

YOUR SCHOOLS

WINTER EDITION 2025/26

THORNRIIDGE HIGH SCHOOL 11A ▶



THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL 11A ▶



FOOTBALL FIELD RIBBON CUTTING 125PX

THORNTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL 11A ▶

THORNWOOD HIGH SCHOOL 11A ▶



FOOTBALL FIELD RIBBON CUTTING 125PX

THORNWOOD HIGH SCHOOL 11A ▶

PROMISES MADE... PROMISES KEPT!

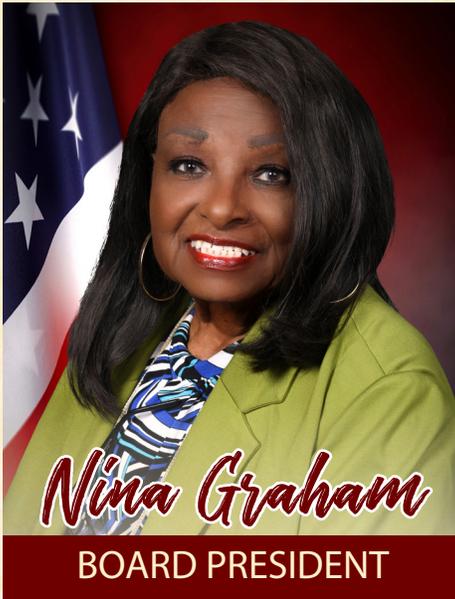


THORNTON TOWNSHIP
DISTRICT
205
HIGH SCHOOLS



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HARVEY, IL



Nina Graham

BOARD PRESIDENT

- Installed new swimming pools
- Made interior and exterior upgrades
- Constructed brand-new athletic fields

Our schools needed these improvements and our students deserved them. Although our current students are excited to take advantage of these enhancements first, they will benefit district students at all our campuses for many years to come.

In addition to the above projects, we contracted with several new school bus companies. This change improves the quality and reliability of the transportation services we provide our students as they travel to and from school.

I would like to acknowledge District 205's Student Board of Education (BOE). The students who serve on this board are leaders! They are charged with representing and advocating for the entire student body and facilitating opportunities for students to give back to the community.

Dear Reader,

Greetings from the School District 205 Board of Education (BOE)!

I am pleased to share some news about the wonderful things the district has recently accomplished and what we have planned. The BOE and district leadership have worked collaboratively and diligently to identify the programs and projects that will enable our students to excel academically while having a positive learning experience. We pursue these goals in conjunction with our district's mission of ensuring that all our students are either enrolled in college or a vocational training program, enlisted in military service, or gainfully employed when they graduate.

The BOE believes that investing in our students requires us to invest in our infrastructure. The district recently completed the following infrastructure projects, which demonstrates our ongoing commitment to maintain, enhance, and improve our schools:



On October 18, 2025, the Student BOE introduced a new initiative, Turn Up for Peace Fall Fest. Kudos to the planning committee and event coordinators who helped make this event a success! It allowed students from Thornridge, Thornton, and Thornwood, as well as members of the community, to come together and enjoy a fun-filled afternoon of positivity, music, food, and games.



While undertaking and completing the above projects and initiatives enables the BOE to humbly proclaim, "promises made, promises kept," we are not done! The district's strategic plan includes additional infrastructure enhancements and upgrades, as well as new academic opportunities for our students. It may take a while for some things to be initiated and implemented; however, we can assure you that we are continuously taking action with our students' best interest in mind. We look forward to keeping you informed and keeping our promises.

Nina Graham
School Board President

DISTRICT 205 BOARD OF EDUCATION



Dr. Kara Davis
Board Vice President



Mrs. Almetta Vasser-Moody
Board Secretary



Mr. Ray C. Banks
Board Member



Mr. Nathaniel Bowman
Board Member



Ms. Sonja Bradley
Board Member



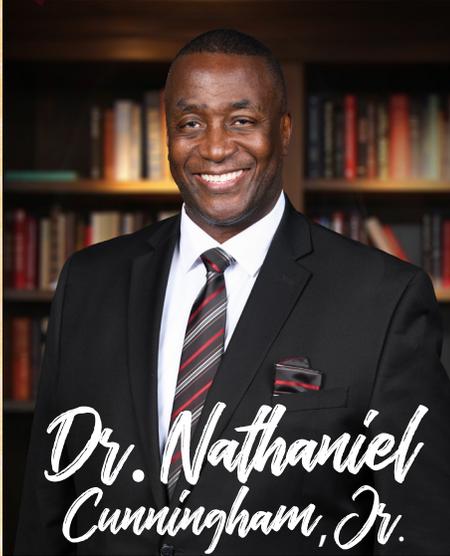
Mrs. Bernadette Lawrence
Board Member



Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Jr.

SUPERINTENDENT

Superintendent's Message



Dr. Nathaniel
Cunningham, Jr.

SUPERINTENDENT

Welcome to the latest issue of *Your Schools*, the official newsletter of Thornton Township High School District 205! I always look forward to sharing our progress, celebrating our achievements, and recognizing the dedication of those who make our district stronger every day.

The theme for this issue is **"Promises Made, Promises Kept."** Everything we do centers on fulfilling our mission—to ensure every student graduates *enrolled in college or a vocational training program, enlisted in military service, or employed in a meaningful career.*

I'm proud to share that, once again, all three of our high schools have been rated **Commendable** by the Illinois State Board of Education. These ratings are a direct reflection of our students' effort, our staff's commitment, and our community's support.

Working with the Board of Education, we've brought several major projects from planning to completion—turning vision into reality. Students across the district are now enjoying **new swimming pools and state-of-the-art athletic fields** at each of our high schools. We've also completed extensive **building enhancements**, improving both the learning environment and the comfort and safety of everyone who walks through our doors. These investments represent our ongoing commitment to providing first-class facilities that match the excellence of our educational programs.

This year also marks the successful launch of our **Family and Community Engagement (FACE)** initiative, led by Jason Clark.



FACE strengthens partnerships between our schools, families, and community by connecting students and parents with valuable resources and support systems.

While we take pride in what we've accomplished, our focus remains firmly on the future. Through our *Securing Tomorrow Today* initiative, we continue to develop forward-thinking plans that will prepare our students for the world ahead. From modernized learning spaces to innovative academic pathways, every effort is designed to equip students for success—today, tomorrow, and beyond.

As always, I invite you to stay engaged with Thornton Township High School District 205. Your support and feedback help us continue to keep our promises and make new ones for the generations to come.

Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Jr.
Superintendent



Building Stronger Connections District 205 Launches FACE and My Influence Matters

Mary Ann Thornton

Thornton Township High School District 205 is embracing a new way to connect with students, families, alumni, and the wider community through its inspiring initiative, **Family and Community Engagement (F.A.C.E.)**.

Rooted in values like empathy, trust, pride, and collaboration, F.A.C.E. is about strengthening relationships that help students thrive. The initiative brings together all three District 205 schools, **Thornridge, Thornton, and Thornwood**, under one shared purpose: ensuring that every student graduates enrolled, enlisted, or employed.

Empowering Families, Alumni, and Communities

F.A.C.E. is built around four pillars that nurture the academic, social, and emotional growth of every student:

• Family & Parent Engagement:

Families are at the heart of student success. F.A.C.E. offers workshops, training sessions, and family-centered events that help parents feel connected and confident in supporting their child's journey from classroom to career.

• Alumni Engagement:

District 205 is creating a living network of graduates who inspire the next generation. Alumni will share their stories, mentor students, and serve as reminders of the district's proud legacy of excellence.

• Student Engagement:

Through leadership programs and student-led initiatives, F.A.C.E. gives students a voice in shaping their school communities. Student Ambassadors - alongside the Student Board of Education - will help lead efforts that build unity, service, and school pride.

• Community Engagement:

By forming partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and civic leaders, the district is opening new doors for mentorship, career exploration, and community service. These collaborations strengthen the bonds that make our neighborhoods vibrant and supportive.

"When families, schools, and communities move together with one vision, our students rise higher."

— Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Jr., Superintendent

My Influence Matters: A Culture of Positive Impact

At the heart of F.A.C.E. lies **My Influence Matters (MiM)** - a district-wide campaign that celebrates the power of positive influence. MiM reminds students, staff, and families that every word, action, and choice has the potential to uplift others.

Participants pledge to use their influence to promote kindness, integrity, and accountability in all they do. The campaign includes:

• Pledge Day:

Each fall, students, families, and staff unite to take the My Influence Matters pledge, affirming their shared commitment to build, protect, and empower.

• Student Ambassadors:

Peer leaders guide influence initiatives and lead by example - showing what it means to lead with

compassion and purpose.

• Parent Engagement Activities:

Families are invited to carry the pledge's message home by participating in service projects and conversations that strengthen connection and care.

• Visible Reminders:

Throughout District 205, banners, digital displays, and pledge cards serve as gentle daily reminders of our shared values of respect, responsibility, and positive influence.



MiM hosted a Navy Pier Field Trip on Wednesday, November 19. During this field trip, the students were able to explore Navy Pier independently as well as partake in the flyover Chicago and ride on the Ferris wheel. Both were first time experiences to some of our students.

A Unified Commitment to Student Success

Together, **F.A.C.E.** and **My Influence Matters** represent more than programs - they reflect a movement toward deeper connection, shared purpose, and lasting impact.

As Superintendent **Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Jr.** explains, "When families, schools, and communities move together with one vision, our students rise higher. F.A.C.E. and My Influence Matters remind us that influence is not just about leadership. It's about legacy."

Through empathy, collaboration, and a belief in the power of community, District 205 continues to build a culture where every student feels seen, supported, and ready to soar.



Mielle Cares Parent Workshop

A powerful evening of connection and growth for parents centered on emotional awareness, communication, and family wellness. Led in partnership with Mielle Cares, the session equipped parents with tools to identify emotions, build stronger relationships, and model a growth mindset. The workshop reinforced the message: "Change your mind, change your life."

District 205 Hosts Third Annual 3E Expo, Showcasing Pathways to Success

Mary Ann Thornton

Exploring the Future: District 205 Seniors Attend 3E Expo

The excitement was undeniable as hundreds of seniors from Thornridge, Thornton, and Thornwood High Schools filled the Tinley Park Convention Center on October 22, 2025, for District 205's Third Annual 3E Expo. It is an event dedicated to helping students prepare for life beyond high school.

A Pathway to What's Next

The 3E Expo, which stands for Enrolled, Enlisted, or Employed, is an annual district initiative designed to ensure that every graduate leaves high school with a clear plan. Whether students are preparing to attend a college or university, join the military, or step directly into the workforce, the expo connects them with the resources, people, and opportunities they need to succeed.

This year's event brought together representatives from colleges, universities, trade programs, employers, and all branches of the U.S. military. Students had the chance to meet face-to-face with recruiters, admissions counselors, and industry professionals, many of whom shared real-world insights and career advice.

Superintendent Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Jr. expressed the district's commitment to ensuring every student's readiness for the next step:

"We want every student to leave our schools with a plan and a purpose. The 3E Expo provides real access to pathways that turn those plans into reality."

Opportunities and Inspiration

Students explored information tables, gathered materials, and asked questions about admissions, scholarships, apprenticeships, and job opportunities. From Illinois State University and Southern Illinois University to local trade unions, technical programs, and community employers, the event offered something for everyone.

Guidance counselors and teachers were on hand to support

students as they connected what they've learned to tangible post-secondary options. For many, the expo opened new possibilities they had not previously considered, sparking confidence and excitement about the future.



A Statewide Model for Student Success

Now in its third year, the 3E Expo has become one of District 205's signature college and career readiness events, and it stands out across Illinois. Thornton Township High School District 205 is the only district in the state offering this kind of large-scale, all-inclusive postsecondary planning experience for its students.

By giving every senior the opportunity to engage directly with higher education, military representatives, and workforce in one space, District 205 continues to set a new standard for what it means to prepare students to be enrolled, enlisted, or employed.

Watch the 3E Expo 2025 Highlight Video:



<https://youtu.be/yRrhrhqiTrM>



ENROLLED, ENLISTED, EMPLOYED!

We Are Proud of Our Student Scholarship Winners and Those Following the Principles of the 3 E'S

District 205 Faculty Association Ray Price Memorial Scholarship Winners Class of 2025

Harmony Davis- Thornridge High School (Future Educator Scholarship) *Edgar Gonzalez*- Thornton High School (Future Educator Scholarship)
Devin Craig- Thornwood High School (Future Educator Scholarship) *Yaquelin Muñoz*- Thornwood High School (Vocational Scholarship)

D205 Graduates Post-High School

ENROLLED

Northwestern University

Jocelyn Mariscal, Economics (QuestBridge College Match Full Ride Scholarship and *Valeria Rodriguez*, Biology (full ride scholarship)

Princeton University

Curtis Spence, Double Communications and Marketing

John Hopkins University

Oluwanifemi Ajayi, Public Health (Ingalls Scholarship)

University of Chicago

Kaliah Oparah, Biological Chemistry (The Gates Scholarship)

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Dorothy Omokowajo, Public Health (Ingalls Scholarship)

ENLISTED

Marines

Ester Adeleke, Nevah Smith, and London Coleman

Army

Zahria Langham, Ty'ana Mitchell, Rashad Brooks, and LaSean Scroggins

Air Force

Janise Holman and Te-Shawn Mosley

Navy

Nozomi McKinney

U.S. National Guard

Elijah Harris

EMPLOYED

District Precision Manufacturing

100% students enrolled in have been accepted into a Post-Secondary Program including Military enlistment. Students will study Architecture, Engineering, and Technology.

Diesel Engine Technology

Student interviews are in progress with the following companies: Rush Enterprises, First Student, Ryder and MVI. Internship applications in progress at Ryder and First Student.

Cosmetology

100% enrolled students completed 1500 required hours for certification
100% enrolled students took the IL State Licensing Exam
100% enrolled students received 39 Dual Credit Hours at South Suburban College towards their Cosmetology Technician Certificate. We hope you will also support the Studio 205 program by scheduling an appointment with one of our talented students.

You can do so by going to this website: <https://trstudio205.setmore.com/studio> or by scanning the QR code.



Barbering

100% enrolled students completed 1500 required hours for certification
100% enrolled students took the IL State Licensing Exam
100% enrolled students received 38 Dual Credit Hours at South Suburban College towards their Barbering Certificate.





School District 205 Student Board of Education Hosts Turn Up for Peace Fall Fest

District 205 Students “Turn Up for Peace” with First Annual Fall Fest

Thornton Township High School District 205’s Student Board of Education (SBOE) brought the community together for an unforgettable afternoon of unity, music, and celebration during the first annual Turn Up for Peace Fall Fest, hosted on Saturday, October 18, 2025, at Thornridge High School.



Hundreds of families and community members gathered for a day of live performances, delicious food, carnival-style games, and a dazzling fireworks finale that filled the evening sky with color and excitement.



The event, powered by student leaders from Thornridge, Thornton, and Thornwood High Schools, was designed to spread positivity, promote community pride, and create safe spaces for young people to connect through fun and fellowship.

“Turn Up for Peace was more than a festival. “It was a statement of what our students believe in,” said Dr. Nathaniel Cunningham, Jr., Superintendent of Schools. “They wanted to show that joy, collaboration, and peace can be powerful tools for change.”

District 205’s Student Board of Education conceived and led the event as part of their ongoing commitment to foster student voice and strengthen community relationships.

“Our students are setting the example for what leadership looks like,” said Ms. Nina Graham, President of the Board of Education. “We are incredibly proud of their creativity and passion for bringing people together.”

The festival’s success signals a growing tradition within District 205, rooted in student empowerment, community connection, and peace-building.





Dr. William Brown
Principal - Thornridge

Thornridge News

Thornridge High School Students Explore College Life at Southern Illinois University Carbondale



Thornridge High School juniors and seniors recently traveled to Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC) for an immersive college experience designed to strengthen their postsecondary readiness and bring their future goals into clearer focus. The visit served as a key initiative in Thornridge's commitment to preparing students to graduate *Enrolled, Enlisted, or Employed*.

The trip introduced students to the college environment and showcased the academic, social, and support resources available at SIUC. Participants were selected based on their involvement in college and career planning activities, academic performance, and interest in exploring postsecondary pathways. By stepping onto a college campus and engaging with professionals and peers, students were able to visualize their next steps after high school and consider the opportunities ahead.

A Day of Learning and Inspiration

During the visit, students enjoyed a lineup of engaging and informative activities, including:

- Guided campus tours
- Interactive academic programs
- Informational sessions with admissions leaders and student support staff

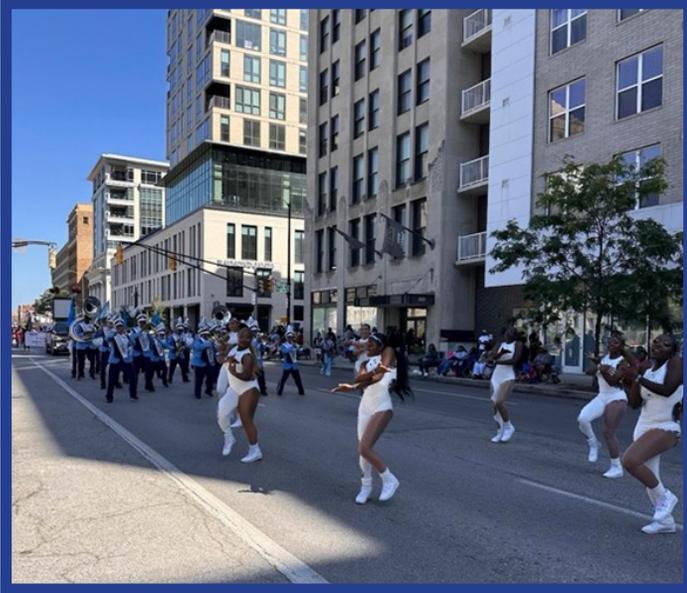
A major highlight was a dynamic discussion with **Wendell Williams, Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management**, who shared valuable insight about college expectations, admissions strategies, and navigating campus life. Students also connected with program directors who specialize in academic resources, financial support, and student success initiatives.

The day concluded with an inspiring message from SIUC engineering students, who encouraged Thornridge scholars to dream big and persist in their academic journey. Adding to the excitement was a surprise visit from **Thornridge Class of 2024 alumna, Naomi Hull**, who shared heartfelt reflections on her first-year college experience. Her words of encouragement and pride in representing the TR Falcons at the collegiate level created an unforgettable full-circle moment.



Thornridge News

Thornridge Marching Falcons Shine at the Circle City Classic Parade



exemplify pride, artistry, and teamwork, keeping the spirit of Thornridge marching forward.

The Thornridge Marching Falcons proudly represented Thornridge High School and the Thornton Township community at the prestigious Circle City Classic Parade in downtown Indianapolis on September 26–27, 2025. Selected through a competitive application process led by Band Director Mr. Pilnick, the ensemble was chosen for its musicianship, precision, and school pride. Performing before a large and enthusiastic crowd, the Falcons delivered a high-energy set featuring “Get Ready” by The Temptations and “I’m Dreamin’” by Christopher Williams, showcasing polished choreography and musical excellence honed through daily after-school rehearsals.

For many students, the parade marked a defining moment in their musical journey—whether performing in a major parade for the first time or gaining confidence through collaboration and discipline. The experience extended beyond the parade route, as students also attended the Circle City Classic Football Game, where they witnessed performances by renowned HBCU marching bands from Miles College and Morgan State University, further inspiring their artistic growth and future aspirations.

The Marching Falcons closed their fall season with a dynamic performance at the District 205 Battle of the Bands on October 31 and continued to shine at the Winter Concert on December 9 in the newly renovated David Eanes Performing Arts Center. Their momentum carries into spring with appearances at IHSA festivals and the Jazz at the Ridge Festival on May 7, 2026. Through every performance, the Thornridge Marching Falcons continue to

Pre-ACT Early Scholar Awards

Thornridge High School celebrated 38 students recognized as PreACT Early Scholars, placing them among the top 35% of high-achieving students nationwide. The PreACT Rising Stars program honors students who demonstrate strong potential in college readiness skills, with distinctions including PreACT Distinguished Scholars (top 5%), PreACT Rising Scholars (next 10%), and PreACT Early Scholars (next 35%). This recognition reflects students’ achievement in critical areas such as reading, writing, math, and problem-solving—skills essential for future college and career success.

These accomplishments are the result of a strong academic foundation supported by a guaranteed and viable curriculum aligned with college and career standards. Thornridge credits the success of its scholars to the collaborative efforts of teachers, counselors, and school leadership. “These achievements send a clear message that hard work, dedication, and community support lead to outstanding results,” said Principal Dr. William Brown. Assistant Principal Jennifer Hannigan added that the recognition affirms students’ readiness to meet future challenges and exemplifies what is possible through preparation and perseverance.



Todd Whitaker
Principal - Thornton

Thornton Township News

Thornton Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month with Joy, Culture, and Community

Thornton Township High School closed out Hispanic Heritage Month with a vibrant and inspiring assembly that honored the theme **“Collective Heritage: Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future.”** Held on October 28, the celebration brought the school community together to embrace cultural pride, diversity, and student talent.

Student emcees Jeyson Vazquez, Jimena Rodriguez, and Angelica Simpson guided the program, which featured lively performances from Thornton’s Hispanic Heritage dancers, a solo by Anderson Pierre-Vil, and a spirited rendition of Selena’s *“Como La Flor”* by the marching band. Guest performers, including vocalist Luis Alfredo and the Ballet Folclorico Manquetzalli dancers, added even more excitement to the showcase.

The celebration also highlighted outstanding student artwork, announcing Jamariah Smith as the first-place winner, with Miguel Meza and Jasmine Pickett earning second and third place, respectively. Led by sponsor Ms. Linda Colon, the event captured the strength and beauty of cultural unity while honoring the district’s commitment to celebrating every student’s heritage.



Rho Kappa & IB Students Launch Global Sock Fundraiser to Change Lives

Thornton’s Rho Kappa and IB students kicked off their annual sock fundraiser, an initiative that has already transformed lives around the world. This year’s dual mission focuses on raising funds to provide schooling for Darlene Namale, a young girl in Uganda, while continuing efforts to help supply prosthetic legs for individuals in need.

“ *Seven years, nine prosthetic legs, hundreds of donors, and countless lives touched.* ”

Over the past seven years, students have funded nine prosthetic legs and sponsored multiple students’ education, including Mercy, Humuza, and Hussein Mutesasira. The project also donates warm socks locally; more than 700 pairs have been given to charities and individuals experiencing homelessness.

Community members can support the effort by purchasing socks online, knowing that for every two packs sold, one pair is donated locally. The fundraiser runs through November 30.





Thornton Township News

Wildcat Classic Brings Alumni Generations Together for a Day of Pride & Play



The 3rd Annual Wildcat Classic: Battle of the Decades brought generations of Thornton alumni back home on November 1 for a full day of basketball, celebration, and community pride.

Teams representing the classes of the 80s, 90s, and 2000s returned to compete for the championship trophy, but the event offered more than basketball. Families enjoyed food trucks, bounce houses, wellness zones, cheer performances, musical entertainment, and photo booth stations. With more than 1,400 attendees, the Classic showcased the deep-rooted Wildcat pride that continues to unite past and present students.

Team Black claimed this year's championship title. The event's success was made possible through the efforts of alumni, staff, volunteers, and families who continue to make the Wildcat Classic a beloved annual tradition.



“ Generations of Wildcats returned home to show what purple pride looks like. ”





Don Holmes
Principal - Thornwood

Thornwood News

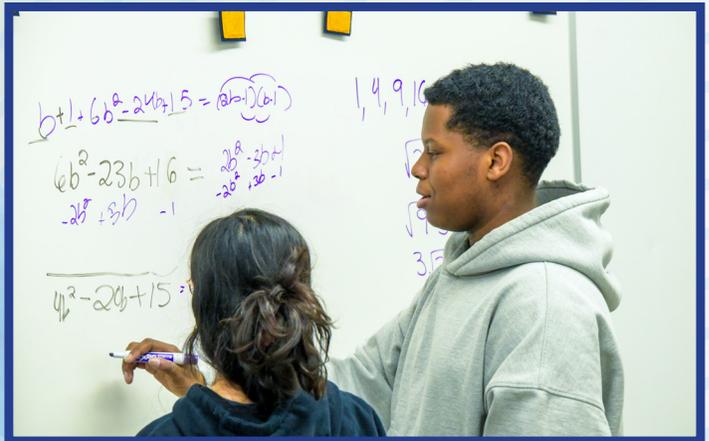
Thornwood High School Mathletes Earn Second Place at October Conference Meet

Thornwood High School's Mathletes earned a strong second-place finish at the October conference competition held at Thornton Township High School on October 22. Competing against teams from across the south suburban region, including Thornton, Thornridge, Bloom, Bloom Trail, Crete-Monee, and Rich Township, Thornwood students excelled in multiple categories. Freshmen stood out in factoring, juniors delivered strong performances in fractional equations, and the team earned high marks in oral presentations on advanced topics such as number theory and sets.

The team's success reflects consistent collaboration and rigorous preparation supported by Thornwood's strong mathematics curriculum and instructional staff. Mathletes practice in grade-level teams and participate in competition-style sessions that build confidence and strategy, contributing to a roster of more

"When students **work together** and **believe in their abilities**, incredible **things happen** inside and outside the classroom."

than 45 students. Looking ahead, the Thunderbirds will host the next conference competition on January 28 and advance to the ICTM regional competition in February, where students will compete for a chance to qualify for the Illinois state finals.



Thornwood High School Celebrates IB Induction and Diploma Achievements

Thornwood High School celebrated an important moment for its International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme with this year's Induction Ceremony, welcoming 34 new junior IB students and recognizing five seniors from the Class of 2025 who earned the prestigious IB Diploma. With more than 80% of IB students earning college credits through one or more IB courses, the program continues to demonstrate its strong impact on students' postsecondary readiness.

Thornwood's IB Programme stands out for its rigorous coursework, skilled instruction, and the unwavering commitment of its teaching team. IB educators work collaboratively to deliver a challenging curriculum while providing the academic and emotional support students need to succeed. Supported by dedicated school and district leadership, the program emphasizes critical thinking, research, time management, and college-level expectations through signature components such as the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge.

This year's ceremony highlighted the resilience, leadership, and determination of Thornwood's IB scholars. Principal Don Holmes and Dr. Ratliff delivered inspiring messages, and senior IB students modeled leadership by guiding inductees through program mission statements. With strong family engagement and a growing reputation for excellence, Thornwood's IB Programme continues to prepare students to excel in college, contribute to their communities, and lead with purpose.



Thornwood News

Thunderbirds Football Soars with a Season Built on "Believe"



The Thornwood Thunderbirds capped an inspiring football season defined by resilience, leadership, and the team's mantra: "Believe." Despite a challenging 1-4 start, the team rallied to win four straight games, capture both District 205 spirit trophies, and secure a spot in the IHSA state playoffs.

A turning point came when captains **Malakhi Adams, Zion Walker, Amir Macon, Aiden Davis, and Juelz Murphy** called a players-only meeting to refocus the team's goals. Their leadership united the roster and helped ignite Thornwood's late-season surge.

The Thunderbirds credit their success not only to hard work on the field, but to strong community support. Teachers volunteered

for tutoring, staff prepared pregame meals, and alumni returned to encourage the team. Students, administrators, and district leaders showed unwavering support throughout the season. "It felt amazing to win both trophies and reach the playoffs," the coaching staff shared. "Our goal is to raise the standard, build a positive culture, and continue moving forward."



As the Thunderbirds look ahead, their goals are clear: win the conference, advance deeper into the playoffs, and chase a state championship.

Thunderbirds Complete a Strong Inaugural Girls Flag Football

Thornwood High School launched its first-ever Varsity Girls Flag Football season with determination and steady growth. After a tough opening loss to Hillcrest, the Thunderbirds earned the first win in program history with a 24-20 victory over Kankakee. Facing early challenges against Rich Township, Bloom, and top-ranked Kenwood, the team reached mid-season at 2-4 but continued to show resilience and competitive spirit.

That perseverance paid off late in the season as Thornwood delivered a statement 19-7 win over Bremen and surged into a three-game winning streak, including a 53-12 victory over Blue Island Eisenhower and two dominant wins over Christian Fenger. The Thunderbirds closed the year with a competitive 38-30 matchup against Stagg, finishing with a 5-5 record. The inaugural season highlighted grit, growth, and strong potential as the program looks ahead to building on its early success.



Photo: Thornwood's inaugural roster sets the foundation for the future of girls flag football at the school.



Outlook Academy

A Season of Growth, Achievement, and Purpose

Outlook Academy launched the 2025–2026 school year with strong momentum, guided by the theme “*We Are in It for the Win!*” Faculty and staff focused on fostering a supportive, inclusive environment while helping students reestablish routines and set goals for success. The school welcomed new Social Studies teacher Mr. Murray and engaged students in meaningful learning across disciplines, while continuing traditions such as the Outlook PRIDE Awards to recognize progress, effort, and personal growth.

Throughout the fall, students participated in hands-on, purpose-driven instruction that strengthened both academic and personal development. English classes emphasized career research and reflective writing, math courses brought concepts to life through real-world applications, and science and social studies explored topics ranging from forensic psychology to government systems and cultural change. Outlook Academy also continued its strong Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), ensuring students received personalized academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support while building skills in organization, decision-making, and wellness.

Preparing students for life beyond high school remained a central focus. Through continued partnerships with South Suburban College, students explored career pathways and completed key milestones such as FAFSA and college applications, while participation in the District 205 3E Expo reinforced the district’s Enrolled, Enlisted, or Employed mission. The fall concluded with celebrations of academic achievement, strong attendance, and community service initiatives, including the Holiday Basket Giveaway, highlighting Outlook Academy’s commitment to excellence, compassion, and student success.



PEACE



CENTER

Peace Center

PEACE Center's Article

A Strong Start to a Successful School Year

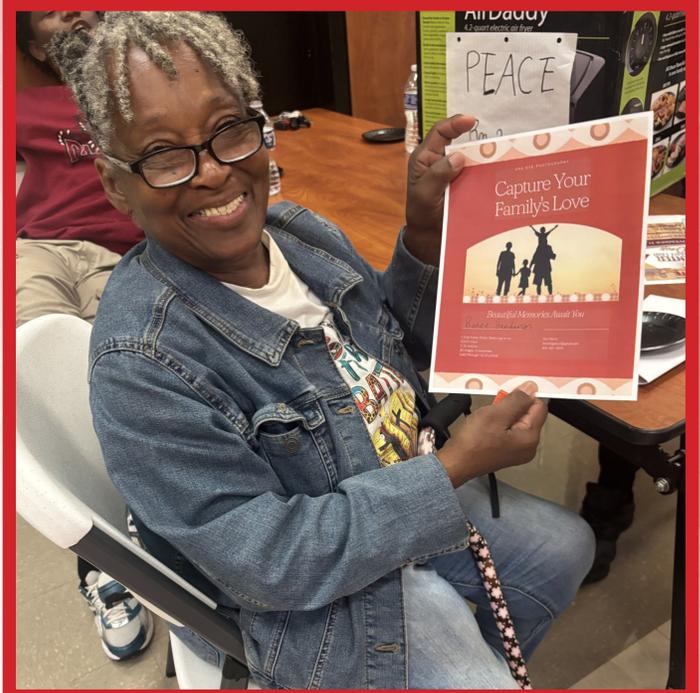


The PEACE Center has launched the school year with strong momentum, marked by student achievement, meaningful opportunities, and a renewed focus on connection, consistency, and community. With continued support from the Board of Education, PEACE students have demonstrated academic growth, professionalism, and pride, most notably during their participation in the District 205 3E Expo, where they engaged confidently with college, career, and military representatives while representing the PEACE Center with excellence.



This year also brought the addition of Ms. Paige Hagler as the PEACE Center's new Parent Coordinator. Her role centers on strengthening communication between families and the school, increasing family engagement, and ensuring parents feel supported throughout their child's educational journey. Early in the year, PEACE staff participated in comprehensive Institute

Training focused on alignment, consistency, and student-centered practices, reinforcing a unified commitment to positive school culture and student success.



The school year began with purposeful social-emotional learning activities, Peace Circles, and one of the most successful Back-to-School Nights in recent years, highlighting strong family participation and community partnership. The PEACE Center also proudly recognized its Quarter 1 Honor Roll scholars for their hard work and resilience. Together, these efforts reflect a vibrant, connected school community dedicated to helping every student thrive.



Students Bring the Flavor in District 205's Battle of the Pizza Challenge



District 205 students took center stage in the kitchen last month as the Student Board of Education Cafeteria Committee and OrganicLife teamed up to host the first-ever Battle of the Pizza Challenge. Held on November 5, 2025, the event brought together culinary students from Thornridge, Thornton, and Thornwood for a spirited competition filled with creativity and school pride.

Students were challenged to prepare two original pizzas, including one vegetarian option, using ingredients provided by OrganicLife. The room buzzed with energy as teams kneaded dough, chopped fresh ingredients, and collaborated on flavor combinations designed to wow the judges.

As part of District 205's ongoing commitment to elevating student voice in menu planning, OrganicLife also conducted a Menu Advisory and a Breakfast and Lunch Survey during the challenge. Students offered feedback, sampled options, and shared ideas to help shape future meals across the district.

By the end of the event, two standout pizzas earned top honors:

- 🍕 Thornridge High School – “Thornridge Veggie Slice”
- 🍕 Thornton High School – “Jerk Attack”

These winning creations will be featured on the December OrganicLife Lunch Menu, giving the entire district the chance to taste the work of its talented young chefs.

The Battle of the Pizza showcased more than just culinary skills—it highlighted student leadership, teamwork, and the power of collaboration between District 205 and OrganicLife. Congratulations to all who participated!





Winners of the Battle of the Pizza Challenge: Thornridge High School – “Thornridge Veggie Slice” and Thornton High School – “Jerk Attack”

Adult Transition Program Students Build Real-World Skills

The Adult Transition Program (ATP) in Thornton Township High School District 205 continues to provide meaningful, hands-on learning experiences that prepare students for life beyond high school. ATP students were actively engaged in career exploration, independent living skill development, and social-emotional learning. Three ATP classes attended the District 205 3E Expo, where students connected with college representatives and employment organizations, gaining insight into postsecondary pathways aligned with enrollment, enlistment, and employment opportunities. At the college level, new ATP students are preparing to take placement tests and select spring semester courses, an important step toward increased independence and self-advocacy.

making. These experiences reinforced essential life skills such as planning, financial responsibility, and confidence in navigating everyday tasks.

Social-emotional learning remains a key component of the Adult Transition Program. During a recent SEL lesson, students explored healthy strategies for managing stress and created their own stress balls as a tool for relaxation and self-regulation. In Room 3367, students deepened their focus on money management and independent living skills by learning how to read paystubs, understand gross versus net income, and develop simple budgets for housing, transportation, groceries, and personal expenses. Through collaborative budget scenario activities, students practiced teamwork, problem-solving, and distinguishing between needs and wants, skills that are critical for responsible adult living. Together, these experiences reflect ATP's commitment to equipping students with the practical knowledge, confidence, and life skills needed to thrive as independent adults.



Across campuses, students participated in practical lessons designed to mirror real-life situations. Thornwood ATP students strengthened job-readiness skills through creative activities, including a field-based lesson at Target focused on selecting appropriate clothing for work, school, and social settings. Students also completed a hands-on grocery shopping unit that emphasized budgeting, list-making, price comparison, and thoughtful decision-

Photos: Student enrolled in the ATP classes attended the annual District 205 3E Expo in October 2025 at the Tinley Park Convention Center.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Thornton Township High School District 205 endeavors to develop productive citizens who are enrolled, enlisted, or employed at the completion of high school.

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Mr. Toriano Horton, Chief School Business Official

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Teacher's Institute Day Advances District 205's Student Success Mission



Educators from across Thornton Township High School District 205 gathered on Monday, January 5, 2026, for a Teacher's Institute Day at Thornwood High School. The professional learning day brought teachers and administrators together to strengthen collaboration and instructional practice across the district.

The Institute Day featured nationally recognized educational consultant and author Dr. Anthony Muhammad, who led sessions focused on transforming school culture and building high-performing professional learning communities (PLCs). Educators engaged in discussions on leadership, collective responsibility, and strategies to support sustained school improvement.

This work directly supports District 205's commitment to ensuring every student graduates enrolled in a college or university, enlisted in military service, or employed in a meaningful career pathway. By investing in educator growth, the district continues to build the strong foundation necessary to prepare students for success beyond high school.

