



# CHAMPAIGN UNIT 4 SCHOOLS

BETTER SCHOOLS BUILD BETTER COMMUNITIES

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019





## **On behalf of the Board of Education, staff and students of Champaign Unit 4 School District, it is my privilege to present the District's Annual Report for 2019.**

An Annual Report has been a District tradition for many years. In the past, a print copy of the Annual Report was mailed to every household within the District's boundaries. The world has changed a lot since the tradition of printed reports started. In today's electronic world, many people prefer to receive information via smartphones, tablets, PCs and other devices.

Accordingly, the administration recommended to the Board that we transition the Annual Report to a hybrid print/electronic means of production and delivery.

We have print copies of the report available to anyone who wishes to request one. In addition, we will place print copies in high-traffic public locations like libraries and community centers. If you would like a print copy of the report, please call our Communications Department at 217-531-0255 or email us at [comms@u4sd.org](mailto:comms@u4sd.org) and we will be happy to mail one. Likewise, if you have a friend or family member who relies on print communication, please let the District know so we can provide a print copy to them.

### **This year's report has three feature sections:**

- **The opening section addresses enrollment growth in Unit 4 and some of the District's current initiatives including:**

The strategic planning process that is underway to create an entirely new strategic plan for Unit 4. The District's strategic plan was last updated in 2008. The new strategic plan will provide direction, based on community and staff input, to guide the District's work in coming years. The new strategic plan will be completed by late spring so the plan can be used in preparation of District and school plans for the 2020-2021 school year.

A complete overhaul of the District's main website and the websites for each of our schools. The current website contains lots of information but feedback from both staff members and community members alike suggests that locating specific information can be challenging. The new website, which will be ready for the start of the 2020-2021 school year, will feature a redesigned menu and navigation structure and a design that works well on all smartphones, tablets and desktop devices.

In addition, the overview section highlights good news and achievements by Unit 4 schools, students and teachers. Here you will find a list of the many prestigious colleges and universities that recent graduates are attending, as well as information about the iRead-iCount program that was piloted in 2018-2019 and has already made a difference for students.

- **The Building for the Future section highlights the renovation and new construction projects that were approved by Unit 4 voters in 2016. These improvements will modernize our facilities and provide improved learning opportunities for our students. You will also learn about the Building Projects page on the Unit 4 website where you can view up-to-date information and photos about each project.**
- **The Education Equity Excellence section features information and examples of the District's strong commitment to academic achievement for all students. This includes fostering a culture of high expectations for all students, focusing efforts to close the achievement gap, and supporting efforts to address disparities in student discipline.**

We welcome your feedback regarding the new hybrid print/electronic format. Please let us know your thoughts.

With gratitude for your continued support of our schools.

Susan Zola, Ed. D.  
Superintendent



# Recent Instructional Priorities

Improving learning opportunities for students is an ongoing priority for Unit 4 and all school districts. Each year we focus on particular aspects of our instructional programs by reviewing the curriculum as well as the textbooks and other learning materials that are used in our classrooms. Over a multi-year period, we review all academic areas in a continuous improvement cycle.

Recently we have been supporting the implementation of new science resources and our alignment with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). This shift asks teachers to help students achieve a deeper understanding of key concepts through a more inquiry-based approach to science. We are incorporating engineering into all science units and making stronger connections to literacy and numeracy throughout our scope and sequence. We have developed the following shared commitments to support increased achievement in K-12 science:



- Support student-centered learning through the use of phenomenon-based inquiries.
- Expect all students to use evidence and reasoning to support their claims.
- Incorporate hands-on labs and learning activities that empower all students to ask questions and conduct investigations.

For more information about NGSS, go to [www.nextgenscience.org](http://www.nextgenscience.org).

We are also focusing on Math/Science/Technology initiatives across disciplines. We are seeking to increase student engagement in math education through:

- Problem-based learning, applying mathematical concepts to real-world situations.
- Mastery of essential skills to strengthen algebra readiness in grades K-8.

In terms of educational technology, we continued with our 1:1 Chromebook initiative at the high school level. All high school students are issued a Chromebook at the beginning of the year and they are able to take the laptops home every day. We are also working to ensure every K-8 classroom has a dedicated set of Chromebooks that students are able to access on a daily basis. Our teachers are empowering students to conduct investigations online, take virtual field trips, collaborate with others in new and innovative ways, and open our curriculum to help students make relevant and meaningful connections to their lives. For more information about schools and the 1:1 Chromebook initiative, go to <https://edu.google.com/products/chromebooks>.



## We Provide a Well-Rounded Education

As we focus on instructional improvement in academic subjects, we also provide our students with excellent Art Education, Music Education and Physical Education programs as well as access to a full range of competitive athletics. Our programs are second to none. The Illinois Art Education Association recently recognized Unit 4 as its "2019 Art Education Program of the Year." Unit 4 instrumental and choral music students are named year-after-year to All-Region and All-State Ensembles by the Illinois Music Educators Association. Our inter-scholastic athletics teams are known for both excellence and sportsmanship and perform well in conference and state athletic competitions.

### Unit 4 Art Department Earns State Honor

Champaign Unit 4 Schools earned the 2019 Art Education Program of the Year honor as selected by the Illinois Art Education Association (IAEA). Unit 4 received its award at the 2019 IAEA Conference, held in November 2019 in St. Charles, Ill. Our art teachers balance being practicing artists and excellent art educators. The program currently features 21 art teachers with a combined 213 years of service to Unit 4 students.



# Unit 4 Growth Continues With Record High Enrollment for 2019-2020



**Official enrollment for Unit 4 for the 2019-2020 school year is 10,347 students. That number is the highest enrollment total in the District's history and is up 174 students from 2018-2019.**

The majority of the growth is at the middle school level. The 2019-2020 enrollment in grades 6-8 increased by 169 students. Elementary school enrollment in grades K-5 is up 52 students. High school enrollment in grades 9-12 decreased by 50 students from the 2018-2019 school year.

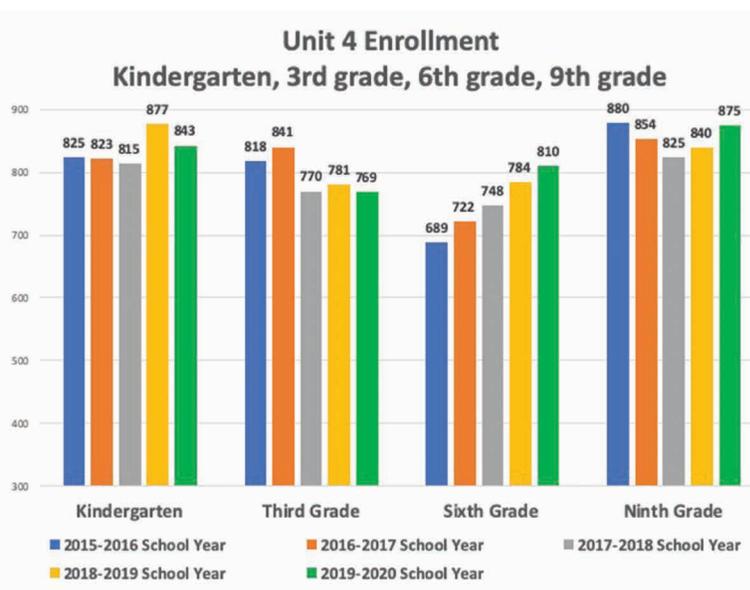
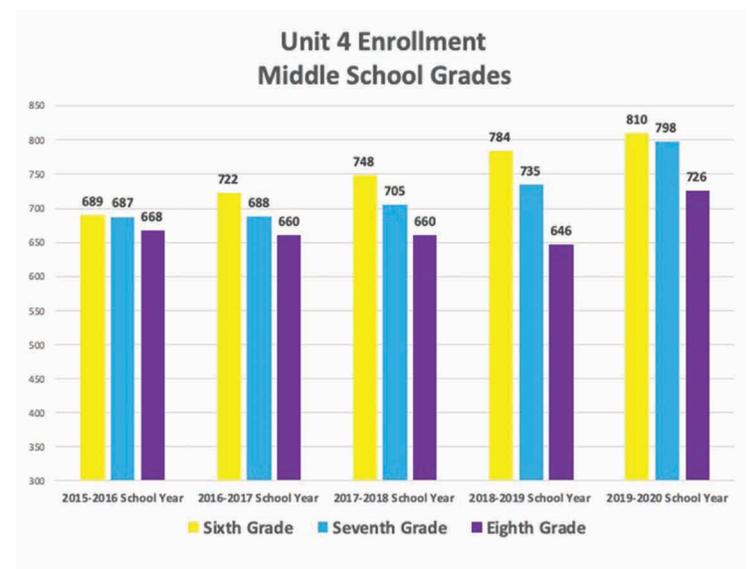
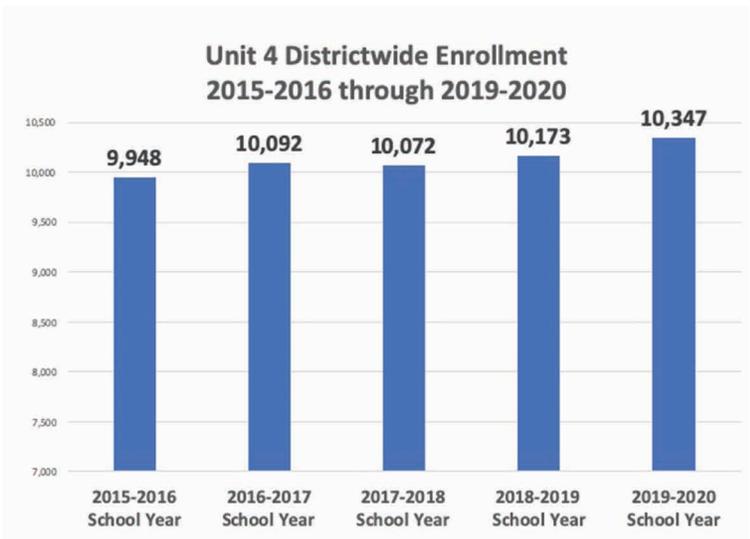
Enrollment numbers vary throughout the school year as families move in and out. The state requires all school districts to record official enrollment on October 1 of each year.

## 5-Year Capital Improvement Program Approved

In addition to the major renovation projects that are described in the "Building for the Future" section of this Annual Report there are ongoing capital improvement needs in Unit 4 schools.

To address projects that impact safety, student experience and playground accessibility, the Unit 4 Board of Education has approved a five-year Capital Improvements and Maintenance Plan for capital projects and purchases necessary for maintenance and repairs.

The plan's projects are funded from existing district money and do not require additional finances. For more information about the Capital Improvement Program, go to <https://www.champaignschools.org>.



# Strategic Planning Process Underway

A major initiative is underway to prepare a new strategic plan for Unit 4. The last comprehensive strategic planning process in the District was in 2008.

As part of the planning process, input is being sought from the District's various internal and external stakeholder groups. The District engaged FourPoint Education Partners to facilitate the update of the strategic plan. FourPoint is an experienced firm that has done strategic planning consulting for a number of high- and low-performing districts (rural, urban, and suburban) across the country that serve large percentages of low-income and minority students.

FourPoint conducted focus groups with elementary and secondary school parents, parents of students receiving special education services and parents of students receiving ESL/Bilingual services. They also spoke with faith-based leaders, municipal representatives, business leaders, University partners, teachers, administrators and students. Focus groups were also held with social workers, parent liaisons, instructional coaches and principals. Input from staff members was also collected via online surveys. FourPoint conducted individual or small group meetings with Board members and District administrators.

The research phase of strategic planning concluded in January 2020. From February through April 2020, FourPoint will facilitate the work of two committees. A leadership committee, composed primarily of community members, will



provide high-level guidance and oversight as the language of the strategic plan is drafted. The drafting of the plan will be done by a Working Committee composed primarily of staff members with some community involvement.

The strategic plan will be completed before the end of the 2019-2020 school year so that the plan can provide guidance for decisions that impact the 2020-2021 school year and future school years.

For more information about FourPoint and the process it uses to facilitate strategic plans for school districts, go to <https://www.fourpointeducation.com>.

## District and School Websites Being Redesigned

The current Unit 4 website and school sites contain a lot of valuable information, but knowing where to locate particular information can be a challenge. Feedback from staff members, parents and community members indicates the current website is cumbersome and difficult to navigate.

Work is underway on a redesigned District website and companion school websites. This is not just a cosmetic facelift. The redesign will result in a streamlined and visually attractive website that works equally well on all devices including desktop PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones. In addition, the navigation structure of the website is being carefully examined so the redesigned website makes it easier and more intuitive for users to efficiently find the information that they are seeking.

The redesigned websites will be activated over the summer to allow time for users to become familiar with the redesign before the start of the 2020-2021 school year for Regular Calendar schools.

# EXCELLENT PREPARATION FOR COLLEGE & THE WORKFORCE

## Strong College Preparation

- Many Unit 4 students who graduated in May 2019 are pursuing their higher education at in-state public schools including the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, Illinois State University, Parkland College, Eastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, Southern Illinois University and Western Illinois University.
- Other May 2019 graduates are attending:

Air Force Academy	Illinois Wesleyan University	University of Missouri
University of Arizona	Indiana State University	Northwestern University
Augustana College	Johns Hopkins University	Ohio Wesleyan
Brigham Young University	University of Kentucky	Rice University
Butler University	Knox College	St. Louis University
University of Connecticut	Lake Forest College	University of Tennessee
Georgetown University	Loyola University	U.S. Naval Academy
Georgia State University	Michigan State	Washington University
Iowa State University	MIT	University of Wisconsin
University of Iowa		
- The Class of 2019 from Centennial High School and Central High School benefited from \$15,730,184 in scholarship money.
- Unit 4 students consistently qualify as National Merit Semi-Finalists and Finalists.
- In a cooperative program with Parkland College, Unit 4 students can enroll in some Parkland classes that provide dual credit at the high school and college level.

## Strong Career Education

- Unit 4 students participate in the auto trades program at Parkland
- Health Care Careers Program
- Building Trades program in cooperation with local contractors and labor organizations

## Partnering With the Unit 4 Community

- iRead-iCount, a program sponsored by the Champaign County Chamber of Commerce, began as a pilot program in 2018-2019 and the early success of the program led to more participation in 2019-2020. The program pairs an adult with a Unit 4 student. The adult and student meet for one-hour sessions held at school. The adult works one-on-one with the student on reading and mathematics. <https://www.champaigncounty.org/iread-icount>
- Champaign Urbana 1-to-1 Mentoring Program. <https://www.cu1to1.org>
- Leaders from Unit 4, the City of Champaign and the Champaign Park District meet on a regular basis to discuss how all three entities can work together to assist targeted students.

# Building for the Future.

After steady enrollment growth for nearly a decade, the need for expansion and renovation was imminent. In November 2016, the Champaign community overwhelmingly voted for the \$183.4 million referendum to bring much-needed upgrades to our schools. These projects will result in great new spaces for students and staff. In total, over \$200 million was authorized for construction at six schools and two athletic fields.

- Expansion and renovation of Centennial High School and Central High School
- A new Dr. Howard Elementary School
- Renovation of Edison Middle School
- Expansion and renovation of South Side Elementary School
- Important upgrades to International Prep Academy
- New athletic fields for Centennial High School and Central High School

While developing plans for the projects, the District solicited feedback from the community, teachers, and staff. As experts in their fields, these key stakeholders informed the design team of their needs and offered input into how the new spaces should look. Teachers and coaches provided insight into project design needs for specialized spaces in theatre,

culinary arts, industrial tech, and athletics.

The year 2019 saw several milestones across the ongoing projects. From demolition to groundbreaking and with many projects substantially underway or nearly complete, the District is well on its way to transforming its schools and “building for the future.”



Dr. Howard Demolition



McKinley Field Groundbreaking



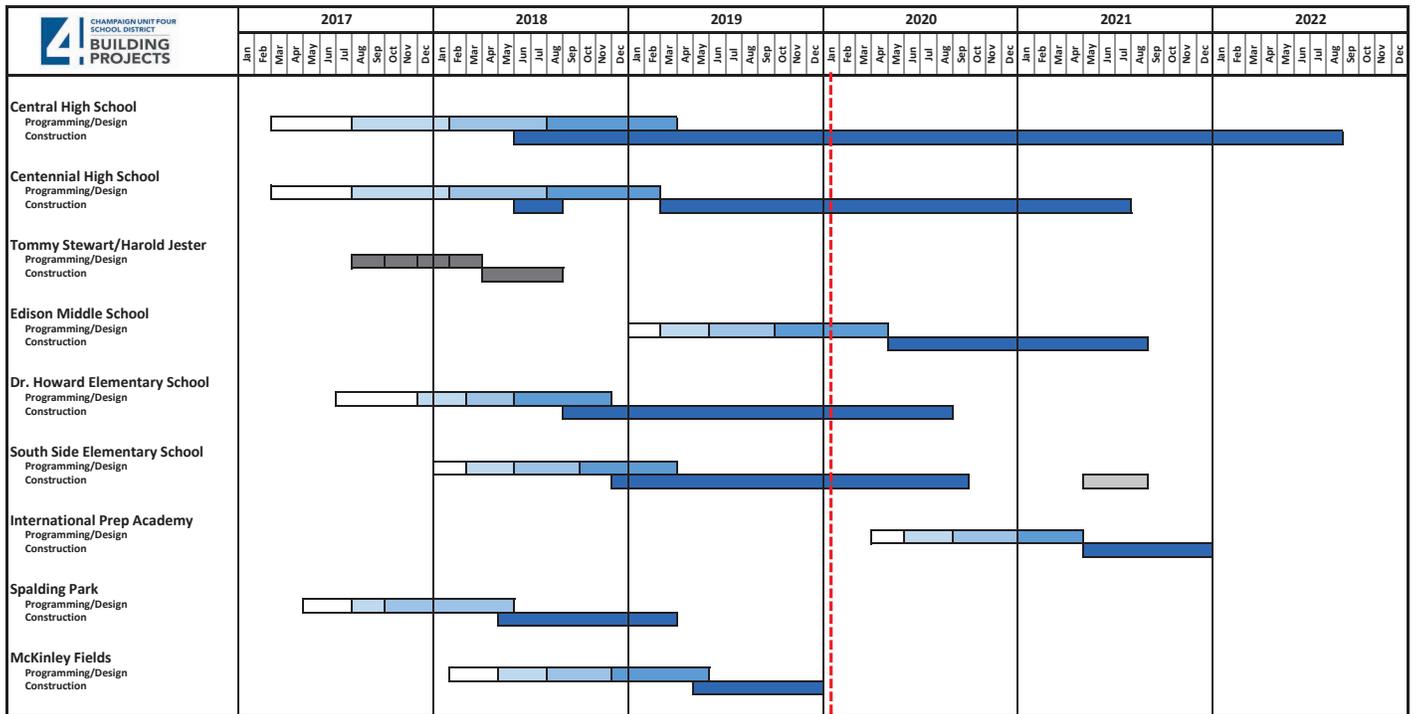
Spalding Ribbon Cutting



## DID YOU KNOW?

*A total of 49 contractors from Illinois, including 10 based in Champaign, are part of the 61 contractors across seven states currently working on Unit 4 capital projects. There are 30 firms of architects/engineers/consultants from four states. Of those, 27 are from Illinois, including 13 in Champaign-Urbana.*

# CHAMPAIGN UNIT 4 SCHOOLS CONSTRUCTION TIMELINE



LEGEND:



“Forty eight years ago I began high school at the new ‘Annex.’ I never imagined I would later be involved in a major expansion and upgrade to that great facility. My sisters and children are also proud alums of Centennial, and we look forward to visiting the completed project. My grandchildren will likely follow to be Centennial graduates and enjoy the improvements this project will give to so many future alums.

—Dave Milazzo  
surveyor on the Centennial project and Centennial alumnus

“As a third generation student of Champaign Schools, it means a lot to me to have been the electrical engineer on the design team that is responsible for modernizing Champaign Central High School – my alma mater. As a lifelong Champaign resident, I’m overjoyed that the community came together to pass the referendum that facilitated these improvements.

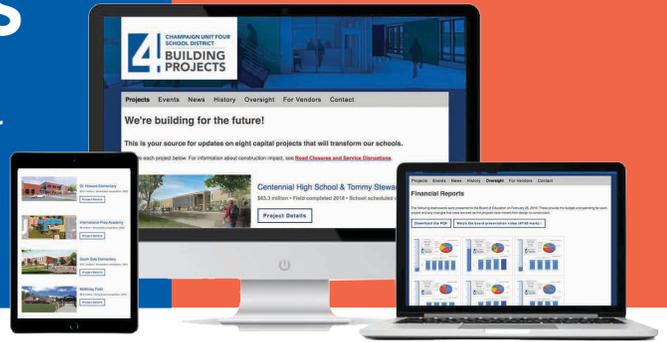
— Lucas McGill,  
electrical engineer on the Central project and Central alumnus

**Approximately 90 different companies across seven states are involved in the current capital projects across Unit 4 to date. The workforce includes many Unit 4 alumni, some of whom are helping enhance the very schools they attended as students.**

# ABOUT THE PROJECTS

A re-designed, more user-friendly, website featuring Unit 4 Building Projects launched in April. The site allows user easier access to updated photos, design plans, project schedules, and more.

<https://referendumprojects.champaignschools.org>



## CENTENNIAL HIGH SCHOOL / TOMMY STEWART FIELD

The grand opening of Tommy Stewart Field kicked off on Sept. 1, 2018 prior to the Centennial vs. Central football game. Work on the Centennial High School construction projects began with an April 5 groundbreaking. The north and south additions and interior renovations were the first areas under construction. Summer work included hazardous material abatement and structural work, along with full renovation of the pool, gym, and other portions of the north wing.



## SPALDING PARK

A March 11, 2019 grand opening celebrated the completion of the Spalding Park project. The ribbon cutting ceremony ahead of Central's home opener included coaches, players, Unit 4 board members, administrators and capital projects team members, architects, and contractors.



## CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

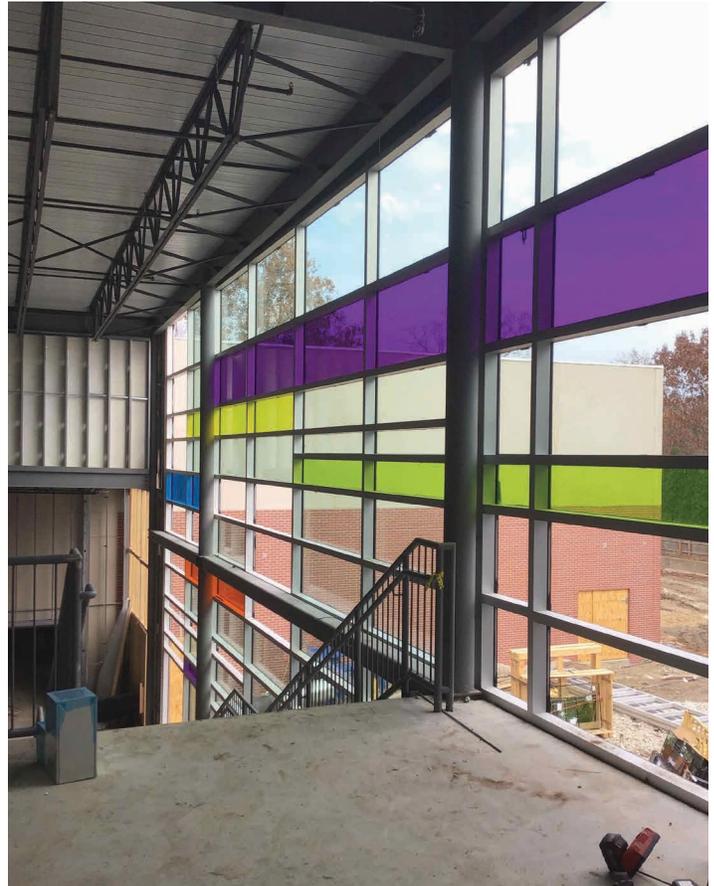
An April 8, 2019 groundbreaking event commemorated the start of construction at Central High School. Summer work included hazardous material abatement and structural work for the new gym addition. Also included is a full renovation of several areas inside the school, including the third floor of the original building, Combes Gym, and Seely Hall. New windows and HVAC were placed in the original building.



**DURING ONE SUMMER CONSTRUCTION DAY AT CENTENNIAL, OVER 1 MILLION POUNDS OF CONCRETE PANELS WERE SET WITH MORE STILL COMING FOR THE NORTH GYM.**

## SOUTH SIDE ELEMENTARY

Work commenced with an April 4 groundbreaking. As of January 2020, a new addition to the school is open and occupied. The new wing houses new 5th grade classrooms and collaboration areas as well as a new library, gymnasium, cafeteria, art studio and administration area. Over the summer of 2020, the existing older portions of South Side will be renovated.



## DR. HOWARD ELEMENTARY

Construction began in early 2019 and included a closure of James Street to facilitate demolition of surrounding properties and construction of the new school. Work continued through the summer and fall of 2019. The new Dr. Howard Elementary will be open for the 2020-2021 school year.



## MCKINLEY FIELD

A May 24 groundbreaking kicked off renovation of McKinley Field. Work has continued throughout the summer to begin preparation for track installation.



RATIO ARCHITECTS, INC.  
ARCHITECT  
BRIC PARTNERSHIP, LLC  
MEP ENGINEERS  
BACON FARMER WORKMAN EN  
& TESTING, INC.  
STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING  
BERNS, GLANCY, AND ASSOCIA  
CIVIL ENGINEERING



# FOCUSING ON EDUCATION EQUITY EXCELLENCE

## Creating the leaders of tomorrow requires strong leaders today.

The Administration, teachers and support staff in Champaign Unit 4 pride ourselves on our diverse community. Therefore, it is essential that our educators reflect the lives and experiences of our students and the larger community.

The District will continue providing professional learning and set the expectation that all school environments will be safe, inclusive and use culturally responsive practices. Additionally, we continue to look at ways we can further empower our students in their educational settings.

### ADVANCED PLACEMENT

- The average score in Unit 4 continues to be above the average score in the State of Illinois, the United States and around the world.
- The District has maintained the goal of increasing the number of minority students taking AP courses/exams and continuing to see success over the years.
- The number of African American students taking AP courses has seen a 95% increase since the Unit 4 started offering Advanced Placement courses.
- The number of Hispanic students taking AP courses more than **DOUBLED** last year.
- In 2018-2019, the number of exams taken by low income students was the highest since 2012.

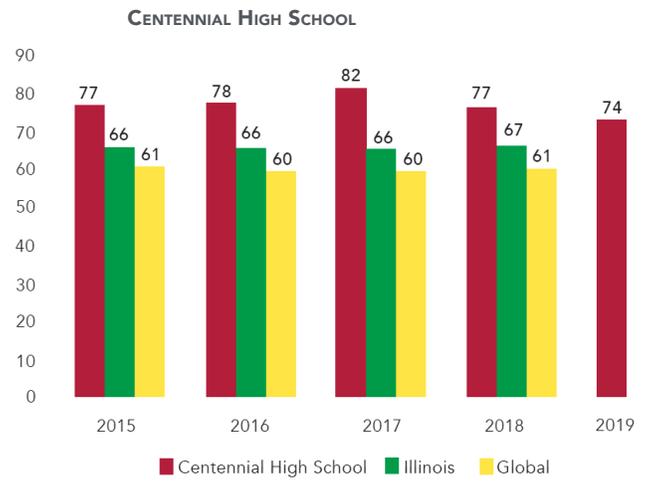
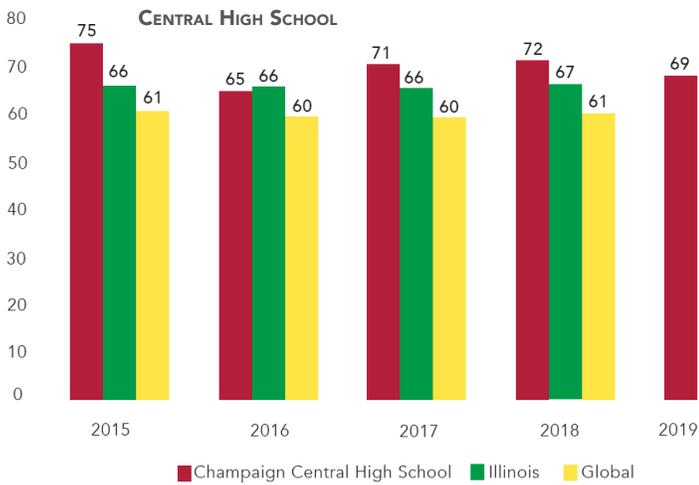
In Champaign Unit 4, there is a strong commitment to academic achievement. In order to reach this goal, the District provides meaningful support and effective accountability of school performance.

This includes fostering a culture of high expectations for all students, focusing efforts to close the achievement gap and supporting efforts to address disparities in student discipline.



THE NUMBER OF AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS TAKING AP COURSES SAW A **22 PERCENT** INCREASE LAST YEAR.

## % of Total AP Students with Scores 3+



## Goal Getters

The Goal Getters program is a supportive program developed by Unit 4 Administrators, the City of Champaign, the Champaign Police Department and community members.

The program was designed to empower students to succeed in their education. The goals of the program are to provide academic and behavioral guidance, mentorship, social emotional learning opportunities, family-focused activities and positive community experiences to high school males.



### The students in the program gain exposure to:

- Leadership and development training.
- College visits
- Assistance with College and scholarship applications
- Mentor training
- Conflict resolution



**Three Unit 4 students who participated in the Goal Getters program graduated in May 2018 and received scholarships to Parkland College. All three began classes at Parkland in fall of 2019.**

# Brilliant. Bold. Beautiful

Champaign Unit 4 launched a campaign to support African American girls - and had an amazing response! Brilliant. Bold. Beautiful. is an initiative to provide positive images and support to this group of students to dismantle the myths society has created around their identity. These t-shirts are one of many ways Unit 4 celebrates and helps our girls better understand their potential and legacy of scholarship and excellence.



**634** SHIRTS WERE PRODUCED  **205** SHIRTS WERE DONATED TO UNIT 4 STUDENTS

## R.I.S.E (Racial Identity Student Experience)

As part of the R.I.S.E. program, our educators create learning and leadership opportunities around racial identity development and advocacy. The goals of this program include: empowering high school students to positively influence the narrative about race in our community, provide mentors to younger students and educating the students about their own racial identity and the racial identities of others.

## Education Equity Excellence (EEE) Committee

Unit 4's EEE Committee includes staff representatives and community members. The purpose of EEE is to review and discuss:

- Student performance data disaggregated by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status
- Academic progress of various student populations such as regular education, special education, gifted, AP/Honors, Novak Academy and alternative students
- Attendance rates; discipline rates and graduation rates

For more information about the EEE Committee, go to <https://www.champaignschools.org/pages/eee/welcome>.

# Kindergarten Readiness

Champaign Unit 4 District partners with the United Way of Champaign County to offer a Kindergarten Readiness Program for parents and students. The program was designed with the goal of preparing students entering kindergarten for their first day of school while also empowering parents/guardians to support their child's learning.



- Three, two-night sessions were offered
- 98 families served
- Led by Unit 4 teachers, social workers and instructional coaches
- French and Spanish translators were available every night

Students were introduced to classroom expectations, given a bus tour and exposed to centers. Those centers included read aloud, math manipulatives, pencil/drawing.

Parents were provided with everyday learning activities and

an overview of basic school information. They were also given an overview of daily schedule and center activities and presentations on the Parent Lab and ESL programs.



## What people are saying...



*"This is why we moved here, you do such a good job getting all the community partners involved. Carle, Library, food donated. Very impressed all around with everything, I appreciate the effort that went into this. Diversity in families and school."*

*"It definitely made me less nervous and more excited. I know now what he's going to be doing in school. It's good to hear that the school has a lot of support for behaviors."*

*"I think it's a great opportunity, info, and resources for parents. It was very collaborative. I enjoyed it."*

# Professional Development for Administrators

Each month administrators meet and discuss things they can do that can begin shifting the narrative around our African American students. Below is just one example of the work that takes place every day at Unit 4 schools. These are Operation Hope Jr. students who have set their own literacy goals.

New this year, administrators will have a fourth professional goal as part of their evaluations. This goal is an equity goal focused on supporting black students.

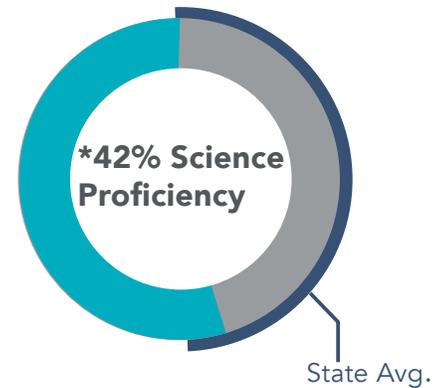
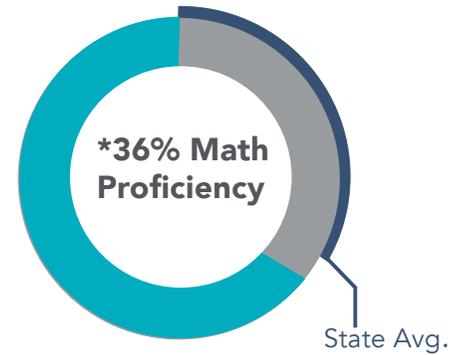
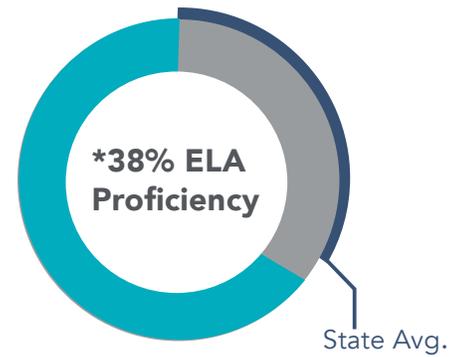


***Much of the Professional Development in the District focuses on moving from conversations about equity and racism to action.***

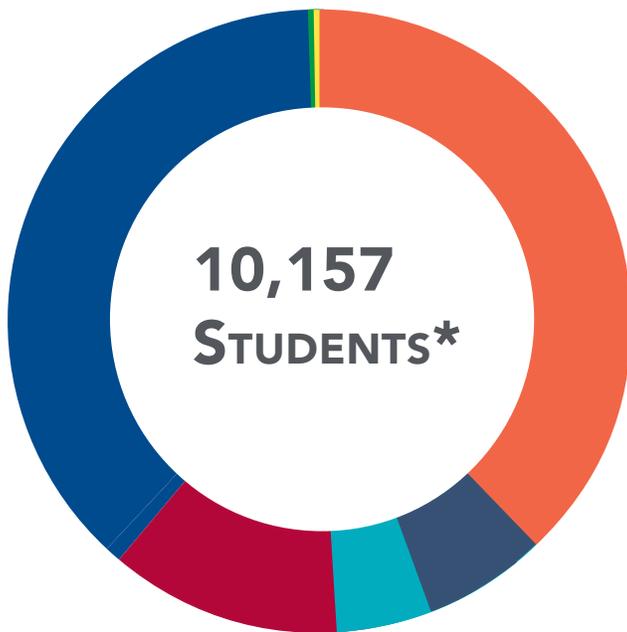
# Unit 4 By the Numbers

## Unit 4 Grade by Grade Enrollment 2015-2016 through 2019-2020

Date	Sept. 30, 2015	Sept. 30, 2016	Oct. 1, 2017	Oct. 1, 2018	Oct. 1, 2019
School Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Pre-K	287	295	295	311	292
Kindergarten	825	823	815	877	843
First Grade	799	838	808	814	881
Second Grade	853	799	797	773	828
Third Grade	818	841	770	781	769
Fourth Grade	800	829	831	780	795
Fifth Grade	751	799	820	822	802
Sixth Grade	689	722	748	784	810
Seventh Grade	687	688	705	735	798
Eighth Grade	668	660	660	646	726
Ninth Grade	880	854	825	840	875
Tenth Grade	652	713	714	666	679
Eleventh Grade	627	609	694	679	643
Twelfth Grade	594	590	570	646	584
SPED (18-21)	18	17	20	19	22
Bridges		15			
District Total	9,948	10,092	10,072	10,173	10,347



# 10,157 STUDENTS\*



### STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

WHITE	35%
BLACK	36%
AMERICAN INDIAN	0.2%
TWO OR MORE RACES	8%
HISPANIC	12%
PACIFIC ISLANDER	0.1%
ASIAN	9%
LOW INCOME	55%
ENGLISH LEARNERS	12%
WITH IEPs	15%
WITH DISABILITIES	--
HOMELESS	2%

\*Champaign Unit 4 School Report Card

# UNIT 4 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

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## **AMY ARMSTRONG**

Board President  
armstram@u4sd.org

## **GIANINA BAKER**

Board Vice President  
bakerga@u4sd.org

## **HEATHER VAZQUEZ**

Board Secretary  
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## **CHRIS KLOEPP**

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## **BRUCE BROWN**

Board Member  
brownbru@u4sd.org

## **KATHY SHANNON**

Board Member  
shannoka@u4sd.org

## **ELIZABETH SOTIROPOULOS**

Board Member  
sotiroel@u4sd.org



# CAMPUS LISTING AND PHONE NUMBERS

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## **Elementary Schools**

**Champaign Early Childhood Center (Pre-K)** – 809 N. Neil – 351-3881

**Barkstall** – 2201 Hallbeck – 373-5580

**Bottenfield** – 1801 S. Prospect – 351-3807

**Booker T. Washington** – 606 E. Grove – 351-3901

**Carrie Busey** – 304 Prairie Rose Ln., Savoy – 351-3811

**Dr. Howard** – 110 N. James – 351-3866

**Garden Hills** – 2001 Garden Hills – 351-3872

**International Prep Academy** – 1605 W. Kirby – 351-3995

**Kenwood** – 1001 Stratford – 351-3815

**Robeson** – 2501 Southmoor – 351-3884

**South Side** – 715 S. New – 351-3890

**Stratton** – 902 N. Randolph – 373-7330

**Westview** – 703 S. Russell – 351-3905

## **Middle Schools**

**Edison** – 306 W. Green – 351-3771

**Franklin** – 817 N. Harris – 351-3819

**Jefferson** – 1115 S. Crescent – 351-3790

## **High Schools**

**Centennial** – 913 S. Crescent – 351-3951

**Central** – 610 W. University – 351-3911

**Novak Academy** – 815 N. Randolph – 352-4328

## **District**

**Unit 4 Administrative Center** – 502 W. Windsor Rd. – 351-3800

**Center for Family and Community Engagement at the**

**Mellon Administrative Center** – 703 S. New – 351-3701

**Distribution Center** – 1301 N. Hagan – 351-3993

## **CHAMPAIGN UNIT 4 SCHOOLS**

502 W. Windsor Road • Champaign, Illinois 61820

[www.champaignschools.org](http://www.champaignschools.org)