

S U M M E R

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COMMUNITY

NEWSLETTER



A Message from Superintendent Mikkel Storaasli

As summer gets underway, we have so much to celebrate across District 127. This edition of our newsletter highlights the many ways our students, staff, and community continue

to learn, grow, and support one another both inside and outside the classroom.

From celebrating the Class of 2026 at Grayslake Central and Grayslake North to expanding college-level curriculum opportunities and showcasing our Portrait of a Learner in action, this issue reflects the experiences that help prepare students for life beyond high school. You'll also read about important work happening behind the scenes, including continued facility improvements, leadership transitions, and long-range planning that will help shape the future of D127.

What stands out most to me is the strong sense of connection that exists throughout our District. Whether students are exploring future careers, collaborating with community partners, supporting one another through mentorship programs, or discovering new passions through authentic learning experiences, they are building skills that extend far beyond academics.

I want to thank our families, staff, students, and community members for your continued partnership and support. Your involvement helps make D127 a place where students feel challenged, supported, and empowered to launch their futures.

Congratulations to the Class of 2026, to our retirees, and thank you for another incredible year in D127.

Warmly,
Dr. Mikkel Storaasli
Superintendent, Grayslake District 127



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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2026!

GRAYSLAKE CENTRAL

The Grayslake Central Class of 2026 celebrated a milestone years in the making, honoring the memories, relationships, and experiences that shaped their high school journey.

This year's ceremony reflected the spirit of a class defined by resilience, connection, and school pride. Student speakers Addi Messinger and Kayla Harrison shared reflections with their classmates, celebrating the moments, challenges, and accomplishments that led to the Class of 2026's graduation day.

Staff speaker Jason Janczak, Social Studies Department Chair and longtime educator at Central, encouraged graduates to stay curious, embrace new experiences, and recognize the impact they can have on the people and communities around them.

As graduates crossed the stage and looked ahead to their next chapter, the ceremony served as a reminder of the community that supported them along the way and the opportunities still ahead. The Class of 2026 leaves Grayslake Central with lessons learned, friendships built, and memories that will last far beyond graduation day. Wherever life takes them next, they will always be part of the Ram community.

Congratulations, Rams!



GRAYSLAKE NORTH

The Grayslake North Class of 2026 came together in celebration, marking the end of one chapter and the beginning of what comes next.

This year's ceremony honored the many paths that brought students to this moment, celebrating both personal growth and shared experiences. Student speakers Maurice Jorden and Julia Flannery offered powerful reflections from two distinct perspectives, each capturing the resilience, challenges, and triumphs that define the Grayslake North journey. Together, their messages highlighted the strength found in both overcoming adversity and embracing opportunity.

The first Alumni speaker, Geoff Gardner, the Grayslake North library media assistant and football coach, reflected on his own journey from GNHS student to staff member, encouraging graduates to embrace uncertainty, take risks, and pursue paths that align with their passions.

Throughout the ceremony, graduates were reminded that their stories, no matter how different, are all meaningful and still unfolding. The Class of 2026 leaves behind a legacy shaped by connection, perseverance, and pride in being part of the Grayslake North community.

The Class of 2026 leaves Grayslake North with memories, friendships, and experiences that will continue to shape their journeys long after graduation. Their time as Knights may be ending, but the connections they built here will remain part of their story for years to come.

Congratulations, and remember, Once a Knight, Always a Knight!



Leadership at D127 Building for the Future

Principal Search Update: Moving Forward with Community Input

Grayslake Community High School District 127 continues to make strong progress in its thoughtful, multi-year Principal search process for Grayslake Central and Grayslake North.

This spring, the District partnered with School Exec Connect to gather input from students, staff, families, and community members through surveys and focus groups. Participation across all groups was strong, reinforcing the community's shared commitment to the future of D127.

That feedback was used to develop Principal Profiles for each school, defining the leadership qualities and priorities that matter most to our community. These profiles were presented to the Board of Education in May and now serve as the foundation for the next phase of the search. With this step complete, D127 is preparing to move forward by posting Principal positions this summer for candidate recruitment. This process reflects the District's commitment to transparency, community voice, and a smooth leadership transition that supports students and staff every step of the way.

BY THE NUMBERS



OVER

425

survey responses from students, staff, families, and community members



125

participants across focus groups and stakeholder meetings



15

focus groups were conducted across both schools

Timeline at a Glance

**Spring
2026**

Community engagement and development of Principal Profiles

**Summer
2026**

Principal positions posted

**Fall
2026**

Candidate recruitment and interviews with stakeholder involvement

**Late 2026/
Early 2027**

Board of Education approval of new principals

**Winter
2027**

Community meet-and-greet opportunities

**July
2027**

New principals begin their roles

Scan the QR code to visit our Principal Search webpage for the latest updates, timelines, and opportunities to get involved.



Dr. Jeff Schagrín

Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning, and Innovation (Starting in the 2027–28 school year)

A familiar face in D127, Dr. Jeff Schagrín brings nearly two decades of experience to his new role as Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning, and Innovation. Since joining the District in 2006 as a Social Studies teacher, he has served as a coach, Department Chair, Activity Director, and Associate Principal at Grayslake North, always focused on expanding opportunities for students.

In his new role, Dr. Schagrín will help guide the District's instructional vision, supporting innovative learning experiences and collaboration across schools.

"We try to help students find doors they didn't know existed and build the skills and confidence to walk through them."



Tom New

District Communications Specialist (Starting July 2026)

Tom New will bring a proven approach to storytelling across D127 as he steps into his new role as District Communications Specialist. At Grayslake North, Tom has helped build student-driven media programs, expanding opportunities in broadcast journalism, video production, and digital storytelling.

Now, he will take that work districtwide, partnering with both schools to highlight student experiences, amplify staff voices, and strengthen connections across the D127 community.

"I'm excited to bring that same energy to a larger scale, so more students and staff feel seen and celebrated."

D127 Continues Summer Facility Improvements

This summer, Grayslake District 127 is continuing planned facility improvements designed to maintain safe, efficient, and future-ready learning environments for students, staff, and the community. Projects across both campuses reflect the district's long-range approach to maintaining facilities while supporting student programs and experiences.

1

Phase 10 HVAC Upgrades at GCHS & GNHS

Long-Range Facility Planning

The district will complete phase 10 of its multi-year HVAC replacement project, updating aging heating, ventilation, and building automation systems at both campuses to improve efficiency and reliability.

2

Sidewalk Improvements at Both Campuses

Safety & Accessibility

Sidewalk repairs and replacements will address aging concrete, improve accessibility, and enhance pedestrian safety around both schools.

3

Grayslake North Track Resurfacing

Student Athletics & Activities

The Grayslake North track will be resurfaced this summer as part of the district's scheduled maintenance plan for athletic facilities.

4

Athletic Space Updates

Supporting Student Programs

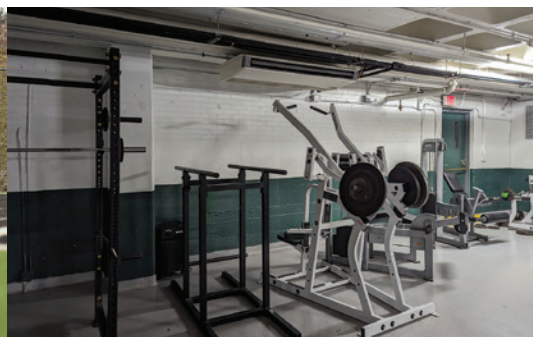
Updates to athletic spaces include new flooring in the Central weight room and equipment replacements in the North athletic areas.

5

Solar Field Progress at GNHS

Energy Efficiency & Sustainability

The district is continuing progress on its solar field project at Grayslake North High School, an investment designed to support long-term energy savings and operational efficiency for the future.



How does D127 fund improvements?

Through careful financial planning, using strategically set-aside operating reserves to fund the facility maintenance needed.

How are capital projects selected?

D127 conducts a thorough assessment of facilities to develop a 10-year health and life safety plan, which assists the district in prioritizing critical needs and creating a multiyear plan to keep the buildings safe and functional.

Expanding Opportunities Through New Curriculum Offerings

Grayslake District 127 continues to expand opportunities for students through new college-level coursework designed to prepare learners for future success. This spring, the Board of Education approved two new courses that will be available for student registration beginning in Fall 2026.

AP Business with Personal Finance

D127's first Business Department Advanced Placement offering allows students to earn college credit while fulfilling Illinois' personal finance graduation requirement.

Biology 123: Principles of Biology

This new dual credit opportunity allows students to earn transferable college credit through the College of Lake County while learning from a D127 teacher during the regular high school day. Unlike AP Biology, the course fits into a single class period, creating greater flexibility for students interested in advanced science coursework.

"These courses give students more flexibility and access to rigorous learning experiences," said Dr. Tracey Landry, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. "Whether students are exploring business, science, or future career pathways, we want them to have opportunities that are relevant, engaging, and connected to their goals."

D127 currently offers 25 AP courses and 15 dual or articulated credit opportunities, helping students gain college experience, explore career interests, and potentially save on future college costs.

AP courses allow students to potentially earn college credit by passing a national exam at the end of the course.

Dual credit courses allow students to earn both high school and college credit simultaneously by successfully passing the class itself.

Portrait of a Learner in Action

The Portrait of a Learner reflects who our students and our community are becoming. Across D127, these traits come to life every day through meaningful experiences, connections, and opportunities.

Empathetic



Mentor and mentee building connections through D127's new ESP Mentor Program.

Curious



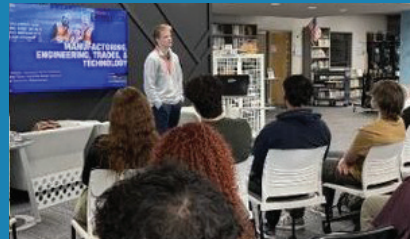
Students exploring creativity and storytelling through hands-on experiences during Spark Week, and Writers Week.

Collaborative



Students, staff, and community members working together to bring the Liberty Prairie Farm plant sale to life.

Invested



Students actively exploring college, career, and workforce pathways at the Junior Success Summit.

Resilient



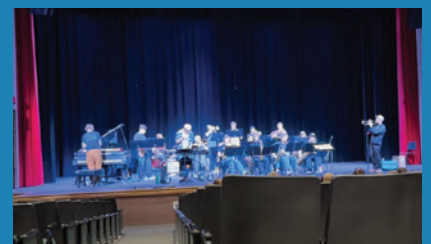
Students expanding their perspectives and breaking barriers at a Women in Construction event.

Principled



Jeff Miller being recognized with the Elbert K. Fretwell Outstanding Educator Award for his impact on students and the community.

Unfinished



D127 alum Adam Meckler inspiring the next generation of musicians as Director of the Michigan Tech Jazz Ensemble.



400 N Lake Street
Grayslake, IL 60030



District Grayslake CHSD 127
Central Grayslake Central HS
North Grayslake North HS



District @GrayslakeCHSD127
Central @Grayslake_Central_HS
North @GNHS_knights



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High School District 127



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Calendar

August 10-11 - Staff Institute Days
*No Student Attendance

August 12 - First Day of School
*Freshman Orientation and special schedule for all students

August 25 - North Back to School Knight

August 26 - Central Back to School Night

September 14-19 - North Homecoming Week

September 19 - North Homecoming Dance

September 22-25 - Central Homecoming Week

September 26 - Central Homecoming Dance

September 7 - Labor Day - No School

September 21 - Yom Kippur - No School

THANK you!

to our Board of Education:

**Douglas Nerge,
Amy Knutson Strack,
Jonathan Reinoso,
Hal Sloan,
Stacy Gabanski,
Dean Thorson,
and Liz Wiczer.**