

HINCKLEY-BIG ROCK ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015





Dear Hinckley-Big Rock Community,

We are excited to share with you our first annual report to the community which describes our District goals, highlights, finances and plans for the future. This annual report is a direct result of one of our 2014-2015 District goals to improve and increase our communication. You will read more about our communication efforts in the upcoming paragraphs.

Each year, as a District, we define our goals for moving Hinckley-Big Rock #429 forward. We worked hard throughout the year toward the accomplishment of these goals. District goals set for the 2014-15 school year were:

1. HBR #429 will improve and increase our communication efforts with parents and community members
2. The District will have a 5 year recurring plan for technology, facilities maintenance and transportation maintenance and replacement
3. Graduating seniors will have a defined plan and be career ready when they complete high school beginning with the Class of 2016

How did we do with Communication?

Our goal of improving our communication, not only with students and parents, but with the community, has been a challenge we have worked to meet through monthly building newsletters, weekly blogs (hbrcommunityblog.blogspot.com), Superintendent tweets (@HBR429Sup), Superintendent blog (hbr429sup.blogspot.com), our website (www.hbr429.org), a District Profile Sheet (tinyurl.com/orrq7kj) for area realtors and anyone else interested in learning more about our District, as well as the upgrading of our middle school sign with help from the Big Rock community and the future upgrade of the high school sign. Building principals are working with staff to develop primary parent communication models for each classroom or grade level as we move into the 2015-16 school year. During the 2014-2015 school year, the District was a regular contributor to the Hinckley Update and the Big Rock Crier relaying important and timely information to community members. Now, with the creation and distribution of this annual report, we feel we have made great strides in keeping the members of the Hinckley and Big Rock communities well informed regarding the happenings within our school district.

How did we do on 5-year plans for technology, maintenance and transportation?

This goal has been completed. We have developed 5-year maintenance and replacement plans in all three areas (technology, facilities maintenance, and transportation) that will help guide our District as we develop our educational and financial plans for the future. Our next steps are to use these plans, evaluate their effectiveness, and make adjustments as needed.

How did we do on Career Readiness?

The seed is planted and starting to grow. Our theme of "Ready to go" heralded the start of our effort to make sure HBR students are ready to move forward to the next challenge, the next grade, or the next stage of their lives. From the elementary school's focus on perseverance (grit), to the middle school's career fair, to the high school's focus on both college and vocational futures for 9-12 students, we continue to provide our students with opportunities and mindsets which will help them be ready to go. In conjunction with this goal, we are working with the Hinckley Business Association regarding student internships and job shadowing and has conducted a job skills survey. We have created and released an alumni survey to gain our graduates' insights into their experiences at HBR and their preparation for their chosen paths. Transition surveys were created and given to our 5th, 8th and 12th graders and we have and will continue to develop individual building goals around career readiness. Our career readiness goal will remain on District radar throughout the 2015-16 school year as we continue to develop new ways to help students take hold of their tomorrow.

We are proud of our progress toward these goals and will continue the hard work needed to make each student of Hinckley-Big Rock CUSD #429 a success in their chosen career path. Our District goals for the upcoming 2015-2016 school year will be:

1. Graduating seniors will have a defined plan and be career ready when they complete high school beginning with the Class of 2016 (This is the third year of this three year goal)
2. HBR CUSD #429 will investigate essential components to effective learning environments and compare the components to our current learning environments.

We look forward towards progressing as a District and keeping you well informed of our progress on our goals. You can always visit www.hbr429.org as our goals are updated on a quarterly basis.

- Travis McGuire, Superintendent

It All Begins Here

Julie Melnyk, Principal
Hinckley-Big Rock Elementary School
Enrollment 2014-15: 311 students
Certified Staff: 25

The 2014-15 school year brought a lot of changes, some challenges, and many successes, but one thing remained constant: Hinckley-Big Rock's district goal of having all students ready to go to college or career upon the conclusion of their schooling experience. Hinckley-Big Rock Elementary School plays a big part in the completion of that goal. It is the place where students develop critical learning behaviors and gain foundational footing in the curricular areas in order to be ready for the next phase of learning in Middle School. During the 2014-15 school year, the elementary school focused on grit, an important element of learning behavior. Grit is the courage and perseverance to push through challenging tasks. Throughout the year, we took students through a series of learning opportunities designed to increase their awareness of grit and to help students create strategies to develop grit on their own.

The new Illinois learning standards brought many challenges to our teachers as they diligently developed and implemented a new math curriculum and studied a new reading strategy designed to help our students become better text analyzers. Throughout this process, students and teachers alike discussed their challenges and how they were able to push through the tough times, often during their Morning Meetings, which is a critical piece in our character program. Every day, during the first 10 minutes in every classroom, students and teachers hold a Morning Meeting. Students sit in a circle and talk to one another about their challenges, daily goals, and/or social issues. This time together helps students develop relationships with each other and improve their communication skills by listening, offering suggestions to solve problems, and encouraging each other. Through this process, we build unity.

It is not just what happens inside the classroom that makes being an elementary student at Hinckley-Big Rock special; it is also the numerous ways that students get involved in extracurricular activities that interest them and give them a sense of belonging and contributing to something bigger than themselves. Whether it is participating in school-wide reading in order to attend the reward of a Cougar game, joining in afterschool clubs like chess and engineering, or belonging to the choir and dance teams meeting at lunch, students unite to make our school the best place to be. Students have opportunities to become leaders in student

council and learn about giving back to the community by working at a local food pantry, singing at a nursing home for the holidays, or serving breakfast on Veterans Day in the school cafeteria.

Even though it may feel like summer break just began, the administrative teams are busy preparing for the 2015-16 school year. For the elementary school, this means a continued focus on implementing and fine tuning our new math curriculum to ensure consistency throughout our grade levels. Teachers will also be exploring new math interventions as we continue to look for the best supports to meet the needs of students who need additional support. In the areas of reading and writing, next year is a big challenge as our English Language Arts team continues the hard work of redesigning our instruction and focus. The 2015-16 school year will also see staff focus on becoming better test creators and analyzers of the results in order to make sound instructional decisions regarding student achievement. Next year, we will continue to update our communication efforts to keep parents well informed as they work side-by-side with us in their child's educational process. Students will continue to experience learning opportunities designed to help them not only become better learners, but also better citizens. We will continue to focus on positive character traits in all areas, but will emphasize self-discipline and what it means and looks like in the classroom, in the gym, at recess, and in the cafeteria. The teachers and staff will model those traits and provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their learning. Students will be able to share their challenges as well as their successes with each other. Hinckley-Big Rock Elementary will hold its first school-wide walk-a-thon and students will experience the joy of giving back to their school community with their participation.

The 2015-16 school year will be jam packed with challenging academic learning and activities designed to promote positive character and the building of the ties between home and school community. On behalf of the teachers and staff at Hinckley-Big Rock Elementary School, we are thankful for the support we receive from the community and are excited for another great year of learning and growing by our students.

-Julie Melnyk, Principal





Moving Through the Middle

Jeff Strouss, Principal
Hinckley-Big Rock Middle School
Enrollment 2014-15: 154 Students
Certified Staff: 17

Middle school is an important transitional time for our students. In sixth, seventh and eighth grade we have begun to focus on soft skills – the behaviors that help people work well and socialize well with others. In 2014-15, the skills we worked on included accepting responsibility, being a team player, creativity and problem solving, as well as leadership, time management, flexibility, wise decision making and communication. We believe that if students



exploration. Career representatives included the military, civil engineering, flight attendant, caterer, small business owner, fireman, police force and banking. Students were able to attend four different career presentations throughout the day, asked great questions and gave the experience a big thumbs up. We will build upon the success of this first Career Day for our February 2016 Career Day. We will also be hosting monthly career talk lunches in 2015-16 for students and various career volunteers. We invite any community members who would like to talk to our students about their careers at either the career day in February or one of our monthly luncheons to get in touch with Jeff Strouss, Principal, at 630-556-4185. We would love to have you.

The middle school staff worked hard in 2014-15 on creating more effective student assessments. The District supported our efforts with professional development in this area for all certified staff. The development of more effective assessments will result in teachers who are better at assessing student growth and improving instruction and learning for all students.

The 2015-16 school year is fast upon us. As 6th-8th grade students “move through the middle”, we will continue to help them develop their soft skills and career interests, and make sure they are ready to go on to high school.

-Jeff Strouss, Principal

become proficient in these soft skills, their grades and behavior will improve now, and they will be better employees, friends and neighbors in the future. Our 8th grade student leadership team supported our soft skill focus by making posters and creating videos highlighting one skill per month. The team also worked with the administration on improving middle school culture and climate. This 8th grade group flourished as student leaders and we are proud to send them on to the high school.

The middle school hosted its first Career Awareness Day in February. Presenters from both the Hinckley and Big Rock communities, former HBR graduates and other professionals joined our students in a successful day of career explanation and



Ready and On their Way

Jay Brickman, Principal
Hinckley-Big Rock High School
Enrollment 2014-15: 209
Certified Staff: 19

We at Hinckley-Big Rock High School continue to strive to improve our daily work. Our focus is on learning. We are consciously using all available resources to enhance the effectiveness of our classroom practices and school processes to ensure the very best educational experience for your children...our students. In short, improving academic success and creating a safe, rewarding, and healthy learning environment for all students is, and always will be, at the top of our "to do list."



Toward these ends, our School Improvement goals help us to focus our efforts. This year, we have focused on helping students ready themselves for life after high school by looking at their mindset and their ability to manage the behaviors that are key to success in a variety of contexts. While we have made a great deal of progress in areas such as developing a "growth mindset," we will continue this work into the 2015-16 school year.

While our academic success continues to shine as evidenced by our composite ACT Scores, the percentage of our students meeting college readiness benchmarks, our number of Illinois State Scholars, our Advanced Placement participation, and the high number of our students earning Career Readiness Certificates based upon components of the ACT test, we remain very proud of the overall "experience" our students receive. We measure our success in ways that go beyond test scores. Our blood drives, Leadership Retreat, Homecoming Week, success of our student-athletes, and our flourishing Club participation are all signs that the students of Hinckley-Big Rock High School are provided with numerous opportunities to become well round-

ed adults. In summary, I believe that numerous pieces of data, from a variety of perspectives, paint a picture that proudly says "We are successful!!"

Of course, our success depends upon the hard work of staff members working toward our goals and objectives.

Creating that environment of excellence requires our teachers to engage in ongoing professional learning. We look forward to continuing our growth in 2015-16 by focusing our Professional

Learning Communities on how to best meet the needs of ALL students. We continue, through this professional learning, to meet our goal of helping all students achieve to their maximum potential by providing support to struggling learners and enrichment to those who benefit from enrichment and new challenges.

Lastly, thank you for your continued and ongoing support. We could not do it without you!

-Jay Brickman, Principal





Special Education Update

Dr. Carolyn Beard, Director of Special Education

Our goal of continued enhancement of special education department operations (best practices) has continued to be a priority for our staff as we provide support to students identified with disabilities in our school district. In order to provide best practice services,



professional learning is critical for the certified and non-certified staff serving our students. The professional learning provided to staff within our district on Strategic Instructional Model (SIM) and STAR/Links enables our staff to increase their skills in working with children with disabilities and allows us to build local capacity so that we will rely more on our district staff instead of outside expertise. SIM instruction focuses on our staff teaching students specific strategies that will assist students to become better readers and writers. The STAR/Links curriculum is primarily for students identified on the Autism Spectrum. The professional learning provides instruction to staff to work with students with autism as well as support staff to become district coaches.

As our focus continues on providing best practice support and services to our students, we still are held to a high standard for compliance by the Illinois State Board of Education. The state has identified indicators that each district must meet. We continue to rate 4's (the highest category) which means that we meet the requirements and don't require any intervention from the Illinois State Board of Education.

Finally, the plans for 2015-16 school year will continue the needed professional learning as identified above. We will also implement a new concept of department meetings as we continue to brainstorm, discuss, plan and implement continued improvements in supports and services to students with disabilities.

- Dr. Carolyn Beard, Director of Special Education



The Financials

As of our last audit for the 2013-2014 school year, we had a fund balance of \$5,751,416 with 230 days of cash on hand. Hinckley-Big Rock CUSD #429 has been prudent in our financial spending with the provided local, state, and federal resources. The information below is meant to describe the 2014-2015 financial picture since our audit will not be complete until the fall of 2015. Additionally, a brief picture of the 2015-2016 tentative budget is provided.



2014-2015 Financial Summary

The entire document can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/oxwbwl9>. The approved FY15 budget can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/opnfz6f>.

Purpose of this overview

Discuss the revenue and expenses to date to portray our current financial standing as we end Fiscal Year (FY) 15.

FY15 Revenue

We budgeted \$11,457,437 in revenue for FY15. Our actual revenue, as of July 13th, was \$11,419,074.12. Some key factors in the difference are a direct reflection on the loss of revenue from the state of Illinois. Some of the key factors in the loss of revenue include:

- A loss of \$6,335 in state revenue from PA 99-0001 which was decided and communicated to HBR CUSD #429 in April 2015.

- A mandate to spend \$5,398 from GSA for specific Special Education related expenses as a result of PA 99-0002. This was a decision by the state of Illinois to maintain compliance with the Federal Government.
- We only received 3 of the 4 mandated categorical payments from the state. This resulted in a loss of an approximated \$185,000 in mandated payments by the state.

FY15 Expenditures

We budgeted \$11,873,966 in expenses for FY15. Our actual expenditures, as of July 13th, totaled \$11,625,943.78. We spent \$248,022.22 less than was initially budgeted through thorough initial planning and spending based on need. We closely monitor our expenses throughout the year with monthly reports to the Board of Education and mid-year reviews with leaders of schools and departments.

FY15 Final Summary Results

Our FY15 budget had a projected deficit of \$416,529. Our unaudited deficit for FY15, as of July 13th, is \$206,869.66. If we were to have received the mandated state categorical payments in FY15, then our deficit would have been \$21,618.83. Hinckley-Big Rock CUSD #429 continues to plan with the known information. The revenue changes from the State of Illinois, sometimes sudden and often with a negative impact, continue to influence our finances and are overall concerning.

2015-2016 (FY16) Tentative Budget Summary

The entire document can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/nnn2t7j>.

The prepared tentative budget, as of July 14, 2015, shows an overall surplus of \$60,178. When comparing FY16 to FY15, there is an overall decrease in revenue of 2.23% (\$255,868) and an overall decrease in expenditures of 6.17% (\$732,575). This budget was created utilizing multiple hypothetical situations since the State of Illinois has yet to pass their FY16 budget. The FY16 budget has been created with fiscal responsibility taking current and long term needs into consideration.

An updated tentative budget will be placed on display after our July 22, 2015, Board meeting. A budget hearing will be held on September 23rd at 6:15 p.m. in the Hinckley-Big Rock High School Library. The budget will be formally adopted at the September 23rd Board meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the Hinckley-Big Rock High School Library.



Team Work

HBRHS Athletics

Bill Sambrookes, Athletic Director
Hinckley-Big Rock High School
Sport Participants: 126

In the athletic department, it seems we begin each new school year as a marathon and it ends up as a sprint. Any time you are sprinting (for those of us that can remember those days) it can be difficult to stop, smell the roses and appreciate the accomplishments that take place on a daily basis. Summarizing the athletic season allows us time to share individual and team success, building and grounds improvements, and changes to the coaching landscape for the upcoming season.

In 2014-15 we had 126 students participate in 16 sports. With a student enrollment last year of about 210, that means about 58.3% of our students were involved in athletics. During basketball season approximately twenty kids in pep band performed at our home games. Adding these students to that total, we had 146 students participating in our athletic events throughout the year, which takes that percent to 67.6% participation.



Fall

Boys soccer had a tremendous season and finished with a 19-3-2 record. They lost to Harvard, who ended up 4th in the state, in the sectional championship game. Our boys finished second in the conference and conference tournament, but earned championships in the Stillman Valley Tourney and the IHSA Regional.

Volleyball had a solid 13-16 record and says good-bye to some great seniors, but will return a core of juniors in 2015-16 who saw significant playing time as sophomores.

Boys golf was young and they didn't "fare" too well on the "fair" way with only two seniors on the team. The team will return a solid group of underclassmen to build on in 2015.

The girls golf team had never before seen success. They finished the year earning a team record 16 wins and posted the lowest nine hole and eighteen hole team scores in team history! They won their second consecutive Little 10 team title and Erin Lyons advanced to the sectional.

Cross country completed its second competitive season and saw Audrey Harrod advance to the sectionals for the second straight year.

Fall All Conference honors were awarded to Jack Bullard, Bailey McQueen, Eric Phillips, Jeremy Perales, and Brett Wachowiak for soccer, with Jack Bullard also earning All-Sectional honors. In volleyball, Jacqueline Madden and Anne Klein earned All Conference recognition, and in girls golf, Erin Lyons and Sophia Peters earned all area first team honors.

Winter

Last winter the girls basketball team suffered a severe blow when senior Jacqueline Madden went down with a season ending knee injury. The team showed constant class and character by never using the loss of a three year varsity performer as an excuse. Hats off to the girls coaching staff for working hard day in and day out in order to compete to the top of their capabilities. One of the greatest coaches of all time, John Wooden a Hall of Fame coach from UCLA, was quoted as saying "Basketball doesn't build character it reveals it". It couldn't have been truer with this group of girls.

The boys basketball team turned a mediocre season around just after the Christmas Classic in Plano. They went 9-1 in games in January and went into the Little 10 Tourney

as the number five seed, finishing second in the tournament. They wound up what turned out to be an exciting season with a 16-13 record, and were a fun team to watch.

Cheer and Dance both participated in competitions but fell short of state advancement in the sectionals. Both teams competed in large venues, with cheer competing at the Convocation Center at NIU and Dance at the Sears Center in Hoffman Estates. In a meet at Waubensee Valley, dance placed 3rd in its class.

For the winter season, Eric Phillips and Alexis Gonzalez earned All Conference honors. Eric, Alexis, Anne Klein, Karrigan Cowan, and Jacqueline Madden all played for the Little Ten conference in the All Star game vs the Interstate 8 conference. Eric and Jacqueline were also nominated for the IHSA All State All Academic team and Eric earned honorable mention honors.

Also in the winter, the IHSA held its inaugural Student Section challenge. Each school that wanted to participate could nominate its student section for consideration with a three-minute video clip that was evaluated for creativity, school spirit, and student involvement. The senior class and sponsor Kim Halverson coordinated our participation. During a game vs The Chicagoland Jewish Academy, the lights went down, the glow sticks came out, and Jeff Urban videotaped our student section at its finest! He edited the video down to the 3 minute time limit, submitted it to the IHSA and we were selected as one of the four finalist schools. On the weekend of the Class 1A and 2A finals, Mrs. Halverson and a group of seniors went to Carver Arena in Peoria and were introduced to the crowd as finalists and recognized for the outstanding job they did.

Spring

Spring sports began the Monday following the end of the boys basketball season. Baseball and softball had new head coaches. Brandon Jackson began his first season as our baseball coach, while club softball guru Steve Gibbertini began his first season as our softball head

coach. Both teams competed hard throughout the season and did their best work during the state tournament. The baseball team won a regional for the first time since 2009, while the softball team earned its first ever regional win when they defeated Aurora Christian in the first round of play. The boys season came to an end with an 8-3 loss to state finalist Fulton, while the girls suffered their loss to Somonauk who earned 2nd place in the state.

The girls soccer team was led by many of the girls from the basketball team and needed that leadership to overcome a season of injuries. The team began the season with 15 players, but because of injuries finished the season playing their regional game vs Lisle with only nine players. Alexis Gonzalez showed her class and versatility playing goalie for the first time in her career when starting keeper Tanner Prellberg was injured and taken out of the game. The girls never quit. Coach Taeuber and the team gave everything they had and earned the respect of every one they played. While the season may not have been the best in terms of wins and losses, it was one of the best examples of how a team works to overcome adversity, a lesson that will make each of these players mentally tougher and ready to face and overcome challenges throughout the rest of their high school careers and into adulthood.

The boys track team was young this year and went a long way in building for next year. Girls track, although short in numbers, sent five girls to Charleston to compete in the IHSA track and field finals. Courtney Carls, and Audrey Harrod made the trip for the second year in a row and were joined by Madison

Davies, Sophia Peters and freshman Julia Sanchez. Audrey qualified in both the 800 and the 400 meter races, Court-





ney made it for the second year in the triple jump and the 4x200 relay team of Courtney, Madison, Julia, and Sophia, made it for the first time but was eliminated in the qualifying race. Courtney jumped a personal best and missed going to the finals by less than an inch. Audrey made the finals and medaled in both events, finishing 2nd in the 800 and 7th in the 400 establishing school records in both.

Mary Kate Harrod became HBR's first softball player to earn All Conference honors. Other honors for HBR athletes included Jacob Morsch, All Conference in baseball, Anne Klein, All Sectional honorable mention in soccer, and Zach McNanna, Audrey Harrod, and Courtney Carls named All Area in track and field by the DeKalb Chronicle.

Facilities

This year our soccer field had two significant additions. European style goals were purchased with funds raised by the soccer teams, from hosting IHSA events and donations from boosters. And the purchase of a quality speaker system solved a long running problem with announcement and music clarity. Thanks to Vic Viland for donating his time to install the speaker system and the soccer goals along with Coach Taeuber and some of the soccer team. Bill Duntelman donated supplies and his time to apply both weed killer and fertilizer to a worn out soccer field. The change in the field appearance was miraculous and gave us a field which looked great, not only in the fall, but also in the spring. The number of opponents that tipped their caps

to our field is countless. Teams love playing here, and we love having them!

Inside the building, our outdated scoreboard was replaced with a much needed, more current scoreboard. Also, the clocks in the locker are now in sync with the scoreboard clock so that teams can now see exactly how much time is left on the clock.

Lastly, we have to say farewell to a couple of great head coaches. Lindsay Byington, who led the Royalties Dance Team to two state finals in her 4 years as coach, and Greg Burkes, who had two girls basketball Class 1A championship teams will not be coaching in the coming school year. Greg will remain the head coach of HBRHS Track. We wish them both good luck and thank them for their great leadership and commitment

Athletics take a lot of time from our kids, staff and parents, and many times it is how competing schools compare themselves. We are fortunate at Hinckley-Big Rock High School to have such a great balance between athletics and academics. Both are held to high standards and result in above average results. We as a district and community can be proud of what is achieved in both the classroom and on the athletic field. It doesn't happen without great kids, parents, coaches and administrators all pulling the same direction. Thanks to all the students, parents, coaches and community members for a great 2014-15 and we look forward to an even better 2015-16.

Retirement. I think most of us look forward to our own retirement, but dread the day when those around us, close friends and co-workers, decide it is time to retire. This year, seven of our District family members left us and headed into a whole new chapter of their lives. It's time to say good-bye and good luck to some of our favorite people and closest friends. These seven individuals worked with us every day in making a difference for each student they came in contact with. Working in a school is a risky business; the relationships you form with students and other staff members are deep and caring and sometimes they come to an end. We will miss the relationships we have formed with our colleagues Sue Brens, Deanna Easto, Marilyn Guerrieri, Vicki Kanik, Carol Kohler, Judi Olson, and Carla Womack. Our students will miss their kindness, patience, knowledge and caring. But, with a smile on our faces and true admiration in our hearts, we wish them much happiness and good health in the years to come. Don't forget us as you wander footloose and fancy free out in the world. We wish you the best of luck in your endeavors. Know that you will be truly missed!



Sue Brens

HBRHS Family & Consumer Science



Carol Kohler

HBRES Teacher



Vicki Kanik

HBRMS/HBRHS Art



Deanna Easto

HBRES Secretary



Judi Olson

HBR Social Worker



Carla Womack

HBRHS Special Education



Marilyn Guerrieri

HBRES Special Education



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