We are Excited for this Fall!

In this edition we are catching you up on student accomplishments from the spring and what we have been doing to prepare for a great 2016-2017 school year. The Lab Schools are getting prepared to welcome the new and returning students August 22nd. While we have had some impressive accomplishments this past year, we are excited to see what the new school year will bring.

Student Accomplishments  For the first time last year we began recognizing the destinations of graduates. We are continuing the effort this year with information submitted by each graduating senior. We have students heading all over the country and our highest percentage in recent years staying right here at Illinois State University! The Class of 2016 was offered more than $13 million in scholarships and we wish them the best of luck as they begin a new journey!

Click here to see where our Class of 2016 students will attend college.

Good luck Class of 2016!
U-High Wins Big at National Speech & Debate and NAACP ACT-SO

University High School came home with several honors at this year’s National Speech and Debate Tournament in Salt Lake City, Utah. Patrick Deneen finished in 2nd place in the extemporaneous commentary event out of more than 400 student competitors. Christina Su finished 10th in informative speaking. Jacob Mattia and Cece Hill advanced to the top 60 in their individual events. As if these impressive results weren’t enough, U-High was named a speech School of Honor at the event and is listed among the top 40 schools in the country out of 1,150 teams represented at nationals. None of this would be possible without the hard work and dedication of our speech and debate team members and coaching staff. You all deserve our heartfelt congratulations on another successful season!

Blythe Brings Home the Gold: U-High junior Jordyn Blythe recently competed in the national NAACP ACT-SO Competition in Cincinnati, Ohio. The competition attracted 600 students from around the nation. Jordyn was awarded a gold medal in dramatics for her monologue performance. Congratulations Jordyn!

Metcalf Genius Days

In the past few years, Metcalf implemented a new program called Genius Days. The school’s program is modeled after Google’s 80/20 concept, where its workers work 80 percent of the time and can use 20 percent of their time on the job to work on something that interests them. The students are given free time (approximately 15 hours of independent study) over several days in which they can explore anything of interest, including shadowing a mentor to learn more about a career. The students must have a plan, it must help them learn, it must be a project to create or do something, and they must be passionate about what they are doing. This program is an exciting way to learn and our students thoroughly enjoy it!

Pictured to the left is Aidan Bovee. During one year of Genius Days, Aidan created a hovercraft, made from wood, that hovers a centimeter off the ground and is pulled around on a rope.
CITIZEN’S ADVISORY COUNCIL...

We were fortunate to have 22 applications for our Citizens Advisory Council position openings this past spring. The CAC selected three new members to serve for the upcoming year. The Citizens Advisory Council members for the 2016-2017 school year are:

Tara Braucht - NEW - Metcalf Parent  Eric Vaughn - NEW - University High School Parent  Darren Wolf
Curt Richardson - NEW - Metcalf Parent  Jeremy Wilcox Metcalf PTO
Edward Gold  Jennifer Trevarathan U- High Booster
Dave Greenfield  Cassie Graham - U-High representative
Monica Noraian  Beth Gordon - Metcalf representative
Mark Pickering  Amelia Noel Elkins - ISU representative
Franklyn Fung  Eric Vaughn - NEW - University High School Parent

Laboratory Schools Budget FY17

After months of negotiations in the Capitol, at the end of June the state of Illinois did pass a stop gap budget, resulting in school districts receiving full funding for the first time since 2011. The Lab Schools will receive full general state aid funding for the 2016-2017 school year. Despite the the proration of general state aid over the last 5 years, we have been fortunate to have strong support from a variety of constituents including parents, grandparents, alumni, Metcalf PTO, U-High Boosters, and of course Illinois State University. Support from these groups has allowed us to make facility and safety improvements in our two schools. This support has also allowed us to maintain our programs and have minimal personnel reductions. We are confident that with our conservative budgeting strategy and your support, the Lab Schools will continue to provide quality education to our students.

Hayden Auditorium Renovation

You can still Contribute!

Thomas Metcalf School's Hayden Auditorium is undergoing a renovation. It's not too late to contribute! The estimated cost is $150,000. By making a gift of $300, you can underwrite a seat for Hayden. Donations of $500 or more will be known as the L. J. Thomley Level of Giving. With your gift, all donors underwriting seats and donating to the L.J. Thomley fund will have their names proudly displayed on a beautiful plaque at the entrance to Hayden Auditorium. If you’d like to make a contribution, please make checks payable to Illinois State University Foundation and mail to: Pat Miles, Illinois State University, Campus Box 7000, Normal, IL 61790. We appreciate your support!
Summer is often a time when we are finishing up the process of bringing new faculty on board and getting them ready for their first year in the Lab Schools. We have been fortunate to secure very talented new educators and want to introduce them to you:

Zach Gilbert – Social Studies Metcalf
Zach Gilbert comes from Unit 5 to Metcalf this fall as our 5th and 6th grade Social Studies teacher with 21 years of experience. He has taught sixth grade social studies at Parkside Junior High for the last 13 years. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in History with Teacher Certification from Eastern Illinois University, and a Master of Science degree in Instructional Technology and Design from Illinois State University.

Michael Jones – Science Metcalf
Michael Jones will be Metcalf’s new 7th and 8th grade Science teacher this fall. Michael has 15 years of experience as a Science teacher with District 87. He has a Bachelor of Science degree from Illinois State University with endorsements in middle school science, mathematics and social studies. He also has a Master of Science degree from Walden University specializing in Integrating Technology in the Classroom.

Chad Tallon - Drama Metcalf
With many years of experience in acting, directing, playwriting and technical experience, Chad Tallon joins Metcalf as our Drama teacher. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from Lewis University and a Master of Fine Arts in Acting from Western Illinois University.

Aundrea Wells - Music Metcalf
Aundrea Wells will be Metcalf’s new music teacher this fall. Aundrea most recently worked at Noel LeVasseur Elementary in Bourbonnais as their general music teacher. She has a Bachelor of Music Education with Certification and a Bachelor of Arts Vocal Performance from Illinois State University.

Camille Strode – Art Metcalf
Camille Strode will be joining us this fall as Metcalf’s art teacher. With 5 years of experience, her last position was as the Early Elementary Art Teacher at Mulberry School. She has a Bachelor of Science in Art Education from Northern Illinois University.

Abby Rader - Physical Education Metcalf
We are excited to have Abby Rader joining our staff this fall. With nine years of experience at Eureka Middle School as a physical education and health teacher and coach, Abby brings a great wealth of knowledge to help with our students’ fitness. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education/Health from Olivet Nazarene University and a Master’s Degree in Education from Indiana Wesleyan University.

Megan Bozarth - Dean of Students Metcalf
With fifteen years of experience teaching in both suburban and rural schools, Megan Bozarth is a welcome addition to our Metcalf staff as the Dean of Students. She has a Bachelor of Science from Illinois State University and a Master of Science in Educational Leadership from University of St. Francis.

Jessica Michaels – Chemistry U-High
Jessica Michaels will join U-High’s Science department as a chemistry teacher this fall. Jessica has six years of teaching experience and most recently worked at Parkway North High School in St. Louis, Missouri. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry with a Minor in Mathematics, and a Master of Arts in Education, both from Truman State University.

We want to welcome our new faculty and are looking forward to their contributions!
Facility Improvements – The Lab Schools have been fortunate to proceed with facility improvements this summer at both Thomas Metcalf School and University High School.

U-High will have the tennis courts resurfaced. This new surfacing has a documented history of excellent performance and should allow for long-term playability of the courts.

The Metcalf back parking area has been completely resurfaced. The Laboratory Schools worked together with Illinois State University facilities and were able to get this work done. The new parking lot surfacing looks great!

Thank you for your support of the Laboratory Schools. Even in very difficult times we strive to provide the best educational environment for each and every student. Doing so allows our students to prosper and have some remarkable achievements, making us proud they are part of the Lab Schools. I hope to see everyone in a few weeks at our back to school events!

Superintendent, Laboratory Schools
Illinois State University