

Grove Avenue School's History

Grove Avenue School was built in 1954 after residents of Elementary School District 4 voted to build a new school for their growing enrollment. At the time of construction there were 874 students attending Hough Street School. When its doors were opened for the first time in September, 1954, 365 students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade started their learning adventure here. When Grove Avenue School was first built it consisted of all of the present classrooms in our primary wing and center hallway up to the hallway by our library stairs. The first principal, Robert Samuels served for eight years. He was followed by Mr. Dale Dunn for 2 years; Miss Natalie Holl for 3 years; Mr. Ronald Smith for 6 years; Dr. Dick Vlasek for 8 years; and Dr. Cindy Kalogeropoulos who has been principal at Grove for over twenty years.

In 1966, Grove grew in size to again accommodate more children and programs. A spacious new library was added on the lower level along with seven more classrooms on the north side of the school. It was again remodeled in 1999 when a new wing was added to the western side and included a beautiful and spacious music room, art room, front office, gymnasium and kindergarten classroom. Also included were new lighting and technology upgrades. This was followed by the installation of new windows and air conditioning in the year 2003.

Grove Avenue School is beautiful, warm and spacious, but what really matters is the heart and soul of this school and that comes from its people. Grove students are noted for their academic excellence. Our national test scores consistently rank our school high above others in the nation. At Grove learning is taken seriously and yet we also manage to make it fun and exciting. This is evidenced by the annual Family Reading Program; Exploration Learning Fairs; classroom projects; field trips and Grove's famous Pride Board where student work is displayed and awarded special recognition each week. In 2007 our school was selected to receive the Exemplary School Reading Award for the State of Illinois from the International Reading Association. What a great honor! In 1993 Grove Avenue School was the first of only three schools in Barrington to receive the prestigious Blue Ribbon School Award for its excellence. This award was presented to Dr. Kalogeropoulos by President Bill Clinton at the White House. Grove was also selected as one of America's Best Schools by Redbook Magazine and recently was placed on the Illinois State Honor Roll for Excellent Schools for high ISAT achievement from 2003-2005. At least ninety percent of our third, fourth and fifth graders met or exceeded state goals. In 2007 Grove was again selected as a No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School. This award was presented to Dr. K and teacher, Paula Bischoffer, in Washington, D.C. in November of 2007. Our school was selected for this honor for our high level of academic achievement. Grove celebrated the announcement of this prestigious award at an assembly attended by Ms. Kristine Cohn, who is the Regional Director for the Department of Education. At the assembly our fifth graders performed; we all rapped to a song about "How Do You Build a School"; and we sang our school song, "Cheer Cheer for Grove School!" In 2008 The *Chicago Sun Times* ranked Grove Avenue School as the 8th highest elementary school in the State of Illinois. The *Sun Times* analyzed the reading and math scores of our students. The rankings are based on actual student scores. The *Chicago Tribune* based their rankings by the percentage of students who met or exceeded State standards. When all tests were analyzed we ranked 22nd in our state.

At Grove students are recognized for their unique gifts and talents. Every child is celebrated for his "specialness". We really believe that all children contribute to the excellence of our school. Our motto is "*Children First*" and we work to live up to that motto each and every day. At Grove we respect the needs of each child and create a nurturing learning environment that fosters compassion, curiosity, self discipline, independence and confidence.

The parents and teachers at Grove work very hard to make sure that children grow as learners and also grow into caring people. Grove's PTO partners to create programs and facilities of excellence for our students. We are so proud of our focus on the development of good character in our students; and the creation of our Peaceful Playground Program where children are expected to resolve their differences through talking not fighting. Every student at Grove participates in a GAVE project each year which stands for *Grove Avenue Volunteers Enthusiastically*. Students donate time and energy to those in need in our community. GAVE Projects have included planting wild flowers at Beese Park; working at the Chicago Food Depository; creating gift packets for the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House; helping the patients of Misericordia; and most recently assembling hundreds of food packets to be shipped to high poverty areas around the world. In May of 2007 Grove hosted a Kids' Garage Sale and Pancake Breakfast which helped to raise over \$18,000 for Heifer International, a worldwide relief organization to combat global poverty. Students also donate non-perishable food items to the Barrington Food pantry on a regular basis. One year students collected 1 million pennies – not only to learn the concept of a million but also to provide the Barrington Fire Department with funds to purchase thermal imaging cameras. Children begin their school day with the Pledge of Allegiance and our Grove Pledge which states that at our school we care for, protect and respect one another's person, property and feelings. In 2009 we have added an additional pledge entitled *The Power of One*. This pledge creates a stronger bully-free commitment for all students.

We look forward to our 2009-10 school year with a renewed commitment to excellence for our students.