

RIDGE REPORT

A publication of news from Chicago Ridge School District 127.5

LEADERS IN LEARNING



WELCOME TO OUR INAUGURAL ISSUE!

We are excited to share the first issue of our new district newsletter that highlights news and updates happening around Chicago Ridge School District 127.5.

In this issue, you will find information from the first trimester of the 2025-2026 school year as well as news on upcoming events.

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Superintendent's Message

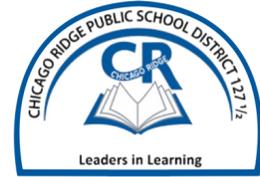
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A MESSAGE FROM BOARD PRESIDENT, Chrissi Petropulos



Dear CRSD 127.5 Community,

My name is Chrissi Petropulos, and I'm honored to serve as your School Board President for my second term. As both a parent and a community member, I'm incredibly proud of the amazing work happening every day in our district.

Over the past few years, CRSD 127.5 has seen tremendous growth in student achievement—a reflection of the dedication, creativity, and care shown by our teachers, staff, and administrators. Like many districts, we've faced challenges in helping students recover from the impacts of COVID-19, but our team has responded with thoughtful and intentional changes. The new curricular alignment across grade levels has strengthened instruction and built a stronger bridge between classrooms and schools.

We're also proud of the continued expansion of supports for all learners—our English Learner families, students receiving special education services, and those ready for advanced challenges. Beyond the classroom, our students shine in an incredible range of clubs, activities, and programs that help them grow as leaders, teammates, and citizens.

What truly makes CRSD 127.5 special is the sense of community. So many of our staff members, families, and students stay connected to our district for years, a reflection of the relationships, support, and pride that make this such a wonderful place to learn and grow.

Our entire Board is committed to supporting our students, staff, and community as we continue to build a district rooted in growth, connection, and excellence. It's exciting to see what we've accomplished together—and even more exciting to think about what's ahead.

Thank you for trusting us, for being involved, and for being part of the CRSD 127.5 family.

CHICAGO RIDGE SD 127.5 BOARD OF EDUCATION



Effie "Chrissi" Petropulos - President

Joy Labudzik - Vice President

JoAnna Grove - Secretary

Tierza Lammel - Member

Antonio Medina - Member

Laura Schroeder - Member

Stacy Berkin - Member

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

I am excited to welcome you to the very first issue of the Chicago Ridge School District 127.5's newsletter! I am thrilled that we are launching this initiative to allow our community another way to connect not only with their child's school but with the entire District.

This newsletter will highlight important announcements, celebrations of student and staff achievements, and updates on academic programs. We know that the education of our students is not just done at school. Our students thrive when they know there is a partnership between home, school, and the community. This newsletter is a chance to strengthen that partnership by keeping everyone informed.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to our dedicated teachers, administrators, and staff who work tirelessly every day. And to our families, thank you for being our most valuable partners in your child's education.

Please take a moment to explore the rest of this inaugural issue and see all the great things happening in Chicago Ridge School District 127.5!

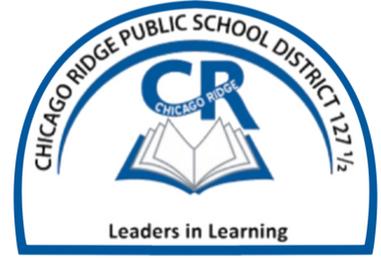
With gratitude,

Dr. Adam Thorns



CRSD 127.5

24-25 Illinois Report Card



ANNUAL SUMMATIVE DESIGNATIONS

WHAT IS A SUMMATIVE DESIGNATION?

Schools receive an annual summative designation on the Illinois Report Card.

The designation is based on the school's overall data on multiple accountability indicators. Exemplary indicates the top 10% of schools. Commendable is the next highest rating.

RC COMMENDABLE

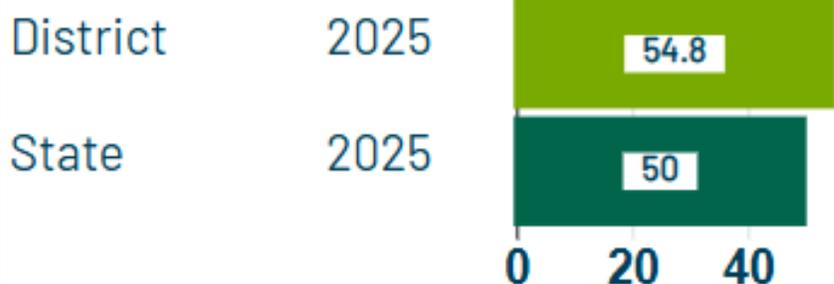
RL COMMENDABLE

FJH COMMENDABLE

DISTRICT ASSESSMENT GROWTH SCORES COMPARED TO THE STATE

**Reading/
Writing**

Math



CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Updated by:
Megan Nothnagel
Curriculum Director

Teaching and Learning

Our teachers and students have been hard at work diving into the first trimester of learning across all three schools! Classrooms are filled with curiosity, collaboration, and hands-on experiences as students engage with our district's high-quality instructional resources across all grade levels and content areas. We are looking forward to a successful second trimester!



Learning Resources for Families

By visiting the **Learning** tab on our district website at www.crsd1275.org and selecting **Curriculum and Assessment**, families can explore an overview of what students are learning in each grade level and subject area. This section includes information about our instructional programs, standards, and helpful guides—such as the “**Family Support Materials**” links, which provide practical strategies and questions to use at home during math practice.

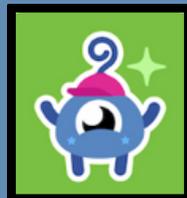
Families can also learn more about how we measure student growth and achievement by selecting Assessment under the Learning tab. Here you'll find details about district and state assessments and how these tools help teachers personalize instruction and track progress throughout the school year.

Digital Learning Tools at Home

Encouraging your child to spend 15–20 minutes a few times each week on these programs helps reinforce what they're learning in class.



Dreambox
Math
K-8th



Reading
Park
K-2nd



Reading
Plus
3rd-8th

Multilingual Learner Department

Updated by: Karoline Burcheri, Bilingual & English Language Director

Instructional Support for Multilingual Learners

EL Team Leaders have been working closely with their building teams, and EL teachers are collaborating with co-teachers to provide targeted language supports and classroom scaffolds that help multilingual learners engage and grow.

Supporting New Staff

A support session was held to introduce new staff to the many layers of support multilingual learners need to feel successful and confident in school.

Language Proficiency Test : ACCESS – Why It Matters

As we head into winter, we are preparing for ACCESS testing, an important annual assessment that helps us measure language growth and ensure multilingual students receive the support they need in the classroom.

Supporting Our Multilingual Families

We continue to welcome newcomer students from many language backgrounds, and our Family Liaisons are building strong connections with families through ongoing outreach, Family Support Sessions, and our Adult English Learning classes at the Chicago Ridge Library.



Student Services Department

Updated by:
Cary Hillegonds
Director of Special Services

TREMENDOUS PARTNERSHIP

For the second year in a row, our district is collaborating with the Illinois Autism Partnership, and our staff and students have gained invaluable support from our consultant. For more information visit their website at eastersealschicago.org

TEAM WORK

We cannot overestimate the incredible contribution our district paraprofessionals are making to enhance the education of our students. This year the group is engaging in vibrant book study discussions to learn from and support each other.

McKINNEY-VENTO ACT

Occasionally, families fall on difficult times and experience homelessness. The purpose of this act is to assist students in homeless situations through safeguarding their access to education. If you have questions please contact the District Office.

GREAT RESOURCE

Found under the support sites section of our District website, Care Solace is a link for our families and staff to mental health services. They also share out great messages like this month's focus on grateful hearts and kind acts.



NEWS FROM THE BUSINESS OFFICE

Updated by **Katheryn Picciolini**
Business Manager/CSBO

School districts must meet various annual audit requirements, primarily a financial audit of their financial statements, conducted by an independent certified public accountant. Districts that spend over \$750,000 in federal funds in a fiscal year must also undergo a Single Audit, which includes compliance testing for federal awards. These audit results are submitted to the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

The results are in and Chicago Ridge School District received a Financial Profile Score of 4.0 and a Financial Profile Designation of RECOGNITION. This is the highest score and designation that a district can receive. The data from the audit is used to calculate five (5) indicators that ISBE uses to determine a district's Financial Profile Designation. Each indicator is weighted and has a score between 1 and 4. The scores are multiplied by the weighted factor and added together to calculate the Financial Profile Designation.

4.0

District 127.5 received the highest Financial Recognition rating from the Illinois State Board of Education for FY 25.



ELDEN D. FINLEY JUNIOR HIGH

The first trimester at Finley Jr. High School has been an exciting one! Whether it's our sports teams, clubs, music program, or academics, our students are active, engaged, and making the most of life at the junior high.

The first trimester has also been a time of incredible growth and connection across our school community. Our teachers have been working hard to create meaningful learning experiences that challenge and inspire students, while our staff continues to foster a supportive and welcoming environment for all. From classroom projects and hands-on learning to community service and school spirit events, Finley students have shown enthusiasm, teamwork, and pride in everything they do. We are so proud of their accomplishments and look forward to building on this momentum as we head into the next trimester!



RIDGE CENTRAL ELEMENTARY

As we wrap up our first trimester, Ridge Central is proud to celebrate a wonderful start to the school year! Our staff has worked incredibly hard to create a warm, welcoming environment where every student feels supported from day one. The energy in our halls was unmistakable as students met their new teachers, reunited with friends, and began building the routines that set the foundation for a successful year.

Throughout the trimester, our students have been learning what it means to be a Ridge Central S.T.A.R. —

Safe • Trustworthy • Accepting • Respectful

By showing these core values in their classrooms and around the building, students can earn Starbucks, which they proudly exchange for special items at our school store, Starget. Our students have shown incredible growth and enthusiasm as they work to be positive leaders in our school community.

We are so proud of all the hard work, excitement, and teamwork that has shaped this first trimester. Here's to a strong start and an even brighter rest of the school year at Ridge Central! ☀️





RIDGE LAWN ELEMENTARY

Ridge Lawn Eagles: Soaring Into the School Year!

The 2025–2026 school year took off with true Eagle Strong spirit! In August, our jam-packed Open House brought families and staff together and even a torrential rainstorm couldn't slow down the excitement. Just days later, we welcomed students back for the first day of school, and the building buzzed with energy. Our youngest Eagles in kindergarten and first grade were especially thrilled to explore their brand-new classroom furniture!

As September rolled in, each classroom elected a Ridge Lawn Student Advisory Representative, giving students a meaningful voice and the opportunity to meet with building administration throughout the year.

October was a month filled with celebration, leadership, and community service. We proudly launched our Cops and Kids Award in partnership with the Chicago Ridge Police Department and Chicago Ridge Mall to recognize students who demonstrate outstanding character and what it truly means to be Eagle Strong. We kept the momentum going with our festive annual Halloween Parade, where creativity and school pride were on full display!

One of our biggest highlights so far has been our building-wide Domino Effect Cereal Drive. Throughout October, our Eagles worked together to collect 1,085 boxes of cereal! Students created a massive domino chain around the school that caught the attention of WGN News and The Patch.

In early November, we proudly donated all cereal boxes to the Worth Township Food Pantry—an incredible example of Eagles lifting up their community. We also continue our long-standing tradition of honoring students who consistently go above and beyond with our monthly High Flyers Awards. These students truly soar! A huge thank you to our PTA for their enthusiastic support this fall, including a family-favorite Movie Night, our Fall Festival Trunk or Treat, and spreading joy to staff with their brand new Treat Trolley.

To keep up with everything happening at Ridge Lawn, be sure to subscribe to our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@ridgelawn1112>.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Trunk or Treat

Ridge Central hosted a sensory-friendly Trunk-or-Treat for the students of the District.



McTeacher Night

CRSD 127.5 Staff and PTA volunteers worked shifts at McDonalds to raise over \$1,000 for students.



Domino Effect

The Ridge Lawn Student Council collected 1,085 cereal boxes to donate to the Worth Township Food Pantry.



Veterans Day

Finley Jr. High hosted a Veterans Day Breakfast which included tributes from the Student Council, Band, Choir, and Richard's JROTC to honor our local veterans.

