in consultations with its Regional Support Team, which includes MDH and Dakota County Public Health. In the first weeks of November, the prediction models and advice from Regional Support Team officials helped the district prepare students in the Hybrid model for a transition to Distance Learning.

### District-Level Data

In addition to monitoring county data, districts must consider the number of confirmed cases, quarantines, and close contacts within their schools as well as other data, such as individuals with flu-like symptoms

and the availability of staff to properly serve students in each model. As county case rates increased and were predicted to continue increasing in October, ISD 199 monitored the number of students and staff with confirmed cases, who were in quarantine, and who had reported flu-like symptoms as well as each school's staffing each day. This district data had stayed steady up until early November when absences and cases started to increase, signaling another reason to prepare for a move to Distance Learning in addition to cases across the county.

District-level data may account for school districts within the same county using different learning models. So even though multiple school districts may be in the same county and have the same county case rate, COVID-19 may be affecting a larger portion of the student population in one school district or the district may not have enough staff members to teach and support students in the Hybrid or In-person Learning model. As a result, the highly affected district in the county may need to move to Distance Learning while the others can remain in the Hybrid model. School districts in a county with a high case rate may also be able to stay in a less restrictive model if they have different resources or factors and their Regional Support Team of MDH, Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), and county public health officials deem it is reasonable.

On November 9, after discussions with school leaders, surrounding districts, and ISD 199's Regional Support Team of MDH, MDE, and Dakota County Public Health officials, our school district made the difficult decision to switch middle and high school students in the Hybrid Learning model to Distance Learning on November 16 and all younger students in the Hybrid Learning model to Distance Learning on November 30. Students will remain in the Distance Learning model through at least Winter Break. In the meantime, the district will continue monitoring and analyzing data in the hopes of bringing students back in the Hybrid model as soon as conditions are safe.

Regards,



Dave

INSPIRE. INNOVATE. EXCEL.

## 199 REPORTER

## Inver Grove Heights Schools

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

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The 199 Reporter is a quarterly publication that is mailed to every household in School District 199 to inform the community and parents about district news and events.

If you have questions about this publication, please contact:

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## CONNECT WITH US

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## GET INVOLVED

ISD 199 is seeking community members for district-level committees and advisory councils. Provide 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, in the sidebar, 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 Abel Riodique at 2990 80th Street East in Inver Grove Heights, RiodiqueA@isd199.org, or 651-306-7828. More information is available at [www.isd199.org/nondiscrimination](https://www.isd199.org/nondiscrimination).*

## Salem Hills First Graders Celebrate Kindness in Chalk



Kindness in Chalk Day is a statewide event that takes place each October, which is Bullying Prevention Month. It promotes kind words and acts, and students are encouraged to write positive messages and draw pictures showing ways to be kind.

First graders at Salem Hills Elementary School decorated the sidewalk in front of the school with supportive messages and pictures for their peers. They also invited other classes to add their own messages and drawings. By the end of the week, the sidewalk was filled with artwork of students inviting others to play, sharing, and giving others compliments.

## Simley Homecoming Events Go Virtual

Simley High School held a Spirit Week in place of the school's typical Homecoming activities. Although students were not able to be together to cheer for the Simley Spartans at their football game against Hastings, the game was livestreamed so students could participate virtually. Students also dressed up in Spartan spiritwear and their class colors during the week and voted for Spirit Week Court. Senior candidates participated in a livestreamed Coronation event to wrap up the week. Candidates and the winners were announced in the Performing Arts Center as the school watched online. This year, Cael Berg and Brooke Finley were named Spirit Week King and Queen.

## Enroll in ISD 199 Any Time

**2021-2022 Kindergarten**

Hilltop Elementary School, Pine Bend Elementary School, and Salem Hills Elementary School are accepting enrollments for 2021-2022 kindergarten now! Incoming kindergarten families in the district will receive an enrollment packet in the mail in the coming weeks. Families can also enroll online any time at [www.isd199.org/enroll](https://www.isd199.org/enroll) or download an enrollment

packet under the "Kindergarten Registration" link. If your child needs an early childhood screening, please call 651-306-7520 to schedule a free appointment.

**2020-2021 Kindergarten**

ISD 199's elementary schools, Hilltop, Pine Bend, and Salem Hills, are ready for your kindergarten-age child whenever you are ready to enroll. Students who turned 5 years old on or before September 1, 2020, can enroll in this school year's kindergarten class at any time. Enroll online at [www.isd199.org/enroll](https://www.isd199.org/enroll).

**All ISD 199 Schools**

Whether you are new to the district or interested in making a change, students of any age are welcome to enroll at any time. Enroll online at [www.isd199.org/enroll](https://www.isd199.org/enroll) or call:

- Early Learning & Preschool at 651-306-7503
- Elementary School (Kindergarten - Grade 5) at 651-306-7825
- Middle School (Grades 6-8) at 651-306-7200
- High School (Grades 9-12) at 651-306-7000

**Open Enrollment & Intra-district Transfer Priority**

Non-resident families interested in Open Enrollment for next school year (2021-2022) should enroll by January 15, 2021, to receive placement priority. Resident families interested in Intra-district Transfer for next year should enroll by January 30, 2021, to receive placement priority.

## ISD 199 Continues to Monitor District Data, Providing Confirmed Case Dashboard



In Trimester 1, about 25% of our students chose to participate in full-time online classes through 199 Online, and about 75% chose Attendance Option 1, which allows students to be in school buildings depending on county and district-level COVID-19 case

data and staff availability. Option 1 students began the year in the Hybrid Learning model, attending school buildings two days per week. Because of county and district-level COVID-19 data and district staff availability, middle and high school students switched to Distance Learning, attending class online five days per week, on November 16 and Early Learning and elementary students switched to Distance Learning on November 30.

### ISD 199 Weekly Confirmed Case Dashboard

Inver Grove Heights Schools has been monitoring COVID-19 cases since the summer. In October, the district began posting districtwide positive case numbers each week on its Coronavirus 2019 information webpage, [www.isd199.org/covid19](http://www.isd199.org/covid19). When students are in the Hybrid or In-person Learning model, the weekly number of new lab-confirmed cases among the district's in-school staff and students is posted each Friday.

The posted number is one of many data points that district leadership monitors. The district tracks staff and student absences, staff and student illnesses, staff availability, county COVID-19 case data, and prediction models based on county data to understand trends and inform any decisions about changing learning models. In September and October, data indicated that the Hybrid Learning model was the best format for all students and staff. However, case rates and other

data points began to show an upward trend of unsafe conditions in November, prompting a transition to Distance Learning for all students, as recommended in the Minnesota Safe Learning Plan and confirmed by the district's Regional Support Team of Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Education, and Dakota County Public Health officials.

### Health & Safety in the School Buildings

Throughout the school year, any ISD 199 student or staff member who has had a suspected or lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 and anyone the team of district staff and local and state health officials has identified as a close contact of someone who tested positive has been provided with resources and directed to stay home and away from other people.

According to MDH, people present in a building at the same time as someone with COVID-19 are at no greater risk of exposure than they would be in the general community. Families who were not notified that their child was a close contact were directed to continue monitoring them for symptoms of illness using MDH's Home Screening Tool, which can be found at [www.isd199.org/covid19](http://www.isd199.org/covid19) under "Preventative Measures," but they did not need to keep their child home unless symptoms developed. If symptoms developed, parents were directed to keep their child home, call in the absence, and consult with their healthcare provider to determine if medical evaluation is needed.

Thanks to the cooperation of students, families, and staff, there was little spread within the schools. Although students had to switch to Distance Learning because of cases from outside the buildings and staff shortages tied to the virus, we appreciate the work our school community continues to do to keep students safe, and we look forward to getting students back in classrooms.

## SNOW & COLD DAYS BECOME FLEX/EXTENDED LEARNING DAYS FOR 20-21



Please be aware that ISD 199's emergency closing procedures have changed this school year. Any Snow and Cold Days will now be Flex/Extended Learning Days. The district will declare a Flex/Extended Learning Day if the buildings are using the In-person or Hybrid Learning model and the weather is too severe to get students safely to and from school buildings.

Students will use Seesaw and Schoology to get assignments and communicate with teachers during established office hours, similar to each Wednesday's Flex Day. Spartan Kids' Care and Essential Worker Care will not be offered on Flex/Extended Learning Days due to the severe weather.

Any closures or delays will be communicated to the families and staff in an automated phone call and text. Families, please take a moment to check that your contact information in Infinite Campus is correct and that your preferred email address and phone number are marked for "General" and "Emergency" notifications. The district will send information about school building closings, emergencies, and other important matters to any phone number and email address marked for "General" and "Emergency." Visit [www.isd199.org/parents/emergency\\_closings](http://www.isd199.org/parents/emergency_closings) for instructions on how to check and update your contact information and preferences.

In addition to automated calls and texts, information about school closings or delays will be available in the following places:

- **DISTRICT WEBSITE:** Visit [www.isd199.org](http://www.isd199.org) for the most updated and detailed information about any closings or delays
- **SOCIAL MEDIA:** Follow **Inver Grove Heights Schools** on Facebook or **@isd199** on Twitter for updates
- **TV:** Watch **Twin Cities television network affiliate stations**, and look for Inver Grove Heights Schools in the news crawl
- **RADIO:** Tune in to **WCCO-AM 830** and listen for Inver Grove Heights Schools
- **DISTRICT WEATHER LINE:** Call **651-306-7875** for a recorded message about any emergency school building closings or delayed starts

Please visit [www.isd199.org/parents/emergency\\_closings](http://www.isd199.org/parents/emergency_closings) to learn more about how decisions are made about school delays and building closures.



## ISD 199 Announces Abel Riodique as Next Director of Special Services



Former Inver Grove Heights Schools Assistant Director of Special Education, Abel Riodique, has been named the district's Director of Special Services, taking over for former director Mary Garrison as she retired in October. Mr. Riodique and Mrs. Garrison have worked closely together in the Special Services Department throughout their careers with the district.

In addition to the connections he has built with staff and families as assistant director, Mr. Riodique brings nearly 20 years of special education experience to the position. He holds a master's degree in special education and earned an Education Specialist in Educational Leadership degree. His work experience includes teaching students with moderate to severe disabilities and developmental disabilities, such as autism, and before starting at ISD

199, he was the special education resource coordinator for St. Paul Public Schools.

In his position as assistant director of special education, Mr. Riodique has worked to identify and support equitable practices to decrease suspensions and referrals for special education evaluations. He has facilitated a number of programs and built procedures to provide the best possible education for all students.

As Mr. Riodique steps into the role of ISD 199 Director of Special Services, the district wishes former director Mary Garrison all the best in her retirement. Mrs. Garrison served in ISD 199 for 8 years, tirelessly advocating for students in the district, providing resources for families in some of the most difficult situations, and leading staff with insightful advice and understanding. Her dedication to every ISD 199 student will not be forgotten as she leaves the district to spend time with family and begin her next chapter in retirement.

## Simley's Kris Hillesheim Named as New Assistant Director of Special Education



Inver Grove Heights Schools is pleased to announce Kris Hillesheim as its new Assistant Director of Special Education. Ms. Hillesheim has been with the district for more than 30 years in special education. As Simley High School's current lead special education teacher, she analyzes student data to recommend schoolwide courses and curriculum, trains and coaches paraprofessionals, and is integral to the special education experience of the district's high school students.

Ms. Hillesheim holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education and special education, a master's degree in educational psychology, and a specialist in educational leadership degree, which led to her Minnesota Administrative License for Director of Special Education.

She also holds teaching licenses for K-12 learning disabilities and emotional behavioral disorders.

As a member of the Simley staff, Ms. Hillesheim has been on multiple professional committees to provide the best professional development opportunities for staff and the best programming for students. She has also trained with and provided professional development from the Minnesota Department of Education as a Minnesota Specific Learning Disabilities Criteria State Trainer.

Ms. Hillesheim started her role as ISD 199's Assistant Director of Special Education on November 2. She and Abel Riodique, who has taken over the Director of Special Services position after Mary Garrison's retirement, will work to provide resources and the best education for all students throughout the school district.

## Impact of COVID-19 Expected to be \$3.2 Million Over Two School Years

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact ISD 199's financial standing directly and indirectly. Though factors are constantly changing, the cost of COVID-19 for our district is estimated to be \$3,195,236 over two school years, with \$417,346 being spent during the 2019-2020 school year to support students and families at the beginning of the pandemic's impact. Student technology, childcare for emergency workers, additional staff support for Hybrid and Distance Learning, supplies for social distancing, lost revenue from facility rentals and athletic events, employee supports, and health and safety measures, such as PPE and additional custodial time, have all added new expenses and reduced revenue in the district budget. The reduction in student enrollment that many districts across the country are facing has also made a significant impact on the district's budget.

Though the district is facing a significant challenge in its budget, it is grateful for the bills and funds that have been passed to help schools continue serving students during such a difficult time. The Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER), and Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER), and the ability to use a fund balance transfer has allowed the district to continue supporting students and staff while prioritizing their health and safety. CRF, ESSER, and GEER funds alone have provided more than \$1.6 million in relief. ISD 199 is also extremely lucky in the fact that the community approved two levies in the 2017 referendum. Funds from the levies helped the district purchase much of the student technology currently being used for all students amid another local, state, and national outbreak of COVID-19 and district-level staff shortages.

ISD 199 always tries to do a lot with a little, and the district continues to be careful with spending, but the opportunities legislators and the ISD 199 community have provided have been critical to keeping students and staff, and by extension, their families and the ISD 199 community, healthy and safe while providing the best education to all children. Thank you for your support.

## 64 Simley Students Earn AP Scholar Awards for 2019-2020 Exams

Advanced Placement (AP) classes challenge students with college-level coursework and provide an opportunity to earn college credit before graduation. Students take exams at the end of the year, which are scored on a 0-5 scale, to qualify for college credit. Each year, students are recognized for earning outstanding scores of 3 or higher on multiple AP exams. Simley High School had 64 students earn AP Scholar Awards in three categories this year. The high school has had nearly 1,000 AP Scholars in the last 10 years.

**AP Scholar Award:** *Earned scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams.*

Cael Berg  
Jenna Bezek  
Maombi Bigabwa  
Alexander Binley  
Erin Borchard  
Kieran Boyden  
Grant Burling  
Katherine Carlson  
Madison Clevenger  
Charles Gustafson  
Emma Heimerl  
Austin Illetschko  
Charles Isabell  
Brendan Johnson  
Cameron Judge  
Norah Larson  
Marcelino Makar  
Kaitlyn Marsh

Eryn McVay  
Ethan Neibacher  
Dominick Olaes  
Erin Orn  
Zachary Painter  
Taylor Riess  
Zachary Sayner  
Athena Schaefer  
Nathan Schauer  
Nicholas Schaus  
Zachary Soule  
Molly Stein  
Jennifer Swearingen  
Gwendolyn Ukestad  
Isaac Ventura  
Matthew Wegener  
Alexandra Woog  
Jonathan Wrobel

**AP Scholar with Honor Award:** *Earned an average score of 3.25 or higher on all exams taken and earned scores of 3 or higher on four or more of those AP exams.*

Sara Borchard  
Emma Deyo  
Rebecca Elkin  
Alex Guggisberg  
Connor Hassing  
Cecelia Jorde  
Sabrina Marrero  
Anna Olson  
Sophia Roche  
Catherine Thoemke  
Mathew Wanger  
Joseph Waska

**AP Scholar with Distinction Award:** *Earned an average score of 3.5 on all AP exams taken and earned scores of 3 or higher on five or more of those exams.*

Caleb Brinkman  
Callie Burch  
Shiraj Chowdhury  
Joshua Franson  
Curtis Hance  
Hannah Heiss  
Elizabeth Hunt  
Ethan Jie  
Maya Merritt  
Marisa Modica  
Tammy Ngo  
Adelynn Pettee  
Emma Raab  
Margaret Sutton  
Philip Workman  
Delaney Zellner

## Families, Every Application for Educational Benefits Can Help Your School



Inver Grove Heights Schools is asking families to help their schools by applying for Educational Benefits, even if they don't think they will qualify. The Educational Benefits program, which includes Free and Reduced Price Meals, offers families

discounts beyond school meals and provides about \$1.2 million of essential funding for licensed staff and grants that support students.

In addition to guaranteeing free or discounted school meals for qualifying students through October 2021, the Educational Benefits program provides discounts on:

- School device insurance, activity fees, and parking
- Internet, phone, and electric services
- YMCA memberships
- Zoo and museum admissions

See the full list of Educational Benefits discounts under "Educational Benefits Discounts" at [www.isd199.org/edu-benefits](http://www.isd199.org/edu-benefits).

Schools also receive essential funding when families apply for Educational Benefits. **Every student who applies and qualifies for Educational Benefits brings, on average, about \$1,500 to their school.** Those funds go toward maintaining smaller class sizes and providing support services, such as social workers and counselors.

The application process is free, easy, and confidential. All information provided on the form is protected as private data. Apply online or print an application: Log in to Infinite Campus and click "More" and then "Meal Benefits," or visit [www.isd199.org/edu-benefits](http://www.isd199.org/edu-benefits) for the printable application. Printed applications can be returned to the student's school or to:

ISD 199 District Office  
2990 80th Street East  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076

Families who qualified in previous years should also apply this year because Educational Benefits applications, which include the application for Free and Reduced Price Meals, must be filled out every school year to help the district.

If you have questions or need help, please call the ISD 199 Food Service Department at 651-306-7822 or email [BottolfsonC@isd199.org](mailto:BottolfsonC@isd199.org).

Though we are grateful that emergency funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has been extended through June 2021, the currently low number of Educational Benefits applications could jeopardize funding for much-needed student services. ISD 199 families, please consider completing a confidential application for Educational Benefits today.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

## Food Service Expands Meal Program to All Children for Free



Inver Grove Heights Schools will provide Free Meal Boxes to **ALL** children, ages 18 and younger, starting November 30. Families will no longer need to pre-order meals, and any child will be able to pick up a Free Meal Box, whether they are an ISD 199 student or not.

Free Meal Boxes will be available for pick-up at 12 distribution sites, some in the afternoon and some in the evening. See the list below for each site's distribution day, time, and location.

### School Meal Distribution Sites

*Mondays & Thursdays from 3:30-5:30 PM*

Inver Grove Heights Middle School, 8167 Cahill Avenue

*Tuesdays & Fridays from 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM*

Hilltop Elementary School, 3201 68th Street East

Inver Grove Heights Middle School, 8167 Cahill Avenue

Pine Bend Elementary, 9875 Inver Grove Trail

Salem Hills Elementary, 5899 Babcock Trail

### Bus Stop Meal Distribution Sites

*Tuesdays & Fridays from 11:00-11:25 AM*

52nd Street East & Brent Avenue

Lake Cove Apartments, 5359 Audobon Avenue

Skyline Village, (North) 7510 Concord Boulevard (near office)

St. Patrick's Church, 3535 72nd Street East

*Tuesdays & Fridays from 11:35 AM - 12:00 PM (noon)*

Blackberry Pointe Apartments, 5480 Blackberry Trail East

Rolling Meadows, 3249 78th Street East (near office)

Salem Green Apartments, 1455 Upper 55th Street East

Skyline Village (South), between 4300 and 4344 Denton Way (near the Emergency Shelter)

The Free Meal Box Program will provide seven days of meals. Boxes picked up on Mondays or Tuesdays will include 3 days of breakfasts and lunches, and Free Meal Boxes picked up on Thursdays or Fridays will include 4 days of breakfasts and lunches.

In the interest of health and safety, family members may pick up a Free Meal Box for their children. Students who are learning at school in the Hybrid or In-person Learning model will continue to receive free meals at school, thanks to the district's free breakfast program and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's emergency funding of school lunches through June 2021.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

## Simley Academic Letters

Congratulations to the 361 Simley High School students who lettered during the 2019-2020 academic school year. The recognition is given to students in grades 10-12 who earn a GPA of 3.333 or higher for the school year. About 120 students in each grade qualified to letter.

Students who lettered last school year adapted to an entirely new way of learning in the spring of 2020. Great job to the students on their outstanding achievement! To see the full list of students who received this honor, visit [www.isd199.org/schools/simley](http://www.isd199.org/schools/simley) and look for "2019-2020 Academic Lettering Recognition" under News.

## Pine Bend Virtual Fun Run



Throughout November, Pine Bend Elementary School students learned leadership skills and trained for a Virtual Apex Fun Run. Leading up to the fun run, students gathered pledges for the number of laps they would run. They also learned cheers, developed social-emotional skills, and completed fitness challenges through the Apex Program. Although this year's fun run was virtual, Apex staff and Pine Bend sent families a playlist, instructions on how to set up a track at home, and a pep rally video to get students excited. One neighborhood of Pine Bend families set up a track for local students to run together!

Thank you to everyone who supported students as coaches and donors! Pledges will go back to the classrooms for future learning experiences.

## Free COVID-19 Testing in Inver Grove Heights & at Home



**Get tested.**

STAY SAFE MN

Free COVID-19 testing is now available in Inver Grove Heights and as an at-home kit. Neighbors in Inver Grove Heights can visit the National Guard Armory, 8076 Babcock Trail, for a free saliva test. The test is open to anyone, regardless of whether or not you have symptoms. Community testing is available noon to 6:00 PM, most Tuesdays through Saturdays. Make an appointment online or walk in.

Any Minnesota resident can also order an at-home saliva test for free. Anyone can order the test, whether they have symptoms or not and whether they have insurance or not. The test kit will be mailed to the resident's home.

To make a testing appointment or find more information about COVID-19 at home testing and community testing, visit [www.mn.gov/covid19](http://www.mn.gov/covid19) and click "Find COVID-19 Testing Locations."



## Simley PA Announcer Earns National Award



The National Association of Sports Public Address Announcers (NASPAA) has named Brian Sweeney, Simley High School's P.A. announcer, as a co-recipient of the 2019-20 Bob Sheppard High School P.A. Announcer of the Year Award. Bob Sheppard, whose professionalism became the standard for sports P.A. announcers, was the stadium announcer for the New York Yankees for 57 years and is considered the best P.A. announcer ever.

Mr. Sweeney has been the P.A. announcer at Simley for the past six years, announcing for hockey, baseball, boys and girls lacrosse, football, boys and girls soccer, volleyball, and dance. He is also the announcer for Minnesota Vixen football, University of St. Thomas hockey, and Concordia University - St. Paul football, lacrosse, soccer, and volleyball.

"Brian has been a huge part of the success of Simley athletic events," Simley Activities Director Will Short said. "As a professional announcer, he creates an atmosphere of excellence."

"It is an honor to be mentioned in the same sentence as the legendary Bob Sheppard," Mr. Sweeney said. "Hopefully, the student athletes whose games I announced will look back on their playing days with positive memories and know that I gave them 100%."

"There are some really good announcers at the high school level, and Brian is certainly one of the best," Brad Rumble, NASPAA Executive Director, said. "The NASPAA is thrilled to have the opportunity to recognize him. We know that he will not only be a tremendous ambassador for P.A. announcer professionalism, but will represent the best of Bob Shepard in helping perpetuate his legacy."

## Students Create Videos to Continue Spartan Superheroes Program



Spartan Superheroes is a districtwide program that aims to connect older and younger students in a positive, educational way. Students in Simley High School athletics and activities usually visit the ISD 199 elementary schools throughout the school year and hold assemblies to talk to younger students about their activity and answer questions.

This year, instead of visiting the elementary schools, Simley athletes and activities members have continued the Spartan Superheroes program with videos. The videos highlight their activity and allow Simley students to talk about their experiences and the opportunities that younger students will have in the future. The videos prioritize safety by limiting school visitors and avoiding mixing student groups at different schools. Even though the program may look different than in other years, it continues to provide role models for younger students while helping secondary students build their leadership skills.

## Simley Marching Band Brings Parade Performance to IGH



Every October, the Simley High School Marching Band competes against other marching bands in Anoka's massive Halloween Parade. However, this year, Anoka significantly reduced the size of its parade to abide by health and safety guidelines. Simley wasn't able to march, so the band brought the celebration to Inver Grove Heights!

On October 31, the Simley Marching Band invited family, friends, and neighbors to watch their final performance in the student parking lot. Attendees parked their cars or brought blankets and chairs to watch the show. Students performed "Thriller," percussion features, and their 2020 show, "Estancia," while circling the parking lot to give everyone the full experience while keeping attendees and each other safely distanced.

## Fall Sports Recognitions

### Cross Country

#### All Conference

Brekken Grathen  
Kaiden Schrandt

#### Honorable Mention

Gabriel Alvear  
Abigale Lindquist  
Nathan Schauer

#### All Conference

100 Backstroke

Madeline Ngo

50 Freestyle

Stella Anderson-Moye

Emily Hageman

Diving

Erin Orn

#### Honorable Mention

100 Breaststroke

Kjerstin Iverson

Tiffany Nguyen

100 Butterfly

Keegan Puariea

50 Freestyle

Elizabeth Ngo

Filomenah Sans

Brooklyn Von Berge

### Boys Soccer

#### All Conference

Ryan Eckstrom  
Ben Hatcher  
Andrew Jeffers  
Lucas Vandermeer

#### Honorable Mention

Mitchell Borrowman  
Kieran Boyden  
Sam Scheffley

### Girls Tennis

#### All Conference

Erin Borchard

Sara Borchard

Cayla Friemann

Clara Thoemke

### Girls Soccer

#### All Conference

Zoe Boughton  
Ella Tuccitto

#### Honorable Mention

Laura Bosin  
Abby Boughton  
Abby Jeffers

#### Honorable Mention

Ali Loomis  
Leah Thoemke

### Girls Swimming and Diving

#### State Participant

200 Individual Medley

Madeline Ngo

Diving

Erin Orn

*Recognitions for football and volleyball will be listed in a future 199 Reporter, as this year's awards for the sports were not yet available at the time of publishing. Congratulations to all of our Fall athletes!*

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

## #1. INTERPRETING YOUR TAX STATEMENT

Dakota County residents recently received their Proposed Taxes for 2021. Property taxes are impacted by two key factors: The assessed value of your home or business AND the property tax rates approved by the county, city, and school district. Use the following steps to read each section of the your tax statement:

1. Review the Values and Classification portion on your Proposed Taxes 2021. This provides a comparison of the actual 2020 numbers to the proposed numbers for 2021. A decrease or increase in Taxable Market Value impacts all portions of your proposed taxes.
2. Review the Proposed Tax Credits for your property.
3. Review the Property Tax Statement comparing actual 2020 to the proposed 2021. This portion of the statement includes State General Tax, Dakota County, Inver Grove Heights, School District 199, Metro Special Taxing Districts, Other Special Taxing Districts, Tax Increment Tax, and Fiscal Disparity Tax.
4. The Totals provide a comparison of the 2020 actual to the 2021 proposed property tax.

Increases or decreases in the school district's portion of taxes do not necessarily mean an increase or decrease in revenue for the school

district. Local taxes and state aids are balanced by the state based on the net tax capacity, or value of properties, of the area.

## #2. EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

While the district is happy to announce that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will extend emergency funding of school lunches through June 2021, the currently low number of families who have applied for Educational Benefits, which includes free and reduced price meals, could jeopardize \$1.2 million of funding for much-needed student services. **Every student who applies and qualifies for Educational Benefits brings, on average, about \$1,500 of funding to their school.** Grant, state, and federal funds help the district maintain smaller class sizes and provide support services for students. All families are encouraged to apply, even if they don't think they will qualify. The free, easy, and confidential Educational Benefits application is available online through Infinite Campus. For more information, read the article "Families, Every Educational Benefits Application Can Help Your School" on page 5 or visit [www.isd199.org/edu-benefits](http://www.isd199.org/edu-benefits).



## INVER GROVE HEIGHTS SCHOOLS WEATHER UPDATES: [WWW.ISD199.ORG](http://WWW.ISD199.ORG)



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