

Now that school rankings have been published, it is useful to look at where LFHS stands within the state of IL rankings. (<http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/illinois>)

Let's say I was part of a young couple looking to move north of Chicago and wanted a good high school district to maximize my kids' education and entrance into a first-class college/university.

So I look at the rankings and see there are 11, which rank higher than Lake Forest. So you combine that with the latest round of negative publicity regarding District 115's administration and all of the empty store fronts along Western Avenue. The conclusion is pretty obvious....let's give Lake Forest a big detour. (And people have; just ask local realtors. The Open House listings in *The North Shore's Weekend* edition dated 8/29 show that Lake Forest and Lake Bluff comprise fully one third of all open houses on the entire North Shore!)

### **High School/State Rank/Number of Students in Thousands**

Stevenson #5 (3.9)

Deerfield #7 (3.7)  
Highland Park #8 (3.7)  
Prospect High #9 (2.1)  
Libertyville #13 (2.0)  
Evanston #15 (2.9)  
Buffalo Grove #18 (2.0)  
Vernon Hills #19 (1.3)  
New Trier #21 (3.2)  
Glenbrook North #22 (2.1)  
Glenbrook South #23 (2.6)  
Lake Forest #26 (1.6)

This sad state of affairs needs immediate attention. The District's superintendent, the high school principal, and the school board **need to have a measurable plan of action to raise LFHS's academic profile. And if they don't deliver on this key performance measure, then there needs to be defined consequences including removal.**

As an aside, it would also be interesting to look at:

1) the cost per pupil at to see just how much bang for its buck Lake Forest is getting relative to the other communities that the foregoing list of high schools serve.

2) what the historical ranking trend has been for LFHS (has it declined, improved, remained unchanged) over the last decade.

It is interesting to note that with the single exception of Vernon Hills, Lake Forest has a considerably smaller student enrollment than the higher ranking schools. About 15 years ago I had the occasion as part of my profession as a strategic planner for a major ad agency in the city to interview a recognized educational authority. I asked him to compare LF and NT. He said LF had two dimensions going for it that made it his preference as the best North Shore high school. First was its small size and second was the "collegial" atmosphere between the students and the teachers/administration that a former superintendent (searching my memory here; believe it was Dr. Metcalf) had nurtured. Not that NT wasn't a great school, but unless you were the prom queen, the football captain, or some other student stand out, this individual felt that a school the size of NT was "toxic" (his word) for the average student who simply got lost given the scale of things.

With the latest mishandling of the search for a new principal, this indefinable and priceless collegial atmosphere, if it still exists at all, has been sorely diminished.

I wish I could be more optimistic about my community's high school. It served my children well, but that was a decade ago and what was then, is not now.

A long time Lake Forest resident  
and concerned citizen