

Fall 2021

# Connect 31

Published by West Northfield School District 31

Empowering Every Student to Make a  
Positive Impact on Tomorrow's Community



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# WELCOME HOME

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*Pictured: Winkelman students  
entered the school on the red  
carpet for their first day.*



# Letter from the Superintendent



Dear District 31 Community,

Welcome Home! To me, home means a safe, enjoyable, happy place where you can live, laugh and learn. It's somewhere where you are loved, respected, and cared for. As we welcomed students and staff back into our building (in some cases for the first time since March 2020), we emphasized creating an environment for all of us in our community to live, laugh and LEARN in a home away from home.

We are grateful that you are part of our community. Together we believe we can create a home away from home that will provide safety and support for everyone.

Between the red carpet walk at Winkelman as students entered school to the traditional back-to-school cook-out at Field, it was a pleasure to welcome our students back to the buildings for the 2021-2022 school year. We loved hearing the laughter and conversation that flowed throughout the buildings.

We recognize that the last 20 months have been challenging...and there is still so much unknown ahead of us... but this community has proven time and again that we will work collaboratively through it and make schools a safe place for learning and living. Welcome home!

Sincerely,

Dr. Erin Murphy  
District 31 Superintendent

## District 31 Student Services

District 31 celebrated Exceptional Children's Week in May. Inclusive schools ensure all students are welcomed and provided necessary supports to be successful.

### **English Learner Program**

The English Learner (EL) Program is proudly serving nearly 200 students predominantly in the languages of Mongolian, Russian, Korean, and Spanish. We recently had our Bilingual Parent Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting, where we discussed the purpose of BPAC and our EL funding. Future meetings will be announced on the district website. Meetings take place at Winkelman and include food, prizes and other activities.

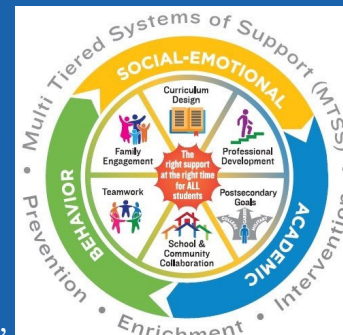
### **Special Education**

Our Special Education department has added a 3-5 Supported Learning Environment classroom

to District 31. This new classroom is allowing us to provide a continuum of services in our own school district. In addition to this new classroom, our department is working on providing on ability awareness training for students, teachers and families and focusing on our inclusive practices. In D31, ALL means Empowering Every Learner!

### **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**

Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) is a framework for systematic and continuous improvement using evidence-based practices and data-based problem solving to support "needs driven" decision-making that improves





**Courtney Nielsen**  
School Nurse

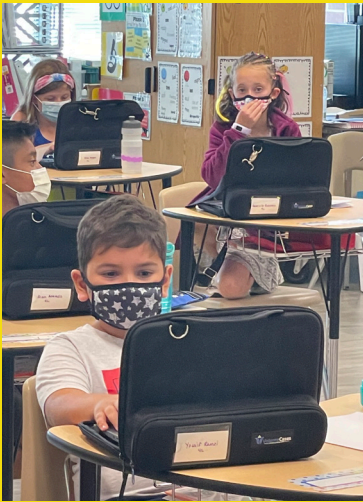
## Winkelman Health Office

Welcome our new Winkelman School Nurse Courtney Nielsen. Ms. Nielsen will work collaboratively with students, staff, and families to keep our school safe throughout the year. The Winkelman Health Office is open to students during school hours and offers a variety of support and health education. If you have any questions regarding student medical forms, COVID-19 vaccinations, quarantine information, or general student health questions, please reach out to Nurse Nielsen at [cnielsen@district31.net](mailto:cnielsen@district31.net).

For District 31 COVID-19 information, please visit [district31.net/covid](https://district31.net/covid).

## First Day of School

Winkelman students began school on August 19 with a red carpet entrance. Little Wildcats returned on August 23.



academic performance for all students. All staff members received an overview of the new MTSS handbook and new forms. A final handbook will be posted on the District website.

### **Little Wildcat Preschool**

Little Wildcat Program has started off the school year with 4 classrooms in a blended learning model. The District program is supported by TrueNorth. Our District proudly provides services to District 27 and 30 through our North-

field Township agreement.

### **Homeless/ McKinney Vento**

If you or someone you know are homeless, which means a lack of fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. Please contact Dr. Janine Gruhn, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, at [jgruhn@district31.net](mailto:jgruhn@district31.net) or call 847-313-4411.





# Strategic Plan



## Mission

**Empowering every student to make a positive impact on tomorrow's community.**

## Vision

**Every student is empowered and prepared to make meaningful contributions to the community through:**

- Equitable opportunities for ALL students
- An environment that is culturally responsive and celebrates diversity
- A focus on future-ready learning skills and high expectations
- Authentic learning experiences and innovative resources designed to inspire and develop students' passions
- An enriching, creative, and collaborative environment

## Core Values

**We embrace the following Core Values as we work to achieve our Mission, Vision, and Goals:**

- High Expectations
- Diversity and Inclusivity
- Continuous Improvement and Data Informed Decisions
- Future-Ready Learning
- Student Engagement through Agency
- Collaboration
- Partnerships
- Shared Leadership Accountability

## Portrait of a Graduate

**These are the values and characteristics we wish to see demonstrated by our students when our vision is fully achieved:**

- Critical Thinkers
- Problem Solvers
- Collaborators
- Effective Communicators,
- Empathetic
- Responsible Global Citizens
- Self-Advocates
- Resilient
- Curious Life-long Learners



## Goals and Strategies

### Goals

1

#### **Student Growth & Achievement**

Students will demonstrate academic & social emotional growth supported by engaging, evidence-based learning strategies & equitable curriculum, instruction & assessment.

### Strategies

- Implement a consistent & universal system of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, across all grade levels & buildings, that promotes the development of every student academically, physically, & social-emotionally.
- Create & implement a standards-based & differentiated curriculum for all subject areas that is aligned vertically (across grade levels) & horizontally (within grade levels) to inform practices in grading & reporting.
- Hold every student to high expectations, increase growth, & close gaps by providing intervention, differentiation & enrichment.

## Goals

## Strategies

2

### **Supportive Learning Environment**

District 31 will foster a healthy climate & culture that creates an environment where rigorous, relevant, engaging & equitable learning experiences meet the needs of all learners.

- Implement specific district-wide structures, processes, monitoring tools, & expectations for student goal setting.
- Create innovative opportunities for student-centered learning that ensures engagement & agency (student voice and choice) through exploration of their passions & interactions with problem-based, real-world applications.
- Foster a sense of belonging to address diversity, equity & inclusion across all settings.

3

### **Professional Practice & Shared Leadership**

District 31 will cultivate a supportive & positive learning environment where collaborative structures & processes are used to ensure shared leadership, professional growth & data-based decision making.

- Utilize the systematic process in which we work together interdependently (Professional Learning Communities) to promote trust, positive change, collaboration, & commitment.
- Provide targeted, on-going, & differentiated professional learning opportunities that provide educators with innovative & practical applications.

4

### **Family and Community Partnerships**

District 31 will build strong relationships & collaborate with families & the community to support the education, well-being, growth & development of the whole child.

- Empower families as active partners in supporting & improving student learning in meaningful ways.
- Develop reciprocal partnerships by sharing resources, engaging all families, collecting feedback, & providing professional learning.

5

### **Finance, Facility, & Technology**

District 31 will remain financially stable, provide equitable access to resources of the highest quality & maintain financial transparency to all stakeholders.

- Ensure that resources are expended in an equitable & fiscally responsible manner to maximize opportunities for all learners including access to leading-edge technology & responsive learning environments.

## **Connect 31 Parent Education Opportunities**

Join us for the 2021-2022 Parent Education Series featuring presentations designed to help our families thrive. Learn more about the education series and find other helpful resources at [www.district31.net/ParentEducation](http://www.district31.net/ParentEducation).

### **Social Emotional Learning with Doug Bolton**

Tuesday, October 26 and Tuesday, April 26 at 6 p.m.

### **504 Plan Accommodations with Jesse Menold**

Monday, November 1 at 6 p.m.

### **English Learner Strategies with Sandra Luna**

Tuesday, November 16 at 6 p.m.

### **Special Education Advisory Meetings with Dr. Janine Gruhn**

Tuesday, December 14, Tuesday, March 8, and Tuesday, May 10 at 6 p.m.

# Community News

## Message from the District 31 Ed Foundation and PTO

Welcome back to school! The Education Foundation (Ed Foundation) and the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) both serve the D31 community, both are here to support the schools and the people within, and both would love you to be a part of the work they do.



## Ed Foundation

## PTO

Fund initiatives which provide engaging, enriching, inclusive, and safe environments for students in order to support and promote the district's high educational standards

### Mission

Support D31 by bringing the community together to build relationships, enhance education, and benefit students, parents, teachers, administration, and all community members

Parent volunteers

### Run By

Parent volunteers

Any D31 parent, guardian, teacher, administrator, or community member

### Members

Any D31 parent, guardian, teacher, or administrator

Bi-annual Fall Fun Run/Spirit Week at Winkelman, Annual Benefit, and funding initiatives. Current funding initiatives include funding the Field Middle School Science Lab and the Winkelman Art Room furniture and equipment upgrades. Past completed funding initiatives included iPads and Chromebooks for every student, Wi-Fi and Internet infrastructure updates, STEAM initiatives and makerspace labs, installation of new playground equipment at Winkelman, outdoor improvements at Field, PPE funding and donations, and the Teacher Grant Program.

### Support Provided

Programs, resources, and services that enrich and maximize the education of every child and benefit the school, including organization and support of room parents, creation and management of the D31 contacts resource DirectorySpot, family recreation nights, school supply kits, Bingo Night, Annual Art Fair, STEM Expo, Taste of D31, Art Enrichment Program, restaurant fundraisers, Farewell to 5th, 8th grade graduation reception, Teacher Appreciation Week, Wildcat Times newspaper, and Project Reach.

Fundraising through events, direct donations from families and community members as well as corporate and private sponsorships. The Ed Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable organization.

### Funded Through

Membership fee (\$15 per household), fundraising from select events, and contributions from community members. The PTO is a 501(c)3 charitable organization.

website: [d31edfoundation.org](http://d31edfoundation.org)  
email: [edfoundation@district31.net](mailto:edfoundation@district31.net)

### Learn More

website: [district31.net/pto](http://district31.net/pto)  
email: [d31pto@gmail.com](mailto:d31pto@gmail.com)







**Tania Gastelum**  
School Nurse

## Field Health Office

Throughout the pandemic Field School Nurse Tania Gastelum has worked collaboratively with staff, students, and families to keep our District 31 community healthy and safe. The Field Health Office is open to students during school hours and offers a variety of support and health education. If you have any questions regarding student medical forms, COVID-19 vaccinations, quarantine information, or general student health questions, please reach out to Nurse Gastelum at [tgastelum@district31.net](mailto:tgastelum@district31.net).

For District 31 COVID-19 information, please visit [district31.net/covid](https://www.district31.net/covid).



## First Weeks of School

Field students began school on August 19. All students and staff enjoyed an outdoor barbeque picnic lunch.



## My Red Said

District 31 partnered with Community Action Together for Children's Health (CATCH) for My Red Said, an initiative highlighting the importance of coming together to share and talk about mental health. The ribbons located at Field allowed students and staff to write a short, personal message of encouragement, hope, or even struggle. "The Conversation Starts Here"

## Weekly COVID-19 Testing

District 31 was proud to partner with SHIELD Illinois to be one of the first elementary districts in the area to offer weekly COVID-19 testing for all Winkelman and Field students and staff. Offering the testing program allows students (with no symptoms) who are identified at school as a close contact to a COVID positive student to "test to stay" in school. Students not participating in the test to stay program who are identified as a close contact must quarantine at home for 10 days. The weekly COVID-19 testing and test to stay have been incredibly successful mitigation tools that have allowed students and staff to return to a more normal learning environment, while keeping students safe and healthy. Learn more about District 31 COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies in the Student Handbook Addendum located at [www.district31.net/handbook](https://www.district31.net/handbook).

## District 31 Schools



### Winkelman School

Preschool - Grade 5  
1919 Landwehr Road  
Glenview, IL 60026  
847.729.5650



### Field Middle School

Grades 6 - 8  
2055 Landwehr Road  
Northbrook, IL 60062  
847.272.6884

### Board of Education

Dr. Allison Slade Rothstein, *President*

Laura Greenberg, *Vice President*

Daphne Frank, *Secretary*

Meredith Estes

Jeffrey Steres

Melissa Choo Valentinas

Dr. Maria J. Vasilopoulos

### Administration

Dr. Erin Murphy, *Superintendent*

Catherine Lauria, *CSBO Finance & Operations*

Dr. Janine Gruhn, *Student Services*

Kate Ipsen, *Early Childhood*

Becky Mathison, *Curriculum & Instruction*

Dr. April Miller, *Field Principal*

Justin Cooper, *Field Assistant Principal*

Shaton Wolverton, *Winkelman Principal*

Nino Alvarez, *Winkelman Assistant Principal*

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## District 31 Caring Corner



**"Give what you can. Take what you need."**

A Caring Corner is open to District 31 families in the foyer of the District 31 Admin Office (3131 Techny Rd.). District 31 families may stop by M-F between 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. and drop off donations or take what they need.

The Caring Corner will have items such as coats, hats, groceries, and personal care items. If you need items, please come and take what you need. If you are able to donate, please drop off new/unused items or monetary donations at the District Office.

## District Calendar

October 8.....	Family Movie Night
October 11.....	No School for Students/ Field Parent Teacher Conferences
October 12.....	Ed Foundation Meeting & PTO Restaurant Fundraiser @ Grill House
October 12 - 26.....	PTO Book Fair
October 14.....	Field and Winkelman Parent Teacher Conferences
October 18.....	Winkelman Parent Teacher Conferences
October 26.....	Parent Education Series - Social Emotional Learning
October 28.....	Board of Education Meeting
November 1.....	Parent Education Series - 504 Plan Accommodations
November 4.....	No School - Recognition of Diwali
November 16.....	Ed Foundation Meeting, PTO Meeting, & Parent Education Series - EL Strategies
November 17.....	Board of Education Meeting
November 24-26...	No School - Thanksgiving Holiday
December 14.....	Board of Education Meeting
December 16.....	Parent Education Series - Special Education Advisory Meeting
December 17.....	No School for Students/ Professional Development
December 20-	
January 3.....	Winter Break

*\*All dates and times subject to change.*

Questions? Contact Superintendent Dr. Murphy at [emurphy@district31.net](mailto:emurphy@district31.net) or call **847.272.6880**.