



## **RICH TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 227**

20550 South Cicero Avenue  
Matteson, Illinois 60443

708-679-5800 \* [www.rich227.org](http://www.rich227.org)

May 15, 2021

Dear Rich Township Families,

**Dr. Johnnie Thomas**  
Superintendent  
[jthomas@rich227.org](mailto:jthomas@rich227.org)

Looking back at where we were at the beginning of the school year, it is hard to believe how far we have come. Next week, we will celebrate the Rich Township High School graduating class of 2021 and we are thrilled to deliver a ceremony to our seniors and their families as close to normal as possible. We congratulate our seniors on achieving this important milestone and wish them the best as they continue on a journey of continuous learning. Also, I want to thank our parents, staff and community for the support given to all of our students throughout this school year.

**Dr. Alicia Evans**  
Assistant Superintendent  
Of Business and  
Operations  
[aevans@rich227.org](mailto:aevans@rich227.org)

Read more to learn important information regarding our student vaccinations, graduation and more. Please read the following communication in its entirety for additional updates.

**Dr. Stephen Bournés**  
Assistant Superintendent  
Of Educational Services  
[sbournes@rich227.org](mailto:sbournes@rich227.org)

[Click here to watch the weekly video message.](#)

**Dr. Kim Echols**  
Assistant Superintendent  
Of Human Resources  
[kechols@rich227.org](mailto:kechols@rich227.org)

### **Student Vaccinations**

In anticipation of returning to full in-person instruction in the fall, we want to make sure we are supporting efforts to keep our students, staff and families safe. In collaboration with community partners, the district is conducting a survey with families to see if they are interested in receiving the Pfizer vaccine. Based on the results of this survey, the district will be informed on the next steps to take.

**Mr. Larry Varn**  
Principal  
[lvarn@rich227.org](mailto:lvarn@rich227.org)

[Click here to take the survey](#)

Working in partnership with Thornton Fractional High School District 215, we have identified additional opportunities for students and families who would like to receive the vaccine. Please click the link below for instructions on how to register for vaccinations at our partner sites.

[Click here to book COVID Vaccination appointments provided by Cook County Health at Thornton South Fractional High School.](#)

### **Graduation**

Our seniors' last day was **Friday, May 14**, and there are less than 10 days until they walk across the stage and receive their high school diploma. In preparation for this event, here is some important information you should know:

**FOCUSED ON STUDENTS AND STUDENT SUCCESS**

- **Outstanding Obligations:** If students owe any fees or have not returned all of their textbooks, they will not be able to pick up their cap and gown. Students should make sure all books have been returned and fees have been paid by **Monday, May 17**.
- **Post High School Intention Form:** All graduating seniors are required to submit their Post High School Intention Form by **Monday, May 17**. The form is posted on Schoology and must be completed before cap and gown distribution.
- **Cap and Gown Distribution:** Caps and gowns will be distributed **Thursday, May 20**, to all graduating seniors who have satisfied all graduation requirements and all other obligations.
- **Graduation Rehearsal:** Graduation rehearsal will take place on **Thursday, May 20**, at **8 am, 11 am, and 2 pm** at the STEM Campus gym according to the same schedule as the graduation ceremony. Students will need to provide their own transportation to and from rehearsal.

Time	Last name begins with
8 am	A - G
11 am	H - O
2 pm	P - Z

- **Regrets Only:** We are expecting all students to participate in the graduation ceremony so there is no need to RSVP. Please notify the senior sponsor only if you do not plan to participate in graduation.
- **Attire:** As previously communicated, students are expected to attend the graduation ceremony dressed appropriately. **Gentlemen should wear collared shirts and ties, dress pants, and dress shoes; ladies should wear semi-formal or business casual attire, with dresses at appropriate lengths and dress shoes.** Senior class sponsors and administrators will determine if a student is dressed appropriately, and students will be given the option of changing their attire or not to participate. **If caps are decorated, they should be decorated based on their post-secondary plans or otherwise appropriate.** Sponsors will determine if the cap decoration is disruptive or inappropriate. Students will be asked to remove their cap and be given a plain cap if necessary. The student will be charged for the extra cap. In order to avoid this replacement fee, if you choose to decorate your cap, please make sure it is appropriate.
- **Inclement Weather:** We will be closely monitoring the weather next week leading up to graduation. **If it is decided to hold the graduation ceremonies indoors, the decision will be communicated no later than Friday, May 21, by 12 pm.** We will notify families using all of our communication platforms. Families are strongly encouraged to check the district website, social media platforms and their email for the decision. If the ceremony is held outdoors as planned, families will use the four **black** outdoor tickets. If the ceremony is held indoors, families will use the two **red** indoor tickets.
- **Arrival:** Graduates should arrive one hour prior to their scheduled ceremony. Graduates will enter through Door 8. Doors will open for families and guests 30 minutes prior to the ceremony start time.

- **Face Masks:** All attendees (graduates, families, and staff) are required to wear a face mask that covers their nose and mouth at all times.
- **Parking:** Parking will be limited on graduation day and attendees are encouraged to arrive in one vehicle, if possible. If the main parking lot is at capacity, families will be able to use the parking lot across the street from the STEM campus.
- **General Seating:** Seating is open in the stadium unless you have requested a handicapped seating ticket. In order to maintain social distancing, families are allowed to sit together in the stadium. Please maintain a six-foot distance between your family and others.
- **Handicapped Seating:** If a family requires handicapped seating, please email the senior class sponsors at [sedwards@rich227.org](mailto:sedwards@rich227.org), [kgray@rich227.org](mailto:kgray@rich227.org) or [dwright@rich227.org](mailto:dwright@rich227.org).
- **Photos:** A photographer will be present during the ceremony to take professional pictures of graduating seniors. Parents will be able to purchase pictures of their graduate after the ceremony.
- **Contact Information:** For students who choose not to participate in the graduation ceremony or did not pick up items on distribution day, they will be mailed home. Students should update their contact information to ensure they receive important items, such as the diploma. A summer contact information form link has been posted on Schoology.
- **Diploma Pick-Up:** Diploma certificates will be ready for pick up **the week of June 14** at the Rich East Campus. Any diploma not picked up will be mailed home.
- **Questions?:** If families have questions, please email Ms. Debra Wright, the senior class sponsor at [dwright@rich227.org](mailto:dwright@rich227.org)

### **Amazon Virtual Site Visit**

In partnership with Amazon, we are excited to provide our students with a district-wide virtual field trip experience on **Thursday, May 20, from 12:30 -1:30 pm**. This is an amazing opportunity for all of our students. During the field trip, attendees will have virtual access to tour the Amazon Fulfillment Center. They will discover how algorithms and machine learning power the local Amazon Fulfillment Centers. Attendees will also be able to interact with tour guides, engineers, and other Amazon staff. Be on the lookout for other opportunities as a result of Amazon partnership.

In order to receive the link to attend the tour, you must register first. [Click here to register!](#)

### **Student Book Return**

All lost or missing textbooks will be added to student accounts; therefore, students must return textbooks. This year, textbooks will be returned curbside only at the STEM campus at Door 5. The last day for seniors to return their books was **Friday, May 13**.

All other grades must return their books from **June 1 to June 3**.

### **Chromebooks – Returning Students**

**All returning freshmen through junior students issued a Chromebook during the 2020-2021 school year will be able to keep the device through summer break.**

Students will be responsible for following the terms and conditions listed in the signed Student/Parent Technology Use Agreement, including the District 227 Acceptable Use Policy. Proper use and care are expected over the summer months so that all devices will be ready for use for the 2021-2022 school year. Any inappropriate use of the district-issued device will be notified via GoGuardian and reported to administration.

### **Meal Account Refunds**

As we approach the end of the current school year, we want to notify you of the procedures regarding student meal account refunds. All graduating seniors will automatically receive a refund of the balance on their food service meal accounts at the end of the school year. For all other students, money in their meal accounts will carry over into the next school year and can be used for future purchases, as needed. Parents preferring a refund of any balance over \$1.00 can make a request by sending an email to [bwilliams@rich227.org](mailto:bwilliams@rich227.org). Please include the student's name, parent name and current mailing address in the request.

### **Fee Waivers**

The deadline to submit a registration fee waiver for the 2020-21 school year is **Monday, May 17**.

Please note, according to Board Policy 4:140, the fee waiver applies to textbooks, other instructional materials, and driver's education. Students receiving a fee waiver are not exempt from charges from lost and damaged books, locks, IDs, lanyards, other materials, supplies, equipment, and Chromebooks.

The fee waiver status is only applicable to the current school year. You must apply for a fee waiver each year. Fee waivers do not rollover from year to year. The waiver forms can be found [HERE](#). Please email your form to [aevans@rich227.org](mailto:aevans@rich227.org) or your campus cashier. The forms must be legible and cell phone pictures will not be accepted.

### **Food Service**

Due to our status as a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) district, **ALL STUDENTS now qualify for FREE BREAKFAST AND LUNCH DAILY** at school. **If your student has chosen a Hybrid Learning Model and is attending alternating in-person days in class, please encourage them to take advantage of the free meals offered to them on in-person days.** We also want to remind parents that meals for alternate days of remote learning can be picked up at the Curbside Meals Distribution Program on a weekly basis. Please see the information below for the scheduled distribution days and times.

The Food Service Department is currently providing **seven days of FREE breakfast and lunch for any child up to the age of 18 years. Families do not have to live in the community**

**or attend the district schools.** There are no forms to fill out and no income requirements. This program is provided to **ALL** families regardless of their financial situation.

Parents may pick up meals without children being present. Meals are distributed through contactless drive through curbside distribution at both the **STEM** and **Fine Arts and Communications** campuses.

Please note that the location of drive through pick-up station at the STEM campus has been moved to the back of the school building. Vehicles should still line up in the front circle drive on distribution days, and security will direct the traffic, allowing only a few cars at a time to proceed to the back of the school.

***Distribution Days and Hours in May:***

***Monday, May 17 - 10 am – 1 pm and 5 pm - 7 pm***

***Wednesday, May 19 - 10 am – 1 pm***

***Monday, May 24 - 10 am – 1 pm and 5 pm - 7 pm***

***Wednesday, May 26 - 10 am – 1 pm***

The next scheduled date for meal distribution is **Monday, May 17.**

***Locations:***

*Fine Arts and Communications – 5000 Sauk Trail – Richton Park, IL*

*STEM Campus – 3600 W. 203<sup>rd</sup> - Olympia Fields, IL*

For more information, visit [www.rich227.org](http://www.rich227.org), call 708-679-5728, or email [bwilliams@rich227.org](mailto:bwilliams@rich227.org)

Thank you for taking the time to read this important information. Feel free to reach out to the appropriate person if you have additional questions.

**You may also follow us on social media:**

- Facebook: @District227 @richtownships
- Twitter: @District227 @DrJohnnieThomas @richtownships
- Instagram: @district227\_ @richtownships
- Superintendent's Message on our district website:  
<http://www.rich227.org/SuperintendentsMessage.aspx>

Your continued support of Rich Township High School District 227 is appreciated and vital to ensure student success.

Respectfully,

Dr. Johnnie Thomas

Superintendent