



Congratulations to Community High School District No. 99 in Downers Grove, Illinois; to **its teachers**, who are implementing Project CRISS in a highly effective manner; and to **its students** who have become strategic readers.

The district was recently featured in *The Sun/Downers Grove* newspaper in the article “Verbal remedy: Project helps educators teach lifelong learning strategies.”

The article explains that Project CRISS came to District No. 99 in 1997, when a team of teachers was trained and they piloted the program in an attempt to raise reading scores. The article goes on to say.

“It worked so well that more than reading scores improved. Scores went up on:

- ACT exams.*
- Career Planning and Assessment tests.*
- Terra Nova exams.*

Grade point averages improved. The committee found a correlation between reading success and higher test scores.”

One of the teachers mentioned in the article is Matt Barbini, a special education teacher who works at Downers Grove South High School. Matt incorporates many CRISS strategies into his daily instruction, including Concept Maps and Two-Column Notes.

The article quotes Matt, *“I can see kids attacking text and pulling out main ideas,”* he said. *“I’ve seen kids making strides that way.”*

Another teacher mentioned in the article is Jill Rose, a social studies teacher at Downers Grove North High School. The article states, *“She [Rose] said her CRISS training is different from other in-service programs she’s participated in because CRISS empowers students to learn and to use the strategies for themselves.”* It goes on to say, *“One of Rose’s students, freshman Mary Segreti, uses many of the strategies regularly. For example, when studying vocabulary, Segreti uses two-column notes [by] folding a piece of paper in half, putting the vocabulary words on one side and the definitions on the other. She can then quiz herself on the definitions. Segreti said the techniques make studying easier and that she is beginning to transfer the skills she’s learned in Rose’s world studies class and apply them to her English, science, and math classes.”*

We know the key to true **CRISS success is student ownership of strategies**. Mary Segreti is one of many Downers Grove students who has made the CRISS principles and strategies her own.

Congratulations to the educators and students at Community District No. 99 for being recognized in such a positive way by your local newspaper!

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