

BRIDGES

A young girl with dark skin and her hair styled in two long braids. She is smiling and looking off to the side. She is wearing a dark-colored shirt with bright pink and yellow floral patterns. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a classroom setting.

Building

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Publication of Community Consolidated Schools District 168 FALL 2024

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- Blossoms Welcomes a New Administrator
- Wagoner Celebrates STEM Education
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Superintendent's Message



Thank you for choosing to enroll your child at CCSD 168. The staff and I value our relationship with parents and desire to work in partnership with you during your child's years here. It is the goal of CCSD 168 to provide ample opportunities for parents and the community to invest time into the education of CCSD 168 students. As you read this issue of the newsletter, you will

see that Grandparent's Day brought many supportive adults into classrooms to help show support for student success. This was also expressed on Kindergarten Signing Day as well as at Open Houses and Parent/Teacher Conferences.

Research has shown that children whose families engage in their education are more likely to earn higher grades and score higher on tests. Students will develop self-confidence and have more motivation in the classroom. Better social skills and classroom behavior has been observed as well. We have all heard the phrase, "It takes a village to raise a child." That could not be further from the truth.

As we enjoy these fall days, please encourage your child to do their best, do what's right and treat others as they would like to be treated. I appreciate you taking the time to read our newsletters. CCSD 168 is here to serve and support you and your student(s).

We are District 168 Strong!

Sincerely,

Dr. Donna S. Leak

Dr. Donna S. Leak
Superintendent of Schools



Blossoms Gold Olympians

In March 2024, Blossoms Early Learning Center underwent an assessment conducted by the Illinois State Board of Education. The assessors conducted a thorough evaluation of the program, and we are thrilled to announce that our efforts have been recognized with the prestigious Gold Circle of Quality designation.

Achieving the Gold Circle of Quality is a testament to the program's efforts in providing a nurturing, safe and stimulating environment that fosters the holistic development of young children. The curriculum is designed to promote cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills, ensuring that each child is prepared for lifelong learning. The program is particularly proud of the initiatives in engaging families, fostering partnerships and creating a strong foundation for our children's educational journeys.

This recognition is a significant accomplishment for the early childhood team as well and reflects their commitment to providing a high-quality early childhood education experience, along with the adherence to rigorous standards of education and developmental practices that prioritize young children's growth and wellbeing.

Blossoms continuously strives to create an engaging, nurturing and educational environment for each child to thrive. The Blossoms' team will continue to enhance their curriculum and facilities to ensure that "Every Child, Every Day" receives the best possible foundation for their future learning. Blossoms' educators are dedicated to excellence and not only hold themselves to high standards but also unwavering support of each other.

To the families and community of Blossoms, we appreciate your ongoing support and partnership in nurturing the bright minds of CCSD 168's youngest learners. Thank you for entrusting us with your child's early education. Together, we can continue to build a strong foundation for their future.

This recognition brings pride to us all!

OUR MISSION

The mission of Community Consolidated Schools District 168 is to excel by inspiring, challenging, and supporting every child every day to reach their greatest academic, social, and personal potential.

WAGONER CELEBRATES STEM EDUCATION

At Wagoner Elementary School we are thrilled to share the exciting progress our students are making in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education! Our young scientists are utilizing their curiosity and creativity to develop problem-solving skills through the challenges of STEM.

Our young learners have been diving deep into the world of science through a variety of engaging experiments and activities. Students have been discussing the role of an engineer and how to solve problems collaboratively. STEM is a great place to teach and practice students how to collaborate, try new things, make mistakes and learn from the results—all essential qualities for future scientists and innovators.

Whether it's building towers out of everyday materials or utilizing our iPads to code, our Wagoner students are demonstrating their innovative spirit as they work together to solve real-world problems in creative ways. Our students' young minds are discovering their creativity and problem-solving skills through discovery and the problem-solving process.

As we continue to cultivate a passion for STEM education, we remain committed to ensuring that our students develop a lifelong love of learning. Our aim is not only to prepare them academically but also to instill in them the values of resilience, collaboration and curiosity.



ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Wagoner Elementary School will continue to collaborate with students and families this fall to enhance our positive daily attendance. Consistent attendance lays the groundwork for academic success while also nurturing essential life skills such as responsibility and discipline. When students are at school, they are present for the next steps in their learning.

Here's why daily attendance is crucial and how you can help:



Our families play an essential role in shaping students' perspectives and behaviors regarding school attendance. As we continue the 2024-25 school year, the Wagoner family looks forward to partnering with you to ensure our students receive the best academic experience possible.

Why Daily Attendance Matters

1. Academic Achievement:

- Regular attendance is directly linked to improved academic performance. In the early elementary years, students are learning to read, write and build foundational math skills. Missing even a few days can disrupt the flow of learning, making it challenging for students to keep pace with lessons.

2. Social and Emotional Development:

- Daily school attendance aids children in forming relationships with peers and teachers, which enhances their social abilities and emotional resilience.

3. Establishing Routine:

- Consistent attendance helps create a routine that prepares children for future responsibilities, such as college and employment.

How Families Can Encourage Positive Attendance

1. Set a Positive Example:

- Show the importance of attendance by prioritizing it in your own life and discussing its significance with your child.

2. Establish a Routine:

- Develop a morning routine that allows ample time for your child to prepare for school, reducing morning stress and ensuring they arrive on time.

3. Communicate with the School:

- Keep in contact with teachers and school staff to stay informed about your child's progress and any attendance issues early on.

4. Celebrate Milestones:

- Recognize and celebrate your child's attendance achievements, such as weeks or months of perfect attendance, to reinforce positive behavior.

5. Make School Exciting:

- Express enthusiasm about school events and activities. Encourage your child to engage in extracurricular activities they enjoy, creating a positive anticipation for school.

6. Address Barriers Promptly:

- If your child is reluctant to go to school, address their concerns quickly, which might involve discussing solutions with teachers or counselors.

7. Monitor Health:

- Pay attention to your child's health and promptly address any issues to minimize unnecessary absences.

8. Plan Family Vacations Wisely:

- Whenever possible, schedule family vacations during school breaks to reduce disruptions to your child's education.

Strassburg Starts the Year Strong



On October 17, fifth graders visited the Just Roots Farm in Sauk Village and learned about different categories of plants, how they winterize the plants and the structures of greenhouses. Students reported having a wonderful experience!

On October 16, the Sauk Village Fire Department delivered the fire safety presentation to individual grade levels. Now, the students will be working on their Fire Safety door decorations for judging in two weeks. This is a great tradition at Strassburg and the kids are very excited about it.

Over 100 students have already joined our after-school clubs and intramural sports that began the week of October 15. Clubs include Book Club, Art Club, French Club, Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Choir and Game Club. Involvement in after-school activities is very important to developing a positive school climate, so we are thrilled with the overwhelming response for participation by students and parents.

On October 15, we celebrated Hispanic Heritage Night as the culminating event of Hispanic Heritage Month. Students performed a traditional dance and gave

"Wax museum" presentations about historical figures of Hispanic descent. We had wonderful food and a live Mariachi band. A good time was had by all!



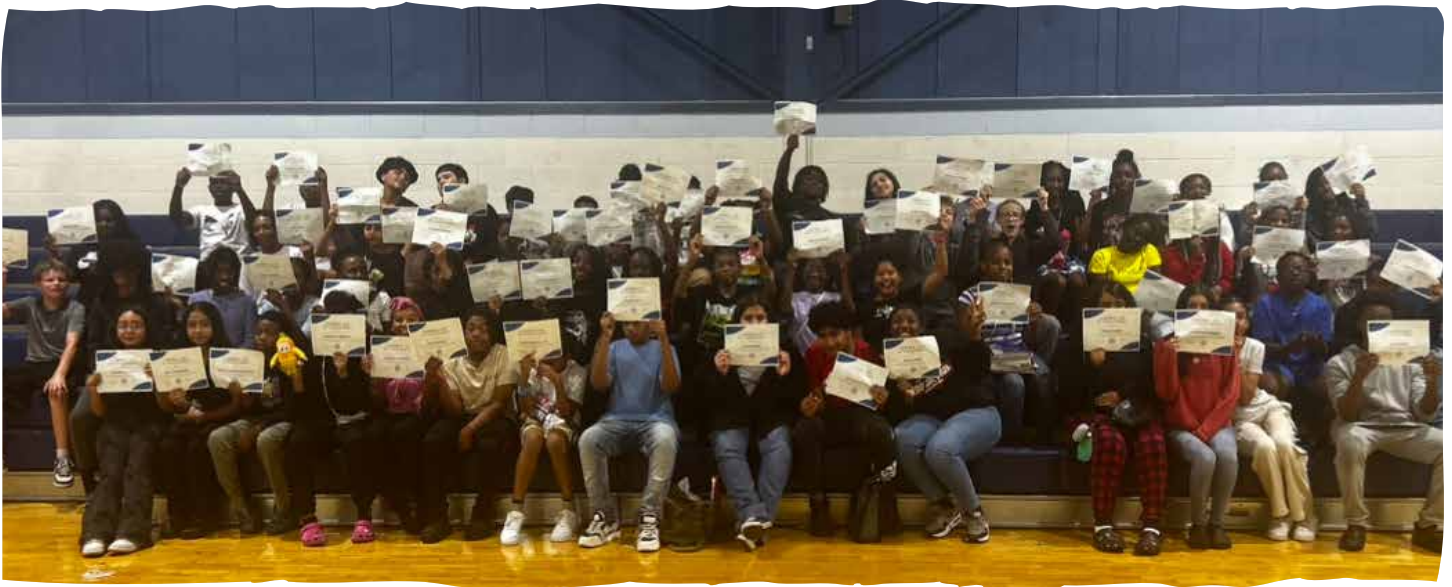


RICKOVER UPDATE

On October 16, RJHS celebrated Unity Day by showing solidarity and wearing orange. Students wrote words of affirmation, which were posted in a heart display outside the media center. In honor of Suicide Prevention Day, staff wore purple, and the PPS team provided valuable information to both students and staff.

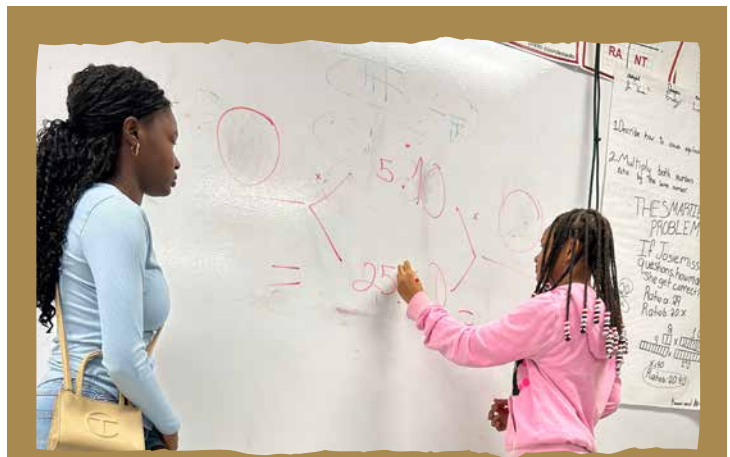
Eighty students participated in the Perfect Start Celebration, recognizing their achievements of perfect attendance, maintaining grades of C or higher and having zero office discipline referrals. Each student received a certificate and a snack to acknowledge their excellent start to the school year.

The eighth graders participated in District 206's Annual Manufacturers Day, where they had the opportunity to explore careers in Career and Technical Education (CTE).



RJHS proudly celebrates **Hispanic Heritage Month**, honoring the rich history, culture and contributions of Hispanic and Latino communities.





Students participate in Saturday math tutorials as an opportunity to improve their grades and help close the achievement gap in mathematics.



You're Invited!

The Board of Education of Community Consolidated School, District 168, will hold their regularly scheduled board meetings and finance committee meetings for the school year on the fourth Monday of each month unless otherwise noted (subject to change if necessary). They are held at the District Administration Building/Boardroom, 21899 Torrence Ave., Sauk Village, IL 60411. Finance Committee Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. (Subject to change if necessary). Regular board meetings begin at 7 p.m. (Subject to change if necessary)

School Board

- Tammy Jones.....President
- Brandie Jackson-Williams..... Vice President
- Sene' Garrett..... Secretary
- Branard Barrett..... Member
- Jeffrey Burns..... Member
- Serena Durr-Jones Member
- Sabrina Fisher Member

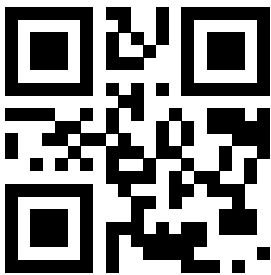
Our Principals

- Brianne Malatt.....Wagoner Elementary School
- Brian Lawson.....Strassburg Elementary School
- Dr. Kimberly Kimbrough..Rickover Junior High School
- Gerri Latting..... Director of Early Childhood

Our Phone/Fax Numbers

- Administration Office (708) 758-1610
- Fax (708) 758-5929
- Wagoner Elementary School..... (708) 758-3322
- Strassburg Elementary School..... (708) 758-4754
- Fax (708) 758-2202
- Rickover Junior High School..... (708) 758-1900
- Blossom..... (708) 758-4762

Our Website Address



www.d168.org

Search for #d168excels on social media to see the latest photos and updates of all the great things happening at District 168



Community Consolidated Schools District 168
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Blossoms Welcomes a New Administrator

Blossoms is excited to announce the appointment of our new Assistant Principal, Mrs. Nicole Cornelious. She joined Blossoms prior to the new school year. This marks the first time Blossoms has an assistant principal on our team, and we could not be more thrilled to welcome someone with such a strong dedication to early childhood education.

Mrs. Cornelious comes to us with 18 years of experience in education. She previously served as an early childhood teacher, elementary education teacher and special education teacher, where she demonstrated a commitment to fostering a nurturing and engaging learning environment for young children.

Mrs. Cornelious earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education with a Special Education endorsement from Northern Illinois University. She also earned a Master of Arts degree in Educational Administration from Governors State University. In her role as assistant principal, Mrs. Cornelious will be responsible for assisting in the support of teachers, engaging with families and overseeing daily operations, along with supporting Blossoms' Birth to Three Program as the Prevention Initiative Supervisor.

We have every confidence that Mrs. Cornelious' expertise and enthusiasm will not only enhance our current programs but also help us further develop our curriculum to meet the diverse needs of our students.

With a passion for building relationships with students, families and staff, we believe Mrs. Cornelious to be an invaluable addition to our preschool community. As she began her 19th year in education, we bid her welcome as she embarks on this next phase in her education career.

We have started off to an exciting year under Mrs. Cornelious' leadership, and we thank her for being a part of our Blossoms' Beehive!



PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE
FOR OUR 2024-25 SCHOOL CALENDAR