



"Where Students Come First"

## Community Newsletter

### Message from the Superintendent

Hello! It is with great joy that I come to work each day at Oak Grove. We have a wonderful school district because of the great support we have from our kids' parents, extended families, and you, the community members. We also have the best students and faculty in Illinois!

Additionally, every Monday during the school year, we produce a newsletter called the Oak Grove News which is accessible by visiting [www.ogschool.org](http://www.ogschool.org). We hope you enjoy the newsletter. As always, you are welcome to come visit. We are, in fact, your school.

We wanted to share some of the highlights of the first semester's activities at Oak Grove. This compilation is just a small sample of the great happenings we witness each and every day. We have a new, mobile-device friendly website.

With Oak Grove pride,  
Lonny B. Lemon, Ed.D.  
Superintendent



### Oak Grove PARCC Scores Sizzle!

Last year the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) introduced new examinations for all students in its school systems. The new exams are called the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. Most of you may have heard it called PARCC. The exams were touted as being far more rigorous than their predecessors, the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, or ISAT.

We have great news at Oak Grove. Our students' PARCC scores are among the very best both locally and in the entire state! We far exceeded the state averages in students who Met/Exceeded expectations - the two highest achievement levels.

	State Average 4's & 5's	Oak Grove Average 4's & 5's
ELA	35%	84.1%
Math	18%	67.7%

ISBE predicted, and informed school districts, teachers, and parents that it would be likely that student scores would not show achievement at the same level as were shown by ISAT scores. However, ISBE has been clear in its message that the PARCC scores represent "the new norm" and will provide a new baseline for educators to analyze as they plan their instruction.

In fact, in the Daily Herald reading area, Oak Grove scores were the highest of any school in English/Language Arts (ELA). Our math scores ranked 3rd, just behind Lincolnshire 103 and in a virtual tie with Lake Bluff 65.

Districts across the state received their Spring 2015 PARCC scores in December, presented on a 1-5 scale:

- 1 - Did not yet meet expectations
- 2 - Partially met expectations
- 3 - Approached expectations
- 4 - Met expectations
- 5 - Exceeded expectations

We are proud of our students and faculty for their commitment to excellence in the classroom and to our families who provide our students with the encouragement, resources, and support they need to be high achievers!

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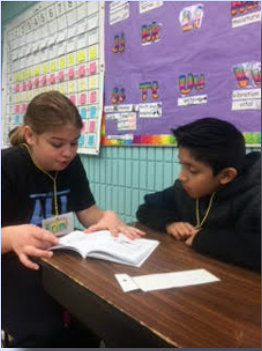
Andrew Fenton  
K-8 Principal

Michelle Jackson  
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## Read With Me

On December 10, Oak Grove 5th grade students visited 3rd grade classes at A.J. Katzenmaier School in North Chicago for a Read With Me session. Our students had a chance to tour the classrooms, have a snack, and socialize with their new friends. For reading material, our students read biographies of famous people. We look forward to getting together with the students from A.J. Katzenmaier again later this year.



## Kindness Week

Oak Grove third grade students kicked off 2016 with Kindness Week! During the week the students learned how to “pay it forward” with acts of kindness. Students ended the week of learning by creating t-shirts with positive messages.



## Puzzle Club

An impromptu puzzle club has sprung up in room 101. Students come in at study hall and work on challenging puzzles. The puzzle shown here is a “4d” version of Paris (one that includes elements from past, present, and future). This dedicated bunch has been working on it since before the Winter Break!





## Coding in Class

For the past few weeks, students in Mr. Oesch's 7th grade Science by Design class have been using "Sphero" robotic balls to integrate science, math, and coding skills. These devices, which resemble the "BB-8" droid in the new Star Wars film, are polycarbonate plastic balls that can be controlled by a tablet or smartphone. Students can simply drive the Spheros for fun, but they were tasked with several programming challenges that were similar in nature to the "hour of code" all of our students have participated in for the past two years. In one programming challenge, students had to program their devices to navigate through an obstacle

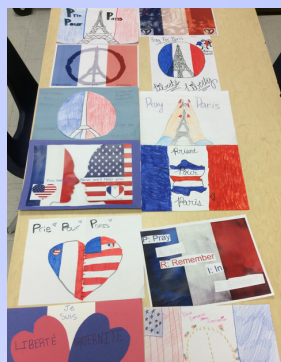


course without any human intervention. Towards the end of the class, students engaged in a race where the students were in control of the device, but they were responsible for creating the programming that allowed them to control the Sphero with their tablet. To be successful, students needed to create a tightly

coded program that allowed them to navigate the race course. Trial and error were involved as maximum speeds needed to be taken into account, as well as the advantages of using X-Y coordinates rather than simple "turn left" or "turn right" commands. At the end of the race, 7th grade teammates Avery Vang and Brittany Reed were crowned champions! We are so glad to be able to offer the kind of fun learning activities that could only be dreamed of in the past!

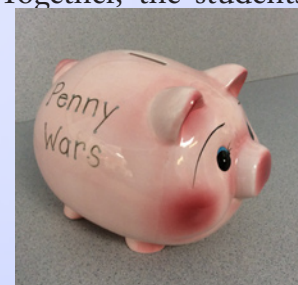
## Peace for Paris

Seventh grade French students made these amazing cards for a middle school in Paris. The cards were mailed after the terror attacks in Paris. We've heard that the Parisian students loved them and are working on a reply!



## PADS Service Project

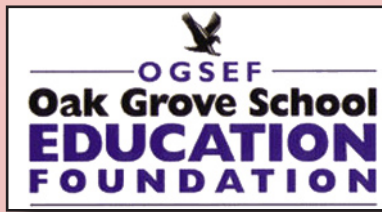
In December, our 7th graders participated in their annual service project for PADS of Lake County. The students collected pants for men, women, and children so the clients would be able to have a change of clothes, they also collected toiletries for the clients that will help them with their personal needs. Penny Wars was also a part of the service project. Penny Wars is a contest between homerooms to see who can collect the most "positive" points (pennies). When students put silver coins or paper money in a jar that counts as "negative" points. Together, the students raised over \$1,100.00. So as a group effort the students provided nearly 500 pair of pants, six large boxes of toiletries and over \$1,100.00! What a fantastic group effort to help those in need.



## Kindergarten Pre-Registration 2016-17

Oak Grove School is in the process of determining kindergarten enrollment for the fall of 2016. Having correct enrollment numbers is important to us as it impacts the number of sections, teachers, and classrooms. A child must be 5 years old on or before September 1, 2016, to attend kindergarten. If you have a student who will be attending kindergarten in the fall, you can click the "Kindergarten 16-17" link from the main Oak Grove website, or simply go to [www.ogschool.org/kindy](http://www.ogschool.org/kindy) to pre-register your child.

Our Kindergarten Parent Information Night was held on February 10th. The presentation covered information about the Kindergarten program for 2016-17, including the registration and screening process. You can see a pdf of this presentation and sign up for screening by visiting our school web site, [www.ogschool.org](http://www.ogschool.org).



## *Building New Educational Opportunities for the Children of Green Oaks*

### What is the OGSEF?

With the help of the parents, community residents, and businesses, Oak Grove Education Foundation (OGSEF) invests in students at Oak Grove School by funding teacher-driven initiatives focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs and more. The Foundation funds differentiated curriculum, programs, training, technology, and other tools necessary to make sure our children have access to the highest possible standards of education. If you are interested in joining or supporting the Oak Grove School Education Foundation, please contact us at [ogsfoundation@yahoo.com](mailto:ogsfoundation@yahoo.com) or visit [www.ogsef.org](http://www.ogsef.org).

### OGSEF Announces New Scholarship for Oak Grove Alumni Graduating from LHS

As support from our community has grown, so has the OGSEF's ability to support our Oak Grove students as they move through elementary and junior high -- and even past high school. We are excited to announce the inaugural Soaring Eagle Scholarship to support a deserving student in their post-secondary studies. This \$1,000 scholarship is open to graduating Libertyville High School Seniors who are Oak Grove Alumni. Applications are available in the LHS Career Resource Center and responses are due by March 16, 2016. The scholarship will be presented at the LHS Awards ceremony in May.

Established in 2005, OGSEF funds programs that go beyond the core curriculum. These programs often define the difference between a good and a great school. They unite the community, corporate partners, and the school around a common purpose of making our district a better place in which to live and raise a family. OGSEF grants have funded over \$150,000 for projects and grants over the last five years including the Science of Sport curriculum, robotics, reading resources, and much more.

### Oak Grove Gala '16 - Fundraiser to Support Educational Enrichment at Oak Grove School

Our biennial Spring Gala will take place on **February 27th, 2016**, at Independence Grove. The Gala is OGSEF's biggest fundraising initiative, and we need the support of our community to make it a great success. In addition, this year we have a spotlight project we are funding: The Oak Grove Green Screen Room. The Green Screen Room offers our students a unique opportunity to intersect creativity, technology, science, math, and communications.

The Grove Gala features dinner, open bar, entertainment by the band CoverGurl, a silent auction, and the opportunity to network with your community! There are several ways to support the OGSEF and the Grove Gala.

### Eagle Business Partner Program - Sponsorship Amount: \$2,500

As an Eagle Business Partner, your branding will be featured in our Gala program and your logo will be prominently placed on marketing materials – website, collateral, email, signage, and more - for OGSEF sponsored events throughout the year.

### Eagle Champions Circle - Sponsorship Amount: \$1,750

Members of the Eagle Champions Circle will receive two tickets to the Grove Gala, recognition in the event program, and a commemorative gold leaf on the Oak Grove Giving Tree.

### Eagle Fan Club - Sponsorship Amount: \$1,000

Members of the Eagle Fan Club will receive two tickets to the Grove Gala and recognition in the event program.

### Gala Tickets - Individual Tickets: \$100

One ticket to the Gala which includes food, open bar, and entertainment.

### Auction & Raffle Donations

Our Silent Auction & Raffle is a highlight of the Grove Gala and we welcome any and all donations. No donation is too big or small, and all your creative ideas are welcome! Please contact [ogsfoundation@yahoo.com](mailto:ogsfoundation@yahoo.com) with your donation ideas. To purchase tickets or commit to one of our Sponsorship Packages, please visit [www.ogsef.org/gala-2016](http://www.ogsef.org/gala-2016) and click the "Buy Gala Tickets Now" tab at the bottom of the page.

If you are interested in making a custom donation or contribution, please visit [www.ogsef.org/donate-now](http://www.ogsef.org/donate-now).





## Chess Club



Matthew Berner and Nikhil Patel's combined scores earned the 3rd place team trophy for Oak Grove at the 87th Kumbaya Chess Tournament in the U1200 section on January 24, 2016. Great job!

## Geography Bee

Oak Grove crowned a new Geography Bee champion on Monday, January 11th. Zachary Giamis outlasted 11 other contestants and earned an opportunity to represent Oak Grove at the State Geography Bee. Ramanan Srirajan was our runner-up and proved a worthy opponent; the championship round went to 7 tie breaker questions! A special congratulations to all the participants; Sean Heard, Paige Regan, Marisa Tarica, Arianne



Berner, Matthew Berner, Desigamoorthy Nainar, Gautham Sajeev, Jack Regan, Tej Tamalapakula, and Sashwatha Senthilkumar. Zachary was the only 8th grader participating, so we are expecting an exciting competition in 2017.

## Spelling Bee

In December, 25 students in grades four through eight qualified for the Oak Grove Spelling Bee. On January 14th, after two hours of spelling, seventh grade student Allie Parker became our Oak Grove Spelling Bee winner for 2016. Allie, and runner-up Anna Zhang, had quite a competition. The winning word was "congruent." Congratulations to all of our bee participants. Good luck to Allie as she prepares for the regional bee in February.



## Student Council

Student Council has had a busy and successful year so far! At the beginning of our school year, we opted to spend our time fundraising for one group this year. We decided to work with the Make-A-Wish Foundation to help grant a Lake County child's wish. We have sold coupon books, had Friday school stores, sold Candy Grams and yard signs to help reach our goal of \$6,000. We are now halfway there. In December, we decided to pay back our students who have helped us with our success. As a gift, we served 400 cups of hot chocolate to our junior high students and staff during their lunch periods.



We look forward to our annual food drive to help the C.O.O.L. Food Pantry at their greatest time of need beginning in February, hosting a school dance, and continuing our fundraising for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

## Girls Basketball

The Oak Grove 7th grade girls basketball team took second place in the season ending conference basketball tournament! The team knocked off the 2nd and 3rd seeded teams to make it to the championship game. Way to go, girls... congratulations on a successful season!

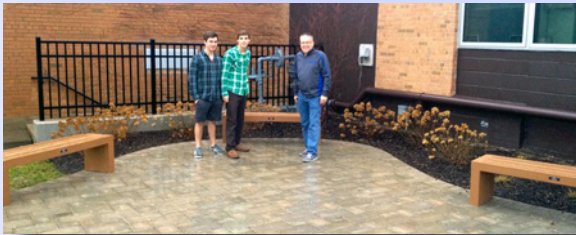




# Eagle Scout Projects at Oak Grove

Two proud Oak Grove Alumni, Brandon Reed and Andrew Fink, honored Oak Grove by beautifying our campus with their Eagle Scout Projects this fall.

Andrew, who is a member of Troop 194, built three beautiful wooden benches that have been placed on the “patio” area in front of the school. They are a wonderful addition and allow our parents and guests to have a great place to sit during afternoon pickup. Andrew wanted his Eagle Scout project to be something Oak Grove students, faculty, and families could see and use each day. Andrew graduated from Oak Grove in 2012 and is a senior at Libertyville High School.



Brandon Reed is a member of Troop 71. He graduated from Oak Grove in 2013 and is a junior at Libertyville High School. His vision was to create an Eagle Scout project that was unique from all others. Brandon wanted to establish a permanent reminder to our community about the sacrifice our veterans make for us each and every day. In Brandon’s words, “Freedom isn’t Free.”

Brandon created a stunning mosaic glass tile American Flag. It is built on a permanent concrete base and sits at the entrance to the Oak Grove grounds at the foot of our flagpole. He, family, and friends “unveiled” it to the public at our Veterans Day ceremony in November. Dozens of veterans in attendance took pictures at the site following the ceremony.

Oak Grove is humbled by, and proud of, these two young men. For them to think of creating their Eagle Scout projects to be a part of our school grounds is a testament to their character and appreciation of the education they received at Oak Grove. Thank you, Andrew and Brandon!



# School Renovations Continue



The summer of 2015 brought continued renovations to the Oak Grove facility. During the summer we renovated the 5th grade rooms and hallway, upgraded the ceilings and lighting, installed new cabinetry throughout the entire 1997 edition, and completed the installation of air conditioning in areas not climate controlled. We also continued to upgrade our technology infrastructure and introduced redundancy throughout all of our systems.

We have one phase of renovations remaining. Once they are completed at the end of summer 2016, we will have completely renovated the entire school. It is a wonderful facility and a great learning environment for our students.





# Camp Duncan

Oak Grove 7th graders participate in team building activities at the YMCA Camp Duncan, in Volo, Illinois. The students and teachers visit twice a year and participate in team building activities, canoeing, hiking, archery, survival skills class, star



lab activities, ropes course, climbing wall, science activities, camp fire, and s'mores. These trips give the students and teachers an opportunity to work together outside the classroom, build relationships, and explore and develop an appreciation for the outdoors. The day after the visit to camp we

continue team building activities at the school. The students and teachers really develop an awareness of each others' strengths not seen in the classroom. Those skills are equally as important as the academic skills and are fostered throughout the school year.



# 1:1 Update

After a successful iPad take-home pilot with the 3rd and 4th grade students at the end of the 2014-15 school year, the Board of Education approved the next step in the Oak Grove 1:1 initiative. Allowing all Kindergarten through 5th grade students to take their iPads home at the start of the 2015-16 school year was the newest undertaking. Great planning went into this portion of the initiative from parent information sessions and iPad handouts dates before the school year began, to changes in the Lightspeed Web filter the District uses to filter Internet content. The District-owned iPads that students utilize at school, as well as take home, are bound to the Lightspeed Web filter no matter where the students are using these devices. This provides an extra layer of protection from inappropriate web content over personal devices that families may own and use at home.

Other key advantages of taking District devices home over using personal devices include access to all content that is created on the student device. Only apps that are chosen by teachers are on these device. Students are not able to add apps or games. Screen time spent on these devices is educationally focused. Support of the Oak Grove Tech department is another advantage available for these iPads.

Data collected from students, teachers, and parents has helped Oak Grove overcome the hurdles that are common to large scale 1:1 deployments, and is helping direct our technology path. The large scale take-home initiative has been a positive move in that it allows work to continue on non-cloud based apps which allows more class time to be devoted to other learning opportunities. Also, taking home District devices lessens the burden of having to share limited personal devices at home.

# Eagle Breakfast

On January 21st, we held our Eagle Breakfast. Junior high students were chosen by the Oak Grove staff and recognized for displaying fine examples of character. We were honored to have Andrew Bitta, head soccer coach of Libertyville High School, as our guest speaker. Mr. Bitta lives in the community and has two children who are alums of Oak Grove.



Oak Grove School District 68  
1700 S. O'Plaine Road  
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### Veterans Day at Oak Grove

Every November 11 is a special day for our nation. This year Oak Grove continued its long standing tradition of honoring our service men and women on Veterans Day. This special occasion is much more than a single day for Oak Grove students. The 8th grade class spends a great deal of time preparing for this event, including a "teaching day" where they teach our younger students about Veterans Day. The ceremony was attended by over 1,200 students, faculty, and guests. We are always moved when veterans in the audience are recognized for their service to their country and are honored to hear stories from our veterans at the reception following the ceremony.



[www.ogschool.org](http://www.ogschool.org)



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