

RICH TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 227



The Message

THE OFFICIAL RICH TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 227 NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2026

Queen Thigpen Earns Associate Degree Before High School Graduation

Rich Township High School senior Queen Thigpen crossed the graduation stage in May with more than a high school diploma. Before completing her senior year, Queen earned an Associate degree in Computer Science from Prairie State College—an extraordinary accomplishment reflecting her dedication, perseverance, and academic excellence.

Queen's achievement highlights the expanding college and career opportunities available through Rich Township High School District 227's partnership with Prairie State College. Through the Early College Initiative, students can begin earning college credit as early as sophomore year while exploring academic interests and preparing for life after high school.

Students have access to college-level courses, career-focused coursework, industry-recognized credentials, and off-campus immersion experiences at Prairie State College. Seniors may pursue General Studies coursework or specialized programs such as Certified Nursing Assistant training.

Rich Township is also developing a formal Associate Degree Pathway that would allow more students to graduate with both a high school diploma and an Associate degree. During the 2026–2027 school year, the district will launch a Certified Medical Assisting pilot program featuring a 40-hour externship and opportunities to earn healthcare-related certifications.

Additional dual-credit partnerships with Loyola University, Kankakee Community College, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and Dawson Technical Institute provide students with even more opportunities. One upcoming construction course will allow students to help renovate a home while earning dual credit.



Queen will continue her education at Roosevelt University in Chicago, where she plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in computer science and information technology.

"Earning my Associate degree while still in high school shows that I can push myself and achieve big goals," Queen said. "I'm excited to continue my education and keep working toward my future."

Rich Township proudly celebrates Queen and encourages families to speak with their school counselor about early college, dual-credit, and career pathway opportunities.

Congratulations Queen Thigpen!!

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Board Members

Andrea D. Bonds
Board President

Tiffany Taylor
Vice President

Cheryl Coleman
Secretary

Andre Allen
Board Member

Mia Carter
Board Member

Lamekia Davis
Board Member

Dr. Kristine Rucker
Board Member

Superintendent's Cabinet

Dr. Johnnie Thomas
Superintendent

Mr. Dennis Forst
Assistant Superintendent of
Business & Operations

Dr. Jeff Bonomo
Assistant Superintendent of
Human Resources

Dr. Kevin Gallick
Assistant Superintendent of
Educational Services

Lynn Fields Jr.
Co-Principal

LaTricia Varnado
Co-Principal

Dear Rich Township Students and Families:

It has been an exciting and memorable year for Rich Township High School District 227. Since May, we have celebrated the accomplishments of our students while preparing for another year of learning, growth, and opportunity.

On May 16, 2026, Rich Township High School celebrated its historic 70th Commencement Ceremony at the Fine Arts and Communications Campus stadium. We proudly recognized 579 graduates as they completed their high school journeys and prepared for college, careers, military service, and other postsecondary opportunities.

On July 16, we celebrated six additional students who completed their graduation requirements during summer school. We congratulate these graduates on their perseverance and commitment to reaching this important milestone.

We are also proud to recognize 147 AP Scholars for their outstanding performance in Advanced Placement courses and examinations. Their accomplishments reflect their dedication, academic excellence, and willingness to challenge themselves through college-level coursework.

Throughout the summer, our students participated in academic programs, leadership experiences, athletic camps, competitions, and enrichment opportunities designed to help them continue learning and growing beyond the traditional school year.

As we begin the 2026–2027 school year, we are excited to welcome the Class of 2030 on Friday, August 14. All Rich Township students will return on Monday, August 17.

We encourage families to review upcoming events, complete all registration requirements, and remain connected throughout the year. We look forward to another successful year of achievement, opportunity, and student success.

Respectfully,



Dr. Johnnie Thomas
Superintendent

Follow Us!

[@District227](#)

[@RichTownshipHS](#)

[@District227_](#)

[@richtownshiphighschoolist227](#)



2026-2027 Board Meetings

All Regular Board Meetings start at 5:30 PM

Wednesday, August 19th
Wednesday, September 16th
Wednesday, October 21st
Wednesday, November 18th
Wednesday, December 16th
Wednesday, January 20th

Wednesday, February 17th
Wednesday, March 17th
Wednesday, April 21st
Wednesday, May 19th
Wednesday, June 16th



Class of 2026, by the Numbers

Total
Scholarship
Dollars

\$10,890,000

POST-SECONDARY DATA



Four-Year College



Two-Year College



Trade School



Military



Full-Time Employment



Undecided/No Response



579

Graduates



working people to lead extraordinary lives

480

Future Ready Scholars

Student Highlights



Congratulations to the AP SCHOLARS

Congratulations to the Rich Township High School District 227 students who received a 3, 4, or 5 on their spring AP exam. These students pushed themselves by taking rigorous coursework and preparing for this challenging exam. We are proud to celebrate their accomplishments and hard work.

Olaedo Achukwu*
Marvellous Adedokun
Darius Akpeti
Joshua Ambrocio
Kyla Amos
Marquis Anderson
Marilyn Angel
Rayna Bashir
Arianna Battle
Aliyah Beamon
Madison Beaulieu
Jocelyn Benavides*
Lana Berry
Elise Bonds*
Skye Branson*
Zeltzin Breton
Kameylla
Bridgewater
Lydia Butler
Aniyah Cameron
Destini Campbell*
Giselle Chambers
Valencia Cole
Dayvonna Coleman
Havier Coleman*
Kamren Colquitt
Eduardo Cruz
Justin Culberson
London Cushmeer
Aaliyah Dangerfield
Chad Arkin De
Ocampo*
Carli Dillon
Benedicte Djansi
Khloe Dortch
Mya Driver
Ilanis Dunbar
Kyndelin Duncan*
Jaden Edwards

Kristina Edwards*
Jeremiah Egbuna
Donald Evbie
Oluwatofunmilayo
Fadiya-Ajiboye
Nevaeh Farmer
Tyahna Ferguson
Zahria Fleming
Ajane Gant
Adrian Garcia
Melanie Garcia
Kayla Garcia Green*
Emarlyn Gomez
James Goston
Mya Granderson
Aaron Greene
Divine Hawkins*
Valeria Hernandez
Jaylen Herring
Trichel Holbrook
Briana Holt*
Etinosa Iredia
Kamrynn Jackson*
Carl Jeffries*
Barbara Johnson
Kenan Johnson
Londyn Johnson
William Johnson
Zemaryiah Johnson -
Deere
Darius Jones
Keaysia Jones
Anissa Kelley
Kacie Kerr
Terry Koomson*
Heqmat Lawal
Michael Lewis
Myka Lewis
Aiden Lindsey

John Lindsey
Dominique Loving
Brielle Lowe
William Lucas
Kimberly Machuca
Akira McDowell
Janyla McMichales*
Joselyn Medina-Diaz
Emilio Mendoza Avila
Kenya Miller
Caleb Minter
Riley Mitchell*
Tahiru Mohammed
Tiana Moore*
Zoe Moragn-Jones
Michael Morton
Cody Neely*
Coreene Nelson*
Zariah OBanner
Chifumnanya Okolo*
Amidat Olagunju*
Scarlett Orantes
Nicholas Parker*
Zoereann Payne*
Jocelyn Perez*
Lizeth Perez
Mayah Phelps*
Maya Phillips
Yadah Pickett
Gaida Prather
Zuri Primm
Daniel Raheem
Brenda Ramirez*
Yareli Ramirez
Rokaya Rashad*
Adrianna Ray
Dylan Rivers*

Tayla Rodgers
Salvador Rojas*
Yaretzi Rondan
Villalobos
Janiyah Ross
Madison Ross*
Kevin Sample
Andre Samuel*
Blessing Samuel
Gerardo Sanchez
Dayanira Sandoval*
Emmanuel Sandoval
Ja'leeah Scott*
Taylor Selders
Kenadi Sherman*
Kristen Silcott
Aranza Silva
Escobedo
British Simmons*
Samiyah Simpson
Hannah Southall
Sarai Spencer
James Stevens
David Stewart
Taneah Tanzy
Ashley Teles-Mendez
Faith Thigpen*
Mark Thomas
Adamaris Torres
Satsha Trujillo-
Quinonez
Jerrod Turner
Tyrone Useni*
Micah Usher
Fernanda Valle
Gonzalez
Akira Whitehead*
Sean Wilkins
E'mary Williams
Josiah Williams*

*Students who earned a 3,4, or 5 on multiple AP exams.













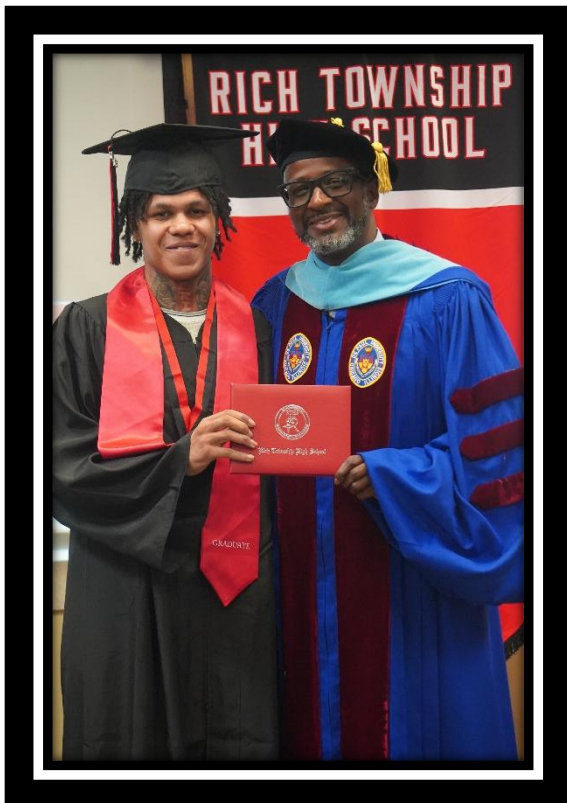






Congratulations to our Summer School Graduates!

We are thrilled to celebrate the remarkable achievements of our seniors who graduated this summer. Each of you has demonstrated incredible dedication and resilience, completing your high school journey with outstanding success. As you step forward into new beginnings, remember that the skills and knowledge you've acquired at Rich Township High School will guide you in every future endeavor. Congratulations, graduates! We are immensely proud of you and can't wait to see what you accomplish next.







Summer Programming Highlights

Academic

10 Days in Japan



Earlier this summer, a group of Rich Township High School scholars spent 10 unforgettable days exploring Japan and experiencing a new culture firsthand.

Their journey included visits to historic temples and shrines, breathtaking landscapes, and vibrant city destinations. Students explored Kyoto, experienced the energy of Tokyo at night, viewed Mount Fuji, and participated in hands-on cultural activities that brought Japanese traditions to life.

Food was also an important part of the experience. Students tried new flavors, shared meals, and learned how cuisine can help connect people across cultures. Along the way, they strengthened friendships, developed teamwork skills, and created memories that will last a lifetime.

The trip encouraged students to step beyond the classroom, consider new perspectives, and grow through meaningful global experiences. It also reflected the tremendous support of the teachers, chaperones, and families who helped make the journey possible.

Rich Township remains committed to providing opportunities that promote exploration, cultural awareness, personal growth, and global learning.

Oxford Royale Experience in England

Rich Township High School District 227 is proud to celebrate Brandi Johnson and Samiyah Simpson as they prepare to travel to England for a two-week academic experience at Oxford Royale Academy.

During the program, Brandi and Samiyah will participate in more than 40 hours of career-focused instruction, including seminars, workshops, interactive lessons, and collaborative projects. They will also connect with students from around the world, expand their cultural awareness, and strengthen their leadership, critical-thinking, and academic skills.

This summer marks the fourth year the district has provided students with the opportunity to attend Oxford Royale Academy. The experience reflects Rich Township's commitment to extending learning beyond the classroom and preparing students for success in a global society.

This opportunity was made possible through the leadership of Superintendent Dr. Johnnie Thomas and the support of the Rich Township High School District 227 Board of Education.

We wish Brandi and Samiyah safe travels and an inspiring experience in England.



Summer Programming Highlights

Extra-Curricular

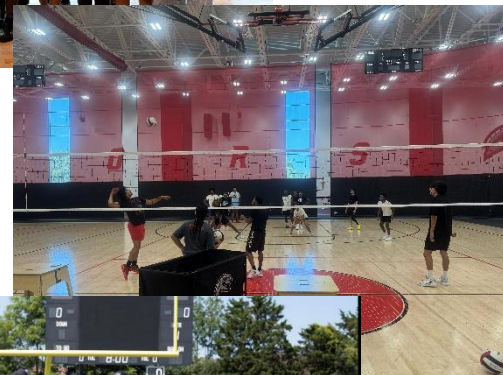


Raptor Athletics and Activities: A Summer of Growth and Leadership

Raptor Athletics had another productive and exciting summer as our student-athletes continued developing their skills, building team chemistry, and preparing for the 2026–2027 school year.

The Boys Basketball Team delivered an outstanding summer performance while competing in NCAA Live Events and gaining valuable experience against strong competition. Both the Boys and Girls Basketball Programs also successfully hosted their annual summer shootouts, welcoming teams from across the area and providing student-athletes with additional opportunities to compete, grow, and prepare for the upcoming season.

The Cheer Team returned to Carthage College for its second annual summer training camp, where team members focused on improving technique, strengthening routines, and building unity. Football continued to demonstrate tremendous growth through a series of 7-on-7 competitions, allowing players to sharpen their skills and develop greater confidence on the field. The Dance Team is also preparing to attend its annual skills camp at Northern Illinois University, where members will continue refining their technique and preparing for the year ahead.



Our Boys and Girls Soccer Programs hosted Monday open-field training sessions for middle and high school student-athletes. These sessions helped strengthen our youth pipeline, introduce younger athletes to the Raptor program, and support long-term program development.

The district also hosted Student Leadership Training, bringing student leaders together to strengthen their communication, teamwork, decision-making, and leadership skills. The experience helped prepare students to serve as positive representatives of their teams, clubs, activities, and school community throughout the upcoming year.

As August approaches, all fall athletic and activity programs are preparing for the official start of their seasons. We are proud of the commitment shown by our coaches, sponsors, student-athletes, and student leaders, and we look forward to another successful year of Raptor Athletics and Activities across our school community and throughout Rich Township High School District 227.

Welcome to the Class of 2030

Your Journey Begins Now

We are excited to welcome the newest members of the Rich Township family — the **Class of 2030!**

Starting high school is the beginning of a new chapter filled with opportunities to learn, grow, and make lasting connections. We look forward to welcoming you on **Friday, August 14**, for your **first day of school**.

What to expect on your first day:

- Meet your teachers
- Walk your schedule
- Begin building new friendships
- Start getting connected to the Rich Township experience

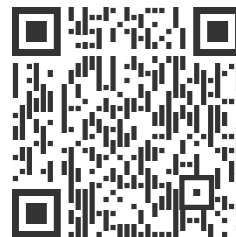
Before attending the first day, please make sure you are **fully registered**. Information about our **final in-person registration opportunity** is provided below.



Get Involved Early!

The best way to make the most of high school is to get connected outside the classroom. From sports and music to robotics and student leadership—there's something for everyone.

Scan the QR code below to explore all the athletics and extracurricular activities available to you at Rich Township!



Why join?

Students involved in at least one extracurricular activity are more likely to thrive academically and socially throughout their high school experience.

Quick Tips for a Strong Start:

- Check your email daily for important updates.
- Follow us on social media to stay in the loop.
- Ask questions! Teachers, coaches, and upperclassmen are here to help.
- Try something new – your high school journey is what *you* make it!

Let's make this year unforgettable, Raptors!

We can't wait to see what you accomplish.

Don't forget to tag us in your #RaptorFirstDay #RaptorReady #RichinStudentSuccess photos!

**RICH TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL**
DISTRICT 227
ONE SCHOOL, TWO CAMPUSES

SAVE THE DATE!!



In - Person Late Registration

Tuesday
August 4, 2026
AND
Wednesday
August 5, 2026



Time : 10:00AM- 6:30 PM

📍 **Location:**
STEM Campus
3600 W. 203rd Street
Olympia Fields, IL 60461

DOCUMENTS NEEDED



- Birth Certificate
- Driver's License or State ID
- Current Lease or Mortgage matching the information on the license/ID
- 9th Grade Physical Exam (dated after 9/1/2025)
- Immunization Records
- 2 of the following (dated within the last 60 days)

Utility Bill, Car Registration, Village Car Sticker, Tax Bill, Pay Stub, Car Insurance, Bank Statement, Home/Renters Insurance, Pay Stub W2 Form, Public Aid/Medicaid Card

*if you are not the current homeowner or leasee, you will need to complete and notarize an Affidavit Form with the homeowner or leasee

*9th Grade Dental Exam (can be turned in at the start of school)

Linnea Garrett, FAC Associate Principal
lgarrett@rich227.org

Paulette Grissett, STEM Associate Principal
pgrissett@rich227.org

Rich Township HS
District 227
20550 S. Cicero Ave
Matteson, Illinois 60443
(708) 679-5800

Upcoming Events

Are you looking for a way to promote your business or services while supporting our school community? Rich Township High School District 227 is offering exciting advertising opportunities in our upcoming publications and events. With a reach that includes students, families, staff, and community members, advertising with us is a great way to connect with a wide and diverse audience.



RICH TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 227

UPCOMING IN AUGUST

IMPORTANT DATES, STUDENT SERVICES & FIRST ATHLETIC CONTESTS



IMPORTANT AUGUST DATES



AUGUST 4 & 5

In-Person Registration — STEM Campus — 10:00 AM–7:00 PM



AUGUST 10 & 11

*Device Pick-Up (Grades 10–12) — 11:00 AM–3:00 PM & 4:00 PM–6:00 PM
STEM Campus & FAC Campus*



AUGUST 14

Freshman Orientation & First Day for 9th Grade — 9th grade students will receive their device and materials during orientation.



AUGUST 17

First Day of School for 10th–12th Grade



AUGUST 26

First Late Start Wednesday



AUGUST 27

*Ronald McDonald Mobile Care Unit — STEM Campus —
School physicals, sports physicals & required immunizations*



AUGUST 28

*Ronald McDonald Mobile Care Unit — FAC Campus —
School physicals, sports physicals & required immunizations*



FIRST ATHLETIC CONTESTS

SPORT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Boys Golf	Wed, Aug. 19	4:30 PM	AWAY
Football (Sophomore)	Fri, Aug. 21	5:00 PM	AWAY
Football (Varsity)	Fri, Aug. 21	7:30 PM	AWAY
Football (Freshman)	Sat, Aug. 22	10:00 AM	AWAY
Girls Volleyball (Freshman)	Mon, Aug. 24	4:30 PM	AWAY
Girls Volleyball (JV)	Mon, Aug. 24	4:30 PM	AWAY
Girls Volleyball (Varsity)	Mon, Aug. 24	5:30 PM	AWAY
Girls Flag Football (JV)	Mon, Aug. 24	5:00 PM	HOME
Girls Flag Football (Varsity)	Mon, Aug. 24	6:00 PM	HOME
Girls Golf	Tue, Aug. 25	4:30 PM	HOME
Boys Soccer (JV)	Wed, Aug. 26	4:30 PM	AWAY
Boys Soccer (Varsity)	Wed, Aug. 26	4:30 PM	AWAY
Girls Tennis (JV)	Thu, Aug. 27	4:30 PM	HOME
Girls Tennis (Varsity)	Thu, Aug. 27	4:30 PM	HOME

#RICHINSTUDENTSUCCESS



RICH TOWNSHIP
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 227
20550 South Cicero Avenue
Matteson, IL 60443

Non Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #130
Homewood, IL
ECRWSS

*****ECRWSEDDM*****
RESIDENTIAL POSTAL CUSTOMER

Advertise with Us

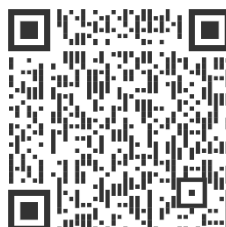
Reach the Rich Township Community

Are you looking for a way to promote your business or services while supporting our school community? Rich Township High School District 227 is offering exciting advertising opportunities in our upcoming publications and events. With a reach that includes students, families, staff, and community members, advertising with us is a great way to connect with a wide and diverse audience.

Whether you're a local business or a community organization, we invite you to take advantage of these opportunities to showcase your brand and support our scholars at the same time. For more information on how you can advertise with us, please contact our Communications Office; mshank@rich227.org

Together, we can create lasting partnerships that benefit both your business and our students!

SCAN HERE



To Learn More