



RICH TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 227

20550 South Cicero Avenue

Matteson, Illinois 60443

708-679-5800 * www.rich227.org

September 11, 2021

Dear Rich Township Families,

Dr. Johnnie Thomas
Superintendent
jthomas@rich227.org

Dr. Alicia Evans
Assistant Superintendent
Of Business and
Operations
aevans@rich227.org

Dr. Stephen Bournés
Assistant Superintendent
Of Educational Services
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Dr. Kim Echols
Assistant Superintendent
Of Human Resources
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Mr. Larry Varn
Principal
lvarn@rich227.org

Thank you to our students, staff and families for your flexibility, patience, understanding and support you have shown these past two weeks as we welcomed back all of our students to in-person instruction and the new flex schedule. As a reminder, all students should bring their fully charged Chromebook to school daily. Students are allowed one loaner a week, but there are a limited number of loaners available, so don't forget your device at home. Students must also remember to bring their IDs daily.

Read more to learn important information regarding transportation, attendance and more. Please read the following communication in its entirety for additional updates.

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

Bus Schedule

Please be advised that our transportation provider is being impacted by the nationwide bus driver shortage. This has created the following issues with our morning and afternoon transportation routes.

The driver shortage has caused the district to have less routes available to pick up students in the morning and in the afternoon, which has created bus overloads. A bus overload is when buses have reached capacity limits and no additional passengers are allowed in get on the bus. On some routes, students are sitting three people to a seat, which makes it impossible to physically distance. However, all students are required to wear a mask.

We also have a Transportation Remind you can join to get regular updates. Here's how to join:

1. Visit www.remind.com/join
2. Type in rtbusinfo and click "join."
3. Enter your name and cell phone number or email address

New routes have been posted to please review them on transportation section of our website. **These routes went into effect on Tuesday, September 7.**

Attendance

Parents should expect a call daily from our Scholarship system notifying them that their student is present and when he or she arrived to school. If you sent your student to school, and you do not receive a phone call, then you should contact the attendance office at:

STEM Campus Attendance Office

- Fran Bryant- x5818
- Theresa Allen- x5818

Fine Arts and Communications Campus Attendance Office

- Christle Jenkins-x3135
- Tonya Williams- x3135

Lunch

Parent feedback is always welcome in our school-home partnership. Thank you to our families for your feedback regarding lunchtime. In order to make sure all of our students have the opportunity to eat lunch, we will keep the cafeteria open until to 2 pm.

Student Handbook

The 2021-2022 Student Handbook is posted on the district website. A digital version will also be emailed to all students.

Face Masks

Following guidance from ISBE and the recommendations of the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics, masks are required for everyone in all schools. Wearing a mask is a simple, easy, and effective way to protect not only our own lives but lives of the parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and loves ones all around us. Face masks for everyone regardless of vaccination status is one of the ways we mitigate the spread of the virus and ensure we can continue in-person instruction. Extra masks are available for students at each campus. However, students are encouraged to bring their own mask. To learn about the other layers of prevention the district is currently using to keep students and staff safe, [CLICK HERE](#) to view our COVID Plan.

Also, the district can administer the BinaxNOW test to students who present with symptoms of COVID-19 and whose parents/guardians (and the students themselves, if age 18 or older and not under guardianship) have provided consent for testing.

[Click here to download the COVID-19 testing consent form](#)

Please return this form to the nurse's office.

IDs and Chromebook Devices

All students must bring their student ID and Chromebooks to school each day. IDs will be used to scan into the building and to capture attendance for each class. Students who do not have an ID will be required to get a temporary ID. The cost of temporary IDs is \$1, which is due at the time the ID is issued. Students must also remember to bring their Chromebooks to school each day to use during instruction.

Dress Code

All students must wear a face mask throughout the school day except when eating. Extra masks are available for students at each campus. Students are not allowed to wear the following items:

- Crop tops
- Hoods, Hats
- Doo-rags/bonnets
- Ski Masks

Food Service

The Food Service Department has been excited to welcome all our students back to the 2021-22 school year! We want to remind you that our school district is now a *Community Eligibility Provision* District, which means **ALL** our students receive a **FREE** breakfast and **FREE** lunch daily when at school. And now that **ALL** our students are eating their meals **FREE**, we wanted to do something new and different in the cafeterias. As you return to the school cafeteria, you will be able to experience our new *Cafe 227 Food Court*.

Every day can be a new culinary adventure, or a chance to consistently dine on your favorite meals. In the morning, start your day out right with breakfast from the *Waffle Bar*, the *Yogurt Bar* or the *Rise and Dine Cafe*. At lunchtime visit the *Taste of Italy*, *South of the Border*, *Hot Off the Grill*, *Wings and Things*, *Souper Fresh and Green* or the *Marketplace* and enjoy an abundance of choices that are sure to feature all your favorites culinary delights. So let us be your favorite school subject! Come dine with us daily! All you need to bring with you is your appetite!

Food Service - Supply Chain Issues

Many of you may be hearing about the national supply shortage that has come about due to Covid and the resulting staffing shortages at many major food and production companies. In addition, there is a shortage of truck drivers and warehouse workers to load and ship supplies to our purveyors. Unfortunately, we are now experiencing the shortages of products that we had heard would be coming. We are no longer able to get many of our most popular food items and many of the supplies we use to serve our students every day.

Chicken products are very difficult to find, and we have not been able to source our very popular chicken wings and chicken poppers for several weeks. Now that we are running out of our current stock, we will be moving to other chicken products to put in their place on the menu. Foil and plastics are in short supply also, which adds to the shortage of things that are produced in bottles and cans. Canned and bottled beverages are another example of items that we are having trouble

purchasing. We will be able to continue to serve our students and staff varied and nutritious meals, but some of the crowd "favorites" may be missing from the menu from time to time.

We want to keep our customers informed because your satisfaction is our most important goal! We are working diligently to ensure that we provide the very best products and service to our customers at all times. Please feel free to contact Food Service Coordinator, Betsy Williams at bwilliams@rich227.org or 708-679-5728 with any questions or concerns.

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