

**From the Desk of the Principal**  
**December 2019**  
**Eric Chisausky**

I would like to thank PTO Presidents Dana Martin and Angela Ordway for their leadership and championing a wonderful start to the school year for Walker. The Walker Fest provided our community time to connect with each other, celebrate Walker, and support our school programming with exciting enrichments. And thanks to *you*, we exceeded our fundraising goal! Read on to learn more about our plans to enhance our Walker School experience.

As the first trimester has ended, I hope you all found the recent parent-teacher conferences valuable in the continuing partnership to help your child learn and grow at Walker School. I am proud of our students, staff, and parents for working hard together to make Walker a great school community!

**We're Exemplary (Again)!**

You may have seen the district communication recently that identified Walker as receiving an "Exemplary" designation on the most recent Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) state report card. That means Walker performed in the top 10% of schools across the state based on 2018-2019 data. This is the second year Walker has received such designation (since these state designations began last year). Much of our school improvement work is focused on reaching all of our students and sustaining our success while continuing to grow in our professional practices. Please read on for more information about our school improvement focus areas for this year.

Click here for a Walker School snapshot:

<https://www.illinoisreportcard.com/School.aspx?schoolid=190221810042009>



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### WALKER SCHOOL (K - 5)

HINSDALE CCSD 181

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**Principal**  
Mr. Eric Chisausky

**District Superintendent**  
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#### School Snapshot

■ School ■ District ■ State

**Summative Designation**  
**Exemplary School**

Schools performing in the top 10% of schools statewide, with no underperforming student

**1%**  
Student Mobility

**70% ELA**  
**58% Math**  
Growth IAR

**FY 2019 School Finances**

\$17k Per-Pupil (School)  
\$17k District Per-Pupil

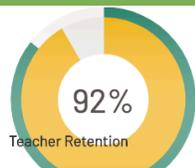
**FY 2019 Evidence-Based Funding**

\$53M EBIF Final Resources  
\$39M Adequacy Target

**4%**  
Chronic Absenteeism

**Total District Expenditures:**  
\$100,746,946

**This district is at 135% financial capacity to meet expectations**



**92%**  
Teacher Retention

I believe this designation is a reflection of our teachers’ investment in a continual cycle of school improvement. Each grade level team sets yearly goals in the areas of English Language Arts (ELA) and Math, including specific Action Plan steps for monitoring our own progress; most importantly, our staff has demonstrated a willingness to make course corrections when needed to ensure our students are achieving proficiency *and* growth targets based on reliable projection data. We intend to keep up these great professional practices, and I am confident we will continue to grow and be recognized for our success!

### Walker School Climate Survey open 12/2

Starting Monday 12/2, you should have received an email from the District asking you to participate in our annual school survey, the Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI). Please click the link below and take a few minutes to provide your feedback about our school climate. This feedback helps us to foster positive youth development, build community and school pride, celebrate strengths, and identify needs.

The results will be available in early 2020 and are often reported on by local media. Your participation is critical to our success! For more info and our FAQ, visit [www.d181.org/csci](http://www.d181.org/csci). **Note: we need at least 40% of our Walker families to complete this survey to provide valid and meaningful information for our continued school improvement efforts.** Please take a few moments to complete this survey and share your feedback.

### Walker School

<http://www.schoolclimate.net/survey/schools/parent.asp?caseid=1194275&survey=4>

#### Winter MAP Testing

Winter MAP testing begins in January grades 1-5. Our teachers will review the winter MAP data once it is available to monitor student progress and scaffold supports to help each child be successful. Below is the *tentative* schedule:

	Mon	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
	January 13th	January 15th	January 16th	January 17th	January 21st	January 22nd	January 23rd	January 24th
Grade Level	1st	1st	2nd	3rd	4th and 5th	4th and 5th	4th and 5th	3rd
Subject	Reading	Math	Reading	Reading	Reading	Math	Math Continued	Math
Time	8:45-9:15, 10:15-10:45	8:45-9:15, 10:15-10:45	8:45-9:15, 9:45-done	9:00-done/lunch	9:00-done	10:20-lunch	10:20-lunch	9:00-done/lunch
Grade Level					2nd			
Subject					Math			
Time					12:15-12:45, 2:00-done			

#### How your child can prepare for assessment—and what you can do to help:

A student who is well rested, well fed, and has a positive attitude about assessment is best prepared for testing. You can help your child do his or her best by considering these tips:

- Make sure that your child is in school and on time on test days.
- Make sure your child gets a good night’s sleep and eats a healthy breakfast before each day of testing.
- Remind your child that this assessment is only one measure. Emphasize that you have confidence in his or her ability to do the best job possible.

- Remind your child to listen to the directions and read each question carefully during testing.

### **Giving and Sharing: Spreading Compassion**

Once again at Walkerville, we are asking for your family to fill our life-size Grinch with compassion hearts to continue our tradition of our annual *Giving and Sharing* collection. Please continue to donate new, unopened toys, winter clothing, books, and canned food for our Giving and Sharing collection, which will support HCS Family Services and drop off extra coins to our collection jug near the office for supporting Kasha, Walker’s adopted Brookfield Zoo animal. Each family is invited to visit the collection table outside the main office to place a sticker on Walkerville’s Grinch, and students can add a heart to their lockers to help spread compassion! You are welcome to join us for Our Giving and Sharing Assembly, being held on Friday, December 20, at 2:00 PM; Mrs. Sciacotta will have our students prepared to sing holiday songs and ring in this important season with a sense of contribution and spirit. Thank you for your compassionate hearts!



**COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTORS!**  
 Walker SELAS word of the month:  
**COMPASSION**  
 Can you grow your heart 3 sizes?

Special thanks to Dana Martin and Molly Pierce and our PTO leadership, for our continuous sense of giving and generosity at Walker by collecting over 40 bags of donations for Cradles to Crayons throughout the school year. Also, thanks to Rachel Murphy and Amy Campbell for their leadership in collecting coats for the Infant Welfare League.

### **School Improvement**

Around this time each year, I like to give a brief overview of Walker’s School Improvement Plan. Our teachers have been analyzing several types of student information, including reading levels, local assessments, and MAP and IAR data trends, across grade levels to pinpoint areas of focus for each grade level. As an overview, here are the major themes we have chosen for this year:

#### **Strategies - Walker teachers will...**

**Visible Focus:** Clearly state the objective of the lesson as an “I can” statement, as well as demonstrate how students may achieve the target by modeling and giving exemplars.

**Respond:** Implement school wide Flex Block Schedule with a targeted focus on guided reading and written response to reading (Year 2 of this initiative).

Reflect: Explore best practice strategies for utilizing common plan time to focus on student needs and to monitor progress prior to trimester benchmark meetings.

Relate: Model relationship-building to increase student sense of Social Emotional Safety.

### Greatest Area of Needs

In short, continuing our focus from last year, Walker has identified on-level reading and writing proficiency for English Language Arts goals, and fact fluency and multi-step problem solving for Math goals as needed focus areas for many of our grade levels. The district resources we have recently implemented, especially our *Fountas and Pinnell Classroom* in English Language Arts, have been wonderful to teach with thus far and have provided a variety of high-interest leveled reading books to engage our students in reading and responding to text. Feel free to contact your child's teacher if you'd like to further discuss your child's progress relative to these school improvement efforts. I look forward to keeping you updated on our progress in these improvement areas throughout the school year.

### SELAS at Walker

For our school-wide SELAS (Social and Emotional Learning for Academic Success) goal this year, we have identified the following three themes based on a teacher survey of our students' social-emotional needs, which all teachers are purposefully weaving into the Walker experience for our students:

- Increase Academic Engagement
- Decrease Impulsiveness
- Increase Cooperating with Others

**Strategy 1:** Each classroom will provide weekly Class Meetings to help facilitate positive relationships with each other.

**Strategy 2:** Staff will form a Kindness Committee to provide actionable expectations aligned to Walker's monthly SELAS themes (i.e. December = Compassion).

We have continued stamping students' hands for CHAMPS expected behaviors and recognizing students who demonstrate the above characteristics. You may have noticed that we continue to recognize Weekly CHAMPS and share these group photos in *Walker Wednesday News* each month. Additionally, one student from grades K-2 and one student from grades 3-5 will be selected from our Weekly CHAMPS to be awarded an extra recess for his/her homeroom class. As parents, you can help by *championing* the effort of your child in these important life skills as we work together to instill a sense of resilience and pride in doing things well! And remember, at Walker School, *We all Choose Kind*.

### **5<sup>th</sup> Grade Health/Puberty 1 Presentations**

New this year, D181 has absorbed the Health Education component previously offered as an elected opportunity to our fifth grade families in the evening, which was titled "Michael" (for the boys) and "Linda" (for the girls)." On February 14 during the

school day, Robert Crown Health Center will present separate boys/girls sessions titled “Puberty 1.” The District will soon send out a communication with more details, but if you’re a 5th grade parent, please save the date for **January 9<sup>th</sup> at HMS at 6:00 PM** to learn more about the student “Puberty 1” presentations scheduled for our students on February 14 during the school day.

### **PTO Partnership**

Thanks to you, parents, the PTO sponsored fall Walker Fest/Warrior Challenge netted over \$38,000.00! An awesome 93% of our Walker students participated in this fantastic event! The PTO Executive Committee has been working with me to strategically plan how best to spend the money raised. Note, much of these funds help pay for our Literacy/STEAM Night, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Ed., field trips, assemblies, author visits, celebrations/spirit days, and other enhancements, such as Spelling Bee and Science Week. Here are our goals with our annual fundraising:

1. Spend the funds in the year in which it is raised
2. Serve all or most of our students’ needs
3. Target meaningful expenses to enhance the Walker School experience

So far this year, the PTO has...

- Purchased numerous books to continue to enhance the library
- Continued our Going Green initiatives across campus and grade-levels
- Expanded our popular hot lunch program
- Supported the third grade HOPE club trip to the Naperville Healing Field of Honor
- Approved allocation to update our PE gymnastics equipment

Due to exceeding our fundraising goal this year, we are exploring opportunities to improve our playground and the building grounds. We also plan to continue supporting our new Walker (STEAM) iLab, our Staff Grant Program, and other teacher-led initiatives.

FYI, Last year the following teacher-requested items were purchased by the PTO and continue to be utilized this year for more optimal learning experiences for our students:

- Leveled books for guided reading
- Monarch and Blue Stem books for the library
- Math Fraction manipulatives for intermediate grades
- Popcorn Site words for primary grades
- Gumball Math game for primary grades
- 6 Breakout EDU Kits for whole school
- Various flexible furniture (stools, standing desks) for the classrooms
- PE gymnastics equipment

Our Walker staff is very grateful for the partnership with the PTO to identify valuable resources to enhance the overall learning experience for our Walker students. Please know we appreciate and welcome parents volunteering at school (library, spirit lunches,

art awareness, gardening projects, etc.), serving on PTO committees, and donating their time to make Walker a great school community!

### **Spelling Bee**

Congratulations to all of our students who participated in our Spelling Bee on December 5. We had 75 students in all perform bravely in front of a full audience!

#### Kindergarten

Winner - Andrew Ho

2<sup>nd</sup> - Ryan Young

#### 1st grade

Winner - Liam Harrigan

2<sup>nd</sup> - Alex Liao and Christian Gernot

#### 2nd grade

Winner - Jerry Liu

2<sup>nd</sup> - Olivia Shum

#### 3rd grade

Winner - Kate Lowe

2<sup>nd</sup> - Liam Will

#### 4th grade

Winner - Nate Ruth

2<sup>nd</sup>- Dylan Tekwani, Jack Gerrard, Jayden Bhattacharyya, and Kendall Forcash

#### 5th grade

Winner - Olivia Tobolski

2<sup>nd</sup> - Natalie DeTorro

Congratulations to **Olivia Tobolski** and **Kate Lowe** for winning the All School Spelling Bee. We wish you luck at the district level Spelling Bee in February 2020.

Thank you to all of our parent volunteers including:

Pam Devata

Courtney Schuster

Susan Tobolski

Marsha Ma

Sameera Ahmed

Nicci Lambert

Dan Lambert

Jinni Ali

We would like to thank our Spelling Bee committee members: Shivani Chadha, Priya Bhattacharyya, Karis Tekwani & Neena Will for putting together our annual Bee

at Walker School as well as our Walker PTO and parent volunteers. Thank you for all your hard work!

**Mark Your Calendars for These Special Events**

12/9		Dinner Bell at Portillo's
12/11		Vintage Charm fundraiser
12/18		Dinner Bell at the Patio
12/13		Pajama Spirit Day
12/19	2:00-3:00	5th graders caroling in town
12/20	2:00	Giving and Sharing Assembly
1/6		Birthday Lunch with Mr. C (January and July half b-days)
1/10		That Burger Joint/ Oberweis dinner bell
1/13		Winter MAP testing begins for grades 1-5
1/20		No School – MLK Day
1/23-1/24		Gymnastics Parent Days in PE
1/24	lunchtime	Lunch Alert (please arrange for students to eat at home if possible as we have the lunchroom occupied with the Gymnastics Parent Days)
1/28	7:00PM	Gr 5 and 6 Orchestra Concert at CHMS
1/30	7:00PM	Beginning Band Concert at CHMS
2/3-2/7		Science Week
2/24	1:30	General PTO meeting with Allison Voss, Social Worker

**Thank You, Parents!**

Lastly, thank you, *parents*, for your investment in your child's education and for being such an important part of Walker School. As this season of Giving and Sharing unfolds, I want to pass along my sincerest appreciation for your efforts in partnering with our staff to help every Walker student *develop the skills they need to change the world and the confidence they need to do it* (d181 Vision statement).

As always, feel free to connect with me if I can assist you in any way to further support your child at Walker School.

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