



LIFE in the LAB SCHOOLS



PARENT EDITION

Greetings!

The Lab Schools are having an excellent first semester. Each school has embarked on exciting new learning opportunities for our students. Metcalf and U-High are taking the lead on key educational issues that contribute to the improvement of student success throughout the state; common core implementation, standards based grading, and technology integration. Our students and our future teachers are benefitting from an environment that is continually learning and improving. I couldn't be more proud of the effort of our students, staff, faculty, and administration. Along with improvements in teaching and learning, both Metcalf and U-High are enjoying improved facilities. Due to a variety of work over the past year, the schools are in their best shape in many years. Having been associated with the Lab Schools in one capacity or another over the past nine years, I am pleased to share my enthusiasm for the progress of the schools!

Student Achievement

Metcalf and University High School once again demonstrate extremely high levels of student achievement. For Metcalf and other elementary students throughout the state, the inclusion of common core aligned test items has impacted ISAT test scores.

ISAT Test Results Spring 2013						
	3 rd grade Meets/Exceeds		5 th grade Meets/Exceeds		8 th grades Meets/Exceeds	
Subject	Metcalf	State	Metcalf	State	Metcalf	State
Reading*	76.7	58.8	93.0	58.9	89.4	59.8
Math*	86.0	54.9	93.0	59.4	91.5	58.9

ISAT Test Results Spring 2013				
	4 th grade Meets/Exceeds		7 th grade Meets/Exceeds	
Subject	Metcalf	State	Metcalf	State
Science	100.0	81.0	97.9	79.0

*20% of the test questions include common core items.

*Cut scores have been raised by Illinois State Board of Education.

Students across the state are in the process of adjusting to new standards and cut scores and we are seeing growth in Lab School student's knowledge and skills. We believe the standards based environment is assisting our students in understanding what they know and can do. We are encouraged by these results and anticipate more improvement as we continue alignment to a standards based assessment process.

University High School students attained a composite ACT score of 24.4. Although the composite is a slight .4 below our five -year average of 24.8, we maintain a strong 4.2 points above the state average of 20.2.

ACT Test Results Spring 2013		
Subject	U-High	State
English	24.0	19.5
Math	24.8	20.5
Reading	24.5	20.2
Science	24.0	20.1
Composite	24.4*	20.2

*73% of U-High students score at or above 21, the ACT benchmark for college-readiness



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University High School departments use this data to analyze college readiness of our students. In each of the fundamental learning areas, U-High students showed gains in college readiness from their freshmen to junior years. As part of our approach of continuous improvement, faculty and administration will spend time analyzing student performance to determine which students need more support and what instructional approaches might assist students in reaching standards established.

Financial Outlook

The Lab Schools project a balanced budget for FY14. Preparation for FY15 will include meeting with faculty and administration to continue discussing our priorities. I am continually grateful to our students, faculty, and administration for making the necessary adjustments to allow the year to go smoothly. Current Illinois State Board of Education budget predictions indicate a 4% decrease in general state aid funding for FY15, however the legislative process makes the funding level difficult to predict. We will be monitoring the state budget situation closely to ensure we have the most current information as we build the budget for FY 15.

Facilities

As mentioned earlier both Metcalf and U-High facilities are in their best shape in recent memory. This is due to the prioritization of specific facility improvements now completed or near completion. Metcalf has finalized renovations in the Family and Consumer Sciences room, the bathrooms in both the girls and boys locker rooms, and installation of a new roof and new asphalt to the playground area.



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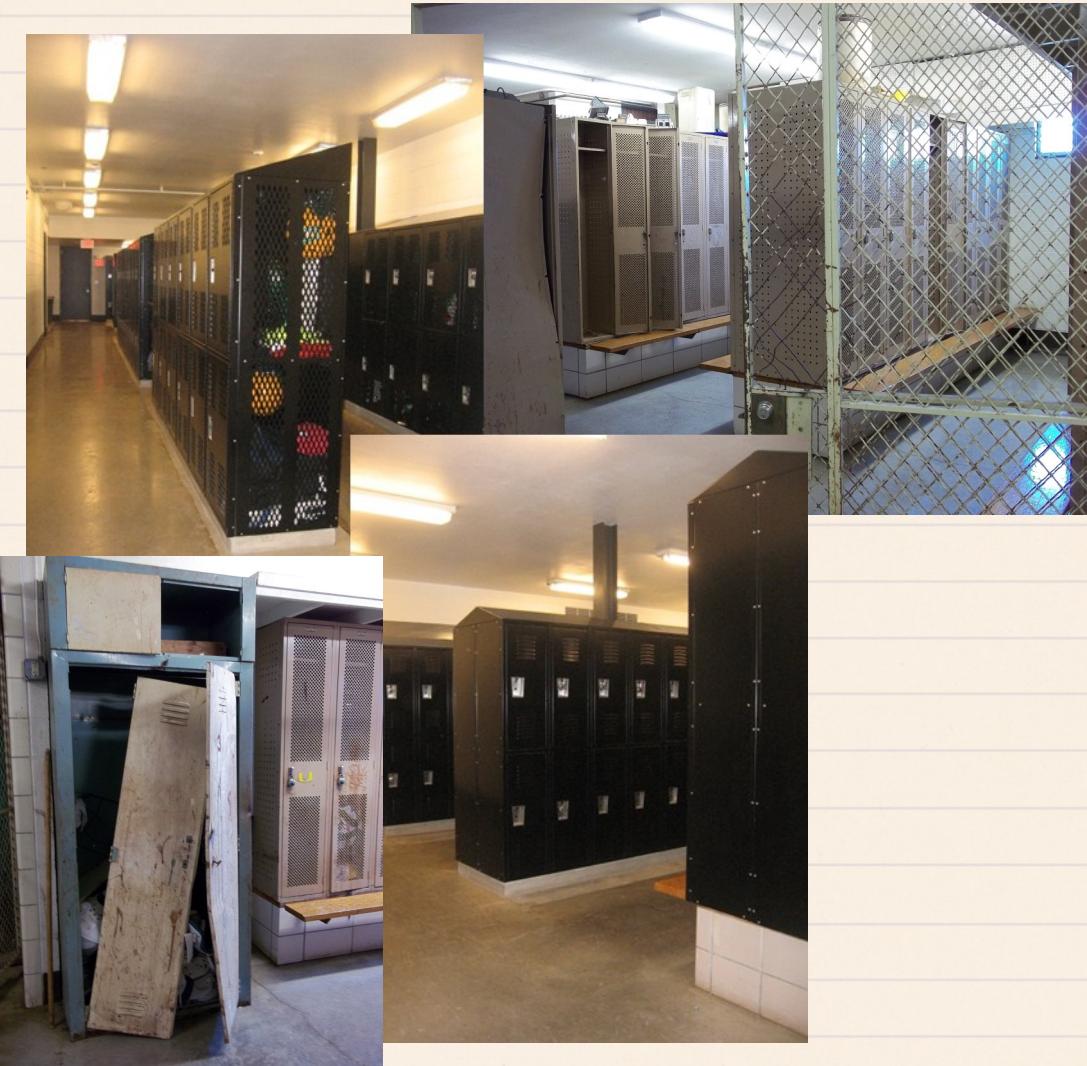
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1891
we learn
and teach

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University High School men's and women's locker room are completely renovated including the addition of a new weight room with new weights being delivered within the month. To finish the locker room project, new flooring, windows, and benches will be installed in the next few weeks. The main gym has been renovated with new banners recognizing our state award winners, a new scoreboard and new mats. We are currently planning bathroom renovations in the student lounge area, contributing to the improvement of the entire first floor.



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Our mission: How can we help?

As Lab Schools we focus on the role of helping our students, future teachers, and area schools strive to achieve at higher levels. While it is usually apparent how we are helping our students and clinical students, it isn't always clear how we contribute to improving education in the region and state. Below are examples of how our faculty and administration are contributing to the success of students outside the Lab Schools;

- The University High School Math department is leading a workshop for implementing the common core standards at schools in the Corn Belt Conference.
- Metcalf is leading Common Core implementation and Standards based grading workshops through the McLean County Regional Office of Education and the Illinois Principal's Association.
- Metcalf has hosted area educators for a music and movement workshop with a nationally recognized speaker Dr. John Feierabend.
- University High School is piloting the implementation of the University High School Essential qualities of a U-High graduate. Students receive direct feedback on these skills that are essential for success in college and the work place.
http://www.uhigh.ilstu.edu/blogs/keystone/?page_id=105
- The Lab Schools are representing the Corn Belt Region in the Vision 20/20 initiative. Vision 20/20 is a state-wide committee charged with developing a vision for education in Illinois that could be adopted by the state legislature or gubernatorial candidates.
<http://www.illinoisvision2020.org/index.php/home/about-the-initiative>

As always, thank you for your support, and please let us know how we can help!