



SEARS

Community

Kenilworth School District 38 - Quarterly Newsletter

SPRING 2026



UPCOMING DATES

Mark your calendar with these upcoming important dates.

- **MAY 18**
Board of Education
Regular Meeting
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
- **MAY 20**
Senior Field Day
- **MAY 21**
8th Grade Research
Project Showcase
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- **MAY 21**
Community Open
House Retirement
Celebration
3:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- **MAY 25**
Memorial Day
(No School)
- **MAY 26**
7th Grade
Springfield Trip
- **MAY 27**
Junior Field Day
- **MAY 28**
8th Grade Graduation
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- **JUNE 5**
Last Day of School (K-7)
Early Dismissal - 2:00 p.m.

VISIT THE WEBSITE

www.kenilworth38.org

Honoring a Lifetime of Impact at The Joseph Sears School



After years of dedicated service, three beloved members of The Joseph Sears School community are beginning a well-earned new chapter. Leslie Richmond, Laura Romisher, and John Scheidt have each left a lasting mark on students, colleagues, and families through their commitment, care, and passion for education. As they step into retirement, we celebrate not only their years of service but the legacy they leave behind.

Dr. Leslie Richmond

Leslie Richmond joined The Joseph Sears School community 16 years ago after learning about an opening through a friend already on staff, a decision that would lead to a deeply meaningful chapter in her career. When reflecting on her time at Sears, Richmond finds it impossible to single out just one memorable moment. Instead, she points to the countless experiences that shaped her, moments inspired by the dedication and successes of students, the support of families, and the collaboration of colleagues. As she steps into retirement, Richmond looks forward to spending more time with her family (and her three dogs), enjoying the calm of nature, and savoring the freedom to cook and read at her own pace. She also plans to stay connected through her book club,

made up entirely of fellow Sears retirees, a fitting continuation of the community she has cherished.

Mrs. Laura Romisher

After beginning her career in social work, Laura Romisher returned to teaching in search of a path that better aligned with her family life, a decision that ultimately brought her to The Joseph Sears School community. Over the years, it wasn't just one standout moment that defined her experience, but the everyday connections with students as they grew both academically and personally. From witnessing "aha" moments in the classroom to celebrating milestones like graduation, Romisher found deep meaning in being part of her students' journeys. She credits the Sears community, especially her close-knit team of 8th-grade colleagues, as the heart of her experience, describing them as talented, dedicated, and unwavering advocates for children. As she looks ahead to retirement, Romisher is eager to embrace a new chapter filled with flexibility, exploration, and opportunities to continue to engage her curiosity and creativity.

Mr. John Scheidt

John Scheidt's connection to the North Shore runs deep, and for the past 32 years, he has been a dedicated member of The Joseph Sears School community. Over more than three decades, Scheidt has played an integral role in shaping the student experience, teaching industrial arts and even spending summers as the school carpenter, repairing and building for classrooms across the building. While he finds it impossible to point to a single memorable moment, he reflects on a career filled with meaningful experiences alongside students, colleagues, and families. He takes particular pride in the strong sense of community at Sears and the personal memories made along the way, including sharing the school experience with his own daughters. As he looks ahead to retirement, Scheidt is eager to spend more time with family, stay active through swimming and mountain biking, return to reading, and enjoy time on the golf course with friends.

LIFELONG LEARNERS:



Sears Alumni Spotlight: Lisa Graham

The Joseph Sears School is committed to nurturing students who reflect the values of our *Portrait of a Sears Graduate*. Long after they leave our classrooms, our alumni continue to demonstrate these qualities in their lives and careers. In this Sears Alumni Spotlight series, we're proud to share their stories and the lasting impact of their Sears experience.

At The Joseph Sears School, the strength of our community is often best reflected in the stories of those who once walked our halls and continue to give back in meaningful ways. Lisa Graham, a proud Sears alumna (Class of 1992) and current Board member, is one such example. Having joined the School Board in 2023, Lisa's journey, from student to leader, highlights the lasting impact of a Sears education.

Lisa's connection to Sears began during a time of transition. "I moved to Sears when I was in first grade; it was actually my third school that year because my family was moving back from being overseas," she recalls. "The culture at Sears embraced me, and the size of this community meant that the new kid was a little bit of a celebrity and made me incredibly welcome, which I was so grateful for."

That sense of belonging was only the beginning. Lisa describes her time at Sears as foundational in shaping her approach to relationships and personal growth. "Relationships with my classmates, teachers, and the broader Sears team were critical in my development. We shared strong personal connections, and I got to grow alongside my classmates in a supportive, close-knit community."

Those early experiences instilled in her a deep appreciation for connection and empathy. "The importance of seeing people, feeling connected to them, and recognizing that they will grow and change, as will you, has shaped the way I approach relationships in my life, whether it be with family, friends, or at work."

Like many alumni, Lisa's memories of Sears are vivid and varied. "There are too many to count!" she says. "Making chicken soup, building a dry ice volcano, the field trip to Long Grove, Scamper, the Washington, D.C. trip, the eighth-grade play, all hold a very special place in my heart." One moment stands out above the rest: "My mom giving me my diploma at eighth grade graduation, as she was on the School Board at the time."

Today, Lisa continues that family legacy of service. She and her husband, Ryan, have lived in Kenilworth since 2015 and are raising their two children, Cora and Patrick, in the same community that shaped her. Professionally, Lisa serves as Managing Director in J.P. Morgan's Global Corporate Bank, where she leads the Power & Utilities Corporate Banking team, overseeing client relationships and business development across North America.

When asked which aspect of the *Portrait of a Sears Graduate* resonates most with her, Lisa points to the idea of being a Fearless Learner. "The uniqueness of Sears, in its size and strong sense of community, allows students to take risks across a multitude of disciplines in a safe and supportive environment. It gives students the confidence to try new things, a skill that will continue to serve them well in life."

Lisa's story is a powerful reminder of the lifelong impact of a Sears education and the enduring strength of our alumni community.



Are you a Sears alum with a story to share?

Scan the QR code to join our alumni network and learn how you can be featured in a future spotlight.

FINE ARTS NIGHT

On April 30, The Joseph Sears School hosted its annual Fine Arts Night. The evening celebrated our students' artistic achievements, from paintings to drawings, to musical ensembles and solo performances. Thank you to Mrs. Parkes, Ms. Wood, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Cabin, Mr. Frie, Mrs. Lehman Hunt, our parent volunteers, and our entire school community for making the night a success.



Congratulations

CELEBRATING MILESTONES 2025-2026



This past school year, many faculty and staff members at The Joseph Sears School celebrated career milestones for their years of service. We honor these exemplary individuals for their efforts toward furthering our students' education and helping them achieve the *Portrait of a Sears Graduate*. Congratulations to all of our professionals!

10 Years

Jennifer Bennett
Alison Johnson
Debbie Kruse
Margo Parkes

20 Years

Ross Cabin
Jeff Gerdin
Angela Lascola

Retirement

Leslie Richmond
Laura Romisher
John Scheidt

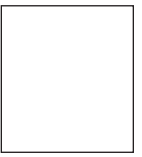




The Joseph Sears School

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Dr. Stephanie Helfand, Principal
Mr. Geoffrey Perlman, JK-4 Assistant Principal
Mr. Jeff Rosen, 5-8 Assistant Principal



2025

SEARS BY THE NUMBERS



1/3

STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

1/3 Sears Students are enrolled in an after-school program



STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND RETENTION

43

staff members participated in after-school committees related to the strategic plan, or served as team coordinators for staff input and leadership

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

INCREASED BY

23.89

Increased student growth in English Language Arts by 23.89 points since 2022, from 49.88 to 73.77



FISCAL ALIGNMENT

100%

of all District Funds are tied to a pillar of the Strategic Plan.

WHOLE CHILD

Our newly formed Parent/School Behavior Council met four times this school year to discuss strengthening school and community partnerships to help improve student behavior.



265

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

265 Google Chromebooks deployed.