



Superintendent's Report – Board of Education Meeting – April 22, 2026 - 7:00 p.m.

Ambitious Instruction – *Classes are academically demanding and engage students by emphasizing the application of knowledge.*

- The K-8 Art Curriculum Committee recommends the *Art of Education Flex and Pro* as a supplemental instructional resource and targeted professional development for the 2026-2027 school year ([Appendix A](#))
- The required state assessments of [IAR](#) & Dynamic Learning Maps ([DLM](#)) in grades 3-8 are complete - results will be made available on the [Illinois School Report Card](#) when published in the Fall of 2026 and on our [Academic Performance page](#)
- The [WSCAE Art Expo](#) is scheduled for 4/25 at the Cheney Mansion in Oak Park from 10 am to 2 pm
- K-8 NWEA End of Year MAP testing is scheduled for the week of May 4th with an End of Year NWEA MAP Board report is anticipated for the June 17th Board meeting
- Registration for Gower Summer 2026 Enrichment Offerings and Summer Step Up are both now available - register by 5/1 in PowerSchool

Supportive Environment – *The school environment is safe, clean and conducive to student learning. Teachers have high expectations for students. Students have the support of their teachers as well as their peers.*

- Year to date attendance (*previous year data*): 93.7% (90.0%) for GW (K-4; K-94.1% [84%]; 1st-93.8% [87%]); 95.2% (94.9%) for GM; 95.0% (95.1%) - Teaching Staff and 96.8% (96.3%) for Student Support Staff
- Gower West and Gower Middle School were recognized as [Capturing Kids' Hearts National Showcase Schools](#) for the 2025-2026 school year! This is the 11th consecutive year for Gower West and the 5th for Gower Middle! Congratulations! Gower continues to be recognized as a National CKH Showcase District
- Required Staff Trainings focused on Educator Ethics which occurred at GM on 4/14 and GW on 4/21
- Gower Cares provided 40 Spring Break Snack To-Go Bags for students/families at a packing event on 3/25
- The Burr Ridge Police Department completed their annual DARE program for 5th graders the week of 4/13

Involved Families and Community – *Strong relationships are built across the community to support learning.*

- Thank you for helping us exceed our standing goal of 35% parent participation on the annual [5-Essentials Survey!](#) We set a new district record with a 53% overall parent response rate! (*a record 71% GW, 35% GM*)
- 2026-2027 school year registration for returning students is underway - Currently, we have 52 Kindergarten students registered for next year! 28 rising preschool students and 24 students new to Gower (*34 last year*)
- Kindergarten Orientation for 2026-27 is scheduled for April 30th to welcome our newest Gladiators!
- The final preschool screening for 2026-27 will be held on 4/23 - Screening for next year will resume in Aug.
- The Spring Musical is scheduled for 4/23-24 at Gower Middle; Our 3rd and 4th grade students will travel to see the show during the school day on April 23rd an excellent transition activity for our rising 5th gr. class
- We invite the Gower Community to join us at Gower Middle on May 7th to enjoy the GM Art Show and the Spring Band Concert starting at 7:00 p.m.
- The [Gower PTO](#) Book Fairs are being held 4/21-22 at Gower West and 4/27-29 at Gower Middle
- Visit the [Gower Foundation](#) website for information on their ongoing activities and programs

Collaborative Teachers & Staff – *The staff is committed to the school, receives strong professional development, & works together to improve.*

- District Committee Work continues with K-8 Art, Professional Development, Tech, GM Math, PERA, and Special Education
- The April 17th Early Release Day is school based and focused on the continuation of our curriculum alignment work across grade levels and the review of classroom assessments and rubrics.
- The Parent/Student Handbook Committee will meet on 5/7 to begin the process of reviewing, revising, and updating the 2026-2027 handbook; the draft will be presented to the Board at the June meeting
- The annual PERA Committee will meet on 4/22 to review the Professional Appraisal Process
- There are no changes to the [2026-27 Preliminary Staffing Plan](#) presented in March and hiring is underway with 5 of our 10 open certified positions for next year recommended for hire (remaining 5 in progress)

Effective Leaders – *School leaders work with staff to implement a clear and strategic vision for school success.*

- The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Support Services position will officially close with the retirement of Mrs. Laratta (June 30th) and replaced by two director positions; [Director of Special Education and Student Services](#) (Dr. Jackelyn Cadard, July 1, 2025); and
- Ms. Karen Hess, Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction in District 365U, is being recommended to serve as the [Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Programs](#) (July 1, 2026); completing a major step in the district's ongoing leadership transition plan
- Gower Middle Report Card is being redesigned for the 2026-2027 school year to better align the system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents/guardians ([Appendix B](#))
- Gower will receive \$14,701 as part of the consortium grant with Hinsdale High School District 86 to provide additional support to our English Language Learner program