



The Message

THE OFFICIAL RICH TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 227 NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2023

RTHS becomes an IB World School

Rich Township High School is proud to announce that our International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP) which serves our talented freshmen and sophomores has been officially authorized as an IB World School. Our MYP teachers and staff have been working diligently with IB to earn this honor and distinction of belonging to a global community of 5,000 schools across 150 countries. The IB verification team visited classrooms a few weeks ago were highly impressed by our engaging curriculum, our talented teachers, and our amazing students and parents.



This verification coupled with the Diploma Programme verification from last year, allows Rich Township High School to offer IB for grades 9 through 12.

IB Academy Leader, Ms. Waters states “Our IB team is thrilled to be authorized. The MYP framework encourages students to make practical connections between their studies and the real world, preparing them for success in their academics and in life. Students learn through inquiry, action, and reflection. MYP provides a strong foundation that supports students in achieving college and post-secondary success.”

Nijah Lewis, a sophomore who transferred from STEM to FAC so he could enroll in IB, states “The work level is higher than a regular class and my teachers encourage me to communicate with others. The level of support in an IB class is more helpful because teachers give me a wider perspective to better understand.”

A MESSAGE FROM

THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Andre Allen
Vice President

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Board Member

Mia Carter
Board Member

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Board Member

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Business & Operations

Dr. Jeff Bonomo
Assistant Superintendent of
Human Resources

Dr. Kevin Gallick
Assistant Superintendent of
Educational Services

Lynn Fields
Co-Principal

Janice Wells
Co-Principal

Dear Rich Township Students and Families:

We're delighted to share that the 2023-2024 school year has started on a fantastic note. The first quarter has been marked by several engaging events and we promise many more enriching experiences on the horizon for our scholars.

The administrative team remains steadfast in their dedication to delivering enriching experiences and opportunities. By analyzing last year's data and implementing necessary adjustments, we are ensuring a path to mastery for both our scholars and staff. Stay tuned for detailed insights from our co-principals in the upcoming sections of this newsletter, shedding light on the successes of our scholars and staff.

The teams within our Educational Services and Operations departments have been diligently channeling their efforts into pioneering new approaches. By reimagining and refining their practices, they are taking significant strides to optimize the learning environments for our scholars. Their commitment is not just about maintaining standards, but elevating them, ensuring our students are met with the most conducive and innovative settings for their academic growth and success.

We are thrilled to spotlight a series of remarkable achievements and events that have recently graced Rich Township High School. First and foremost, we are immensely proud to announce that our institution has been designated an IB World School for grades 9 through 12, a testament to our commitment to global education excellence. Our Mighty Marching Machine showcased their unparalleled talent by clinching victories in not one, but two Battle of the Bands competitions.

Adding to the tapestry of success, our performing arts students took their talents to a national stage, captivating audiences with their passion and skill. In a heartwarming reunion, Grammy award-winning alumnus, J Ivy, graced our halls with a visit, instilling inspiration and pride in our community. Lastly, we would be remiss if we didn't acknowledge the national recognition from the College Board bestowed upon several of our scholars, underscoring their dedication and academic prowess. Kudos to all involved in these noteworthy accomplishments!

Your support of Rich Township High School District 227 has been a cornerstone of our achievements. It remains invaluable in our shared journey towards ensuring every student reaches their highest potential.

Respectfully,

Dr. Johnnie Thomas



Welcome Back Rich Township School District 227!

Rich Township High School District 227 is back in action, welcoming students back from their summer vacation on August 11th. We started the school year off on August 11th, with our Class of 2027 only, giving them an opportunity to explore the building and get to know their schedule. This year we are operating under the theme "Charting a Course to Mastery." As we progress throughout the school year, we will be learning about our journey of focusing on students and student success.



We have added new renovations that are sure to provide our students with experiences and opportunities that you can't find anywhere else in the South Suburbs. Over the summer, in partnership with Pepper Construction, we fully renovated our FAC campus providing a more open layout for students to enjoy. STEM has changes still being made to the back side of the school. These changes come equipped with everything our students need to thrive.



We've recently expanded our team by welcoming a range of new staff members and teachers. Furthermore, we've fortified our commitment to student welfare with a bolstered support and security team outside the classroom. While our premises have seen the addition of new spaces and faces, we've also marked the first anniversary of our beloved Richie the Raptor.

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-PRINCIPALS

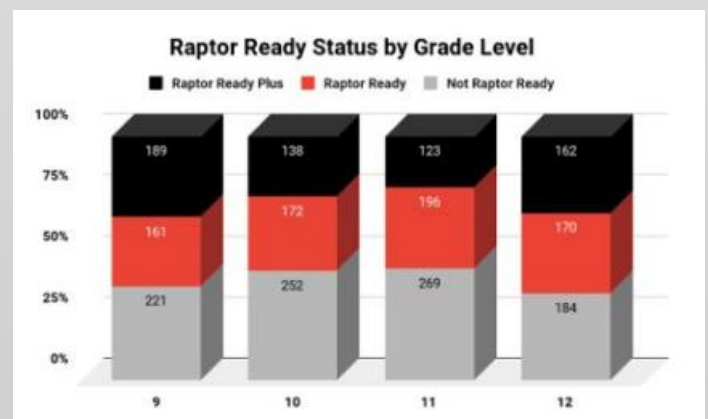
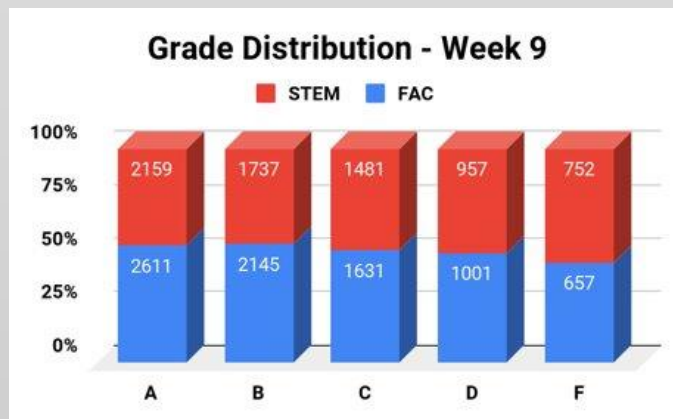
Administration, Teachers, and Staff are Ready!

Rich Township High School Parents and Students,

I am Lynn Fields, and as I step into my second year, alongside Co-Principal, Janice Wells, we are filled with a renewed sense of pride and enthusiasm in serving as the Co-Principals of Rich Township High School's. Together, we are ecstatic to embark on the 2023-2024 academic journey with you.

The summer preceding this school year has been one of transformative growth and progressive evolution, setting the tone for the months to come. As we steer through this academic year, our primary focus remains firmly rooted in the core pillars of Rich Township High School: Academic Achievement, Post-Secondary Success, Global Citizenship, and School Pride.

Our recent data paints a promising picture of our commitment to these pillars. A remarkable 65% of all grades earned by our scholars during the first five weeks have been As or Bs. Furthermore, nearly 60% of our scholars have already achieved the status of Raptor Ready and Raptor Ready Plus – a testament to our collective efforts and the dedication of our scholars.



Our global endeavors are meticulously crafted to enhance communication transparency, boost student outcomes, and broaden post-secondary avenues for each of our scholars. We'd like to extend special appreciation to our Academy Leaders. Their tireless efforts in recent months have bridged our students with industry leaders, providing them with unparalleled learning experiences. A heartfelt thank you goes out to the myriad of organizations that have joined hands with us, amplifying our mission to ensure every scholar is RAPTOR READY.

In closing, we urge every student to delve into the experiences RTHS has to offer – from our dynamic co-curricular activities to our rich academic offerings. Your engagement and commitment are the driving forces behind our success.

To keep up with the latest information and events follow us on all social media platforms @RTHSCoprincipals and @RichTownshipHS.

Sincerely,

Mr. Lynn Fields & Ms. Janice Wells

WHAT'S NEW



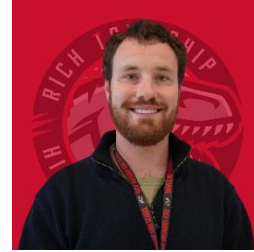
NEW Rich Township Raptors



Ms. Baker, FAC



Mr. Becker, STEM



Mr. Bird, FAC/STEM



Ms. Earls, FAC



Ms. Freelain, STEM



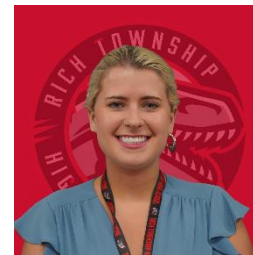
Ms. Gunier, STEM



Ms. Herrera, STEM



Ms. Kwiat, STEM



Ms. Krysinski, FAC



Ms. McLaughlin, STEM



Mr. Morris, FAC



Ms. O'Malley, FAC



Mr. Sherman, FAC/STEM



Ms. Thomas, FAC/STEM



Mr. Washington, FAC



INNOVATION CORNER

Educational Service Department

Enhancing Literacy and Refining Instructional Methods

Rich Township High School District 227, in partnership with West Ed, is intensifying literacy efforts with three main goals: enhancing teacher skills in reading, writing, and discussion; standardizing instructional practices; and promoting Reading Apprenticeship Practices. The program's success is monitored through metrics like 9th-grade performance on Think Cerca assessments, PSAT EBRW progress, and observed improvements in teaching during walk-throughs. These measures aim to ensure beneficial results for both students and faculty.



Equity Leadership Seminar

Rich Township High School (RTHS) prioritizes inclusivity and high educational standards, ensuring all students have the same opportunities regardless of background. Our specialized committee focuses on fostering equity leadership, recognizing, and nurturing each student's capabilities. We are excited about our partnership with the University of Chicago's Network for College Success, enhancing our resources to advance educational equity. This journey involves our entire educational community, whose varied expertise strengthens RTHS's inclusive, high-achieving environment.

As a significant milestone in our equity journey, RTHS is thrilled to leverage our strategic partnership with the Network for College Success at the University of Chicago. This collaboration aims to pool our resources, expertise, and passion to further the cause of educational equity and success.



INNOVATION CORNER



Operations Department

Food Service Updates

Under Food Service Director Betsy Williams, our Food Service Department has consistently innovated in culinary offerings and service. Beyond daily meals, they've enriched special events with delicious dishes.

During National School Lunch Week, we celebrated our exemplary Food Service Teams at both campuses for their dedication and standards. A proud achievement is our Food Pantry collaboration with the Greater Chicago Food Depository, underscoring our commitment to combatting hunger.

Coming soon: an advanced hot and cold lunch vending system, enhancing campus dining convenience. Kudos to our boundary-pushing team that keeps everyone well-fed!



Security Updates

Guided by our Director of Security, Karen Jones-Hayes, our security team has enhanced its training to ensure proactive, positive interactions. We aim for an approachable, not intimidating, security presence.

We've implemented the Evolv Monitoring systems at entrances for efficient, non-invasive screenings, ensuring smooth entries while identifying threats. Our security vehicles consistently patrol outside, and the Flock Safety system helps monitor vehicle activity near campus. Internally, our updated bathroom sensor system detects issues like smoking and vaping without infringing on student privacy.

In short, our goal is a secure environment where education remains paramount. We prioritize "Safety First, Education Always" and thank you for your trust in fostering a safe, productive learning atmosphere.





Rich in Student Success

RTHS Celebrates National Recognition

Students at RTHS earned academic honors from the College Board National Recognition Programs. These programs celebrate students' hard work in high school and showcase their strong academic performance. The academic honors for rural area, Black, Indigenous, and/or Latino students are an opportunity for students to share their strong academic achievements with college and scholarship programs that are seeking to recruit diverse talent.

We're thrilled to celebrate our students and recognize them for the great work they've been doing. We're proud of their strong academic performance in the classroom and on College Board assessments like the PSAT/NMSQT and AP Exams.



Morgan Lendabarker, FAC



Yaritza Sandoval-Diaz, STEM



Jordyn Claiborne, STEM



Miguel Cruz, FAC



Jesa Polcano-Webb, FAC



Serene Hyligar, STEM



Riley Gaston, STEM



Gabrielle Dixon, FAC



Allegra Biney, FAC



Brianna Montijo, STEM



Rebecca Perry, STEM

Mighty Marching Machines take First Place in the Chicago Classic and Circle City Classic!



With precision, passion, and unmatched prowess, the Mighty Marching Machine of Rich Township High School clinched the coveted top spot at the prestigious Chicago Classic Battle of the Bands, held on Saturday, September 2nd at Soldier Field.



The Chicago Classic Battle of the Bands has been an annual tradition, drawing the finest talent from across the Midwest. To win at such a distinguished event is a significant achievement for any band.



The Mighty Marching Machines traveled to Indianapolis, Indiana. They performed at Lucas Oil Stadium taking part in the Circle City Classic on Saturday, September 23, 2023. This weekend's celebration of African American Achievements culminated in an annual football match between two HBCU teams.

Not only did they perform inside Lucas Oil Stadium, but they performed in front of hundreds outside in a local parade.

With their mesmerizing high steps and upbeat sounds, the Mighty Marching Machines clinched the top spot with their outstanding performance.

RTHS Talents Shine in Chicago: A Day of Music, Honor, and Inspiration at the National Cube Conference

On Thursday, September 14th and Saturday, September 16th, 2023, in downtown Chicago, the CUBE Conference attendees witnessed the talent and vigor of some of our performing arts scholars. Three of our eminent student groups, the Mighty Marching Machine, the Choir, and the Naval Cadets, embarked on a journey to the prestigious national conference, representing our school's dedication to arts and discipline.



Amidst a gathering of esteemed professionals and artists, the Choir showcased their vocal prowess by delivering a soul-stirring acapella rendition of the National Anthem. The performance, while sublime in its entirety, was particularly elevated by the unparalleled voices of RTHS students: Hay'lee Young, Lorenzo Wilson, and Quori Morgan. Their harmonious blend and passionate rendition captivated the audience to such an extent that they were met with a spontaneous and heartfelt standing ovation.





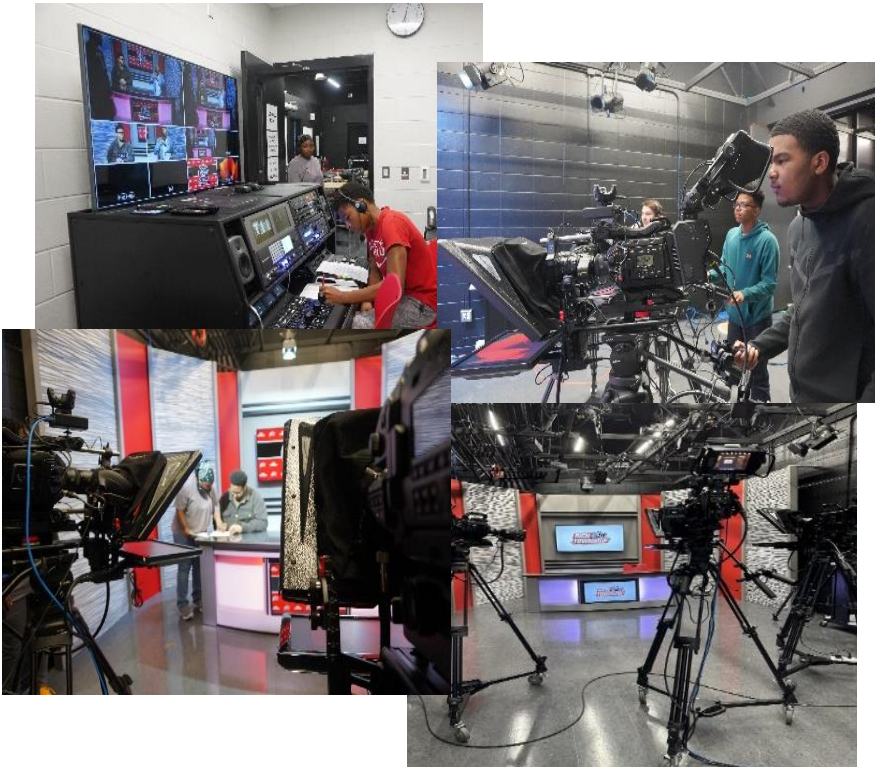
Raptor Spotlights

A Revolution in Media Education: Introducing the Fine Arts Campus TV Studio

Rich Township High School is abuzz with excitement as we unveiled our brand-new TV studio earlier this school year. Featuring state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, this studio promises to transform how our students experience media education. Many of you might have already caught a glimpse of it in our recent weekly updates, and there's much more to come!

The studio is not just a space – it's a hands-on learning environment. Our students are diving deep into the intricate world of TV production, learning the ropes through real-world experiences. They're donning various hats, from directing and anchoring to mastering the technicalities in the control room and handling the camera with finesse. This practical exposure ensures they get a comprehensive understanding of the entire TV production process.

Allow us to introduce the dynamic team behind this incredible venture. Keiko Bennett, CaRon Mason, Ricky Brown, Domarion Hale, Jesstin Pinkston, Jaxon Hailey, and Nehemiah McCree are the backbone of our TV Production studio. Their dedication, passion, and creativity drive the studio's operations every day. Guiding them in this journey is our experienced instructor, Sim Dulaney, who brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the table.



Grammy Award Winner, J. Ivy, Returns to RTHS



During the 2023 Homecoming assembly at Rich Township High School, students witnessed a poignant moment as Grammy-winning spoken word artist, J. Ivy, returned to his alma mater. Jaxon Hainey and Valarie Loekle from the Arts Academy presented him with a piece of the Rich Central Little Theater stage, marking the inception of his poetic journey.



Emotionally holding the historic fragment, J. Ivy addressed the assembly, emphasizing that dreams, regardless of their origin, can reach extraordinary heights. His message was clear:

with dedication, any student can carve their own path to success, mirroring his own storied trajectory.

The Homecoming assembly wasn't just a celebration of the past and the school's achievements; it was a beacon for the future, a testament to the idea that with passion and perseverance, every student has the potential to shape their destiny, just as J. Ivy did.

Captured Moments: The Lens Through Which We Relive Our Stories

At the heart of any institution lies its stories, and our Photography students have been stellar in their mission to chronicle these narratives. With cameras in hand, they've painted a vivid picture of the day-to-day wonders, achievements, and sheer dedication of our scholars. Among them, Valarie Loekle and Jayke Smith stand out, not just for their technical prowess, but also for their ability to see and capture the emotion, the drive, and the spirit of our academic community.



RICH TOWNSHIP RAPTORS IN ACTION

Taste of Matteson

On September 8th, our talented Culinary team hit the road and took our food truck to the Taste of Matteson! We were thrilled to showcase our culinary delights and share a taste of our school's gastronomic expertise with the community. Whether attendees were fans of classic favorites or eager to try something new, our team served up dishes that tantalized many taste buds. It was a memorable day for all involved!



Rich Township volunteers at Back-to-School Youth Day in Park Forest.

On August 12th, Rich Township proudly volunteered at the Back-to-School Youth Day in Park Forest. Our Band, Football, Baseball, Boys and Girls Basketball, Cheerleading, Dance, and Boys Soccer teams all joined in, showcasing our school's spirit and commitment to the community. It was a day of unity, sportsmanship, and giving back, emphasizing the importance of teamwork both on and off the field.



RICH TOWNSHIP RAPTORS IN ACTION

Health & Human Services Guest Speaker

Emma Albers-Lopez, a 4th year, Veterinarian student, spoke to classes about working in the veterinarian field. Ms. Albers-Lopez talk to students about applying to colleges, volunteer programs, and her experiences, including traveling to other countries. Students asked questions about the veterinarian program, along with the types of animals she has encountered.



Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration

This Hispanic Heritage month, Ms. Martinez went above and beyond to offer her students a unique and enriching experience that celebrated the vibrant culture and traditions of Hispanic communities. Instead of just relying on textbooks and lectures, she decided to bring the essence of Hispanic Heritage directly into her classroom in a way that was both educational and delicious.



RICH TOWNSHIP RAPTORS IN ACTION



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RICH TOWNSHIP RAPTORS IN ACTION

Homecoming Highlights: Tradition & Togetherness

The week of September 25th was painted with vibrant memories, especially on Friday at the FAC stadium. Staff and students gathered under the clear blue sky, their spirits high and hearts full. The pep assembly resonated with cheers, music, and shared camaraderie, setting the tone for the events that followed. Tailgating took on a festive air with delicious food, lively conversations, and the shared anticipation of the upcoming football game. As the game commenced, the crowd cheered on with unmatched enthusiasm, making it a day to remember.

The entire Homecoming week, culminating in that memorable day, was a testament to our school's spirit, unity, and the beautiful tapestry of past and present that weaves us all together.





**RICH TOWNSHIP
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 227**
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Upcoming Events

November 10th
Veteran's Day (No SCHOOL)

November 20th through 24th
Thanksgiving Break

December 22nd – January 8th
Winter Break

Board Meetings Dates

All Regular Board Meetings
start at 6:30 PM

November 15th

December 20th

RTHS & SD159 RECEIVE INSPIRA AWARDS

On Friday, September 22nd, Rich Township received an award from the 2023 Illinois Chapter of National School Public Relations Associations Communications Contest. INSPIRA awarded Rich Township with an Award of Merit for the Academy Video.

The award ceremony was held in Oak Brook with more than 30 other School Districts.



Left to Right, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Operations, Dennis Forst Superintendent, Dr. Johnnie Thomas, Director of Communications, Matthew Shank, Global 360 Marketing President, Perry Scott and Videographer, Eric Miller.



District 159, Superintendent, Dr. Tiffany Brunson, Director of Communications, Sheila Friday, District 227, Director of Communications, Matthew Shank, Superintendent, Dr. Johnnie Thomas.

This video highlights our academies at FAC & STEM. We offer a wide range from Business & Finance, Fine Arts & Communications, Health and Human Services, International Baccalaureate, and Technology and Engineering.

To watch the video, go to the Rich227.org website. Academic Programming, Academy video.