INSIGHT

JULY 2026

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT 25 NEWSLETTER

Forward... March to 2031!

Our Strategic Plan is refreshed and underway.
Check out our new Strategic Plan 2026-2031.
Pages 6-9

Multicultural Nights in D25

Celebrating our community together.
Pages 4-5



D25 BY THE NUMBERS

5,126 MAY 1, 2026 ENROLLMENT
KINDERGARTEN - 8TH

9 SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT
7 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
2 MIDDLE SCHOOLS

874 STAFF MEMBERS

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

19.96 STUDENTS PER CLASS
KINDERGARTEN - 5TH

$18,046 OPERATING EXPENDITURE PER PUPIL

TEACHER RETENTION RATE: **93.4%**

LANGUAGES SPOKEN: **50**
TOP 5: ENGLISH, SPANISH, UKRAINIAN, RUSSIAN, POLISH

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Let our kids tell you what's happening in D25 by visiting www.sd25.org/Stories.

FRONT COVER PHOTO: Westgate students put their learning into practice during a math lesson.





With diplomas in hand and excitement on their faces, South and Thomas graduates celebrate the culmination of their District 25 journey and look ahead to their next chapter.

As summer is now well underway across Arlington Heights, I want to take a moment to reconnect with our community and reflect on the school year we just completed in District 25.

This past year was marked by meaningful progress and steady, focused work that continues to move our district forward. We continued important curriculum work, including the implementation of our elementary reading curriculum, ongoing professional learning, and the expansion of our instructional programs, launched our Strategic Plan Refresh process, navigated an eLearning day, responded to water main breaks, worked through unexpected challenges, and embraced opportunities to improve and grow.

In every classroom, office, and school building, our staff showed up with purpose and care. Early mornings, late nights, collaboration, and problem-solving all reflected a simple truth: we do this work together.

But what stands out most is not any single initiative or challenge. It is the way we continue to show up together.

Together, we problem-solve.
Together, we support one another.
Together, we create schools where students feel safe, welcomed, and valued.

And because of that collective commitment, our students learned, grew, and, most importantly, loved coming to school.

This edition of Insight Magazine offers an introduction to our Refreshed Strategic Plan (2026-2031), including the priorities that will guide our work moving forward, along with updates on how we are creating community within our schools, stewarding your tax dollars, and, most importantly, supporting the children of Arlington Heights. I invite you to explore these pages and learn more about the work happening across District 25.

As summer continues, I hope this season is providing time to rest, recharge, and enjoy family and friends. While the pace of the school year slows, the work of reflection and preparation continues.

As I complete my second year as superintendent, I remain deeply grateful for the educators, staff, families, and community members who make District 25 such a strong and caring place for children. It is a privilege to serve this community.

Thank you for being part of the District 25 story.

Enjoy the remainder of your summer. We look forward to welcoming everyone back soon, ready to continue the work together.

Together Today 2 Transform Tomorrow,

Brian A Kaye

Dr. Brian A. Kaye – Superintendent



Dr. Kaye is entering his 22nd year with District 25 and his third year as Superintendent.

Multicultural Nights in D25

In Arlington Heights School District 25, our Multicultural Nights have become one of the most meaningful traditions across our elementary schools. While each building brings its own unique energy and approach, the heart of these evenings is shared: celebrating one another through the cultures, backgrounds, and family stories that help define who we are as a school community.

What begins as a single evening of sharing has a way of becoming something much larger.

In many of our schools, Multicultural Night extends beyond one night through schoolwide assemblies and meaningful opportunities for students to come together in shared celebration and learning. These experiences help students recognize that culture is not distant or abstract. It is lived, it is personal, and it is present in the classmates, families, and staff they interact with every day.

In District 25, these events are more than celebrations, they are community-building experiences that reflect who we are and who we strive to be.











At the center of each Multicultural Night are the students and families themselves. Together, they create displays that highlight family history, traditions, heritage, and lived experiences. These posters and exhibits are then proudly shared with classmates, staff, and neighbors, transforming school hallways and gym spaces into vibrant collections of storytelling and connection. The pride is unmistakable, as students see their own identities reflected, and also gain new windows into the lives of others.

These evenings consistently reflect what we value most in District 25: belonging, partnership, and community. Families are not just guests, they are collaborators. Staff are not just facilitators, they are connectors. And students are not just participants, they are storytellers and learners, helping to build understanding and strengthen the fabric of our school communities.

At their core, Multicultural Nights help bring our Portrait of a Learner to life. They remind us that understanding others is essential to understanding ourselves, and that our schools are strongest when every student feels seen, valued, and connected.



The future of Arlington Heights School District 25 was not shaped in a single meeting or by a single group. Over several months, students, families, staff, administrators, board members, community representatives, and union leadership came together through the Strategic Plan *REFRESH* process to examine data, identify strengths and opportunities, and envision what comes next for our schools.

Guided by a series of collaborative retreats and community conversations, participants explored where District 25 is today, where we aspire to go, and how we can continue supporting every learner. The result is a Strategic Plan that reflects the voices, values, and aspirations of the D25 community, and a shared commitment to transforming tomorrow, together.

The Strategic Plan Refresh process brought together diverse voices from across the District 25 community. Through retreats, discussions, feedback opportunities, and collaborative planning sessions, members of the District 25 community helped shape the priorities that will guide the district's future.

The Strategic Plan Refresh Team

STUDENTS, STAFF, FAMILIES, COMMUNITY MEMBERS, BOARD MEMBERS, ADMINISTRATORS, & UNION LEADERSHIP

THE STRATEGIC PLAN BELONGS TO OUR COMMUNITY BECAUSE OUR COMMUNITY HELPED CREATE IT.

The Process

STEP 1 NOVEMBER 2025

Orientation

Question:

What are we being asked to do?

The Strategic Plan REFRESH Team gathered for the first time to learn about the process, establish shared expectations, and begin exploring the work ahead.

STEP 2 DECEMBER 2025

Data Retreat

Question:

Where are we now?

Participants reviewed district performance data, community member feedback, and current realities to better understand District 25's strengths and opportunities.

As our 2021–2025 Strategic Plan wrapped up, we created a document that celebrated and highlighted the progress we made together over the past four years, and also reflected on areas of continued focus as we look ahead. Scan the QR code to the right to explore The Journey. This document informed much of the work we did during our Refresh process.

STEP 3 JANUARY 2026

Vision Retreat

Question:

Where do we want to go?

Community members worked together to identify future aspirations for students, staff, and the district, helping shape a shared vision for the years ahead.

STEP 4 FEBRUARY 2026

Setting Direction Retreat

Question:

How will we get there?

The REFRESH Team translated ideas and aspirations into strategic priorities, goals, and areas of focus.

STEP 5 MARCH 2026

Recommendations & Living the Plan

Question:

How will we bring this work to life?

Draft recommendations were refined, reviewed, and prepared for Board consideration while implementation planning began.

STEP 6 MAY 2026

Board of Education Approval

The Board of Education officially adopted the Strategic Plan, marking the beginning of the next chapter for District 25.

Adopted by the Board of Education in May 2026, Arlington Heights School District 25's Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap for the future, guiding priorities, decision-making, and continuous improvement across the district. Developed through a community-driven process, the plan reflects the shared aspirations of students, families, staff, community members, administrators, Board members, and union leadership.

OUR MOTTO
What we live by day-to-day. It represents who we are in one breath.

OUR MISSION
What we aim to do each and every day.

OUR VISION
How we will get there.

OUR VALUES
What we all live by, students and staff.



Together, we cultivate an inclusive and caring community where every learner is supported, challenged, and prepared to thrive in a changing world.

Our Vision

We envision a future in which every school ignites curiosity, fosters belonging, fuels joy, and equips every learner to lead with purpose, resilience, and compassion in a changing world. In this future:

Students lead their learning. They set meaningful goals, think critically, apply knowledge to authentic challenges, and graduate prepared for high school, postsecondary success and engaged citizenship.

Belonging is systemic, not incidental. Policies, practices, and structures ensure every learner feels seen, valued, and supported in a culturally responsive and inclusive environment.

Learning reflects the future. Instruction prioritizes collaboration, innovation, adaptability, and real-world application aligned with emerging opportunities and workforce needs.

Continuous improvement fuels excellence. Educators model curiosity, use evidence with purpose, and innovate relentlessly to ensure meaningful growth for every student, every year.

Our Values

The following core values will guide our behaviors and actions:

Integrity
We act with honesty, transparency, and strong moral principles, and we take responsibility for our actions and their impact.

Belonging
We create environments where every person feels valued, respected, and connected.

Excellence
We pursue high standards, continuous growth, and meaningful achievement in everything we do.

Innovation
We think creatively, embrace change, and seek better ways to learn and lead.

Empowerment
We equip and trust individuals with the confidence, skills, and agency to lead and make a difference.

The Strategic Plan and Portrait of a Learner work hand in hand. The Strategic Plan identifies the priorities and commitments that will guide the district's work, while the Portrait of a Learner defines the skills, mindsets, and attributes we aspire to cultivate in every student. Together, they provide both the roadmap and the destination, ensuring that every decision, initiative, and investment supports student growth and success.

As you explore the visuals on these pages, you'll see both the district's strategic priorities and the learner-centered outcomes that inspired them. Together, they represent a shared vision for the future of District 25: preparing students not only for academic achievement, but for a lifetime of learning, leadership, and contribution.

To view our Portrait of a Learner, scan the code below.

TOGETHER TODAY TO

TRANSFORM TOMORROW

Our Goals & Strategies

Student Achievement:

Inspire and prepare every student for a future of purpose, opportunity, and success.

Curriculum Rigor, Relevance, and Consistency: Implement a standards-aligned curriculum that challenges students while ensuring consistent expectations and real-world relevance across all classrooms.

Personalized and Extended Learning Opportunities: Provide flexible learning pathways, enrichment, and support programs that adapt instruction to each student's needs and interests.

Special Education and Advanced Learning Systems: Strengthen systems that identify and support diverse learners by analyzing meaningful assessments and delivering targeted special education services and advanced academic opportunities.

Inclusive Learning Environment:

Cultivate welcoming school communities where every student and staff member feels safe, valued, and inspired to thrive.

Enhance a Consistent, Healthy climate: Implement a clear, school-wide behavior system that promotes positive relationships, consistent expectations, and a safe learning environment for all students.

Increase Student Engagement and Voice through Instructional Innovation & Enrichment: Enhance innovative teaching strategies and enrichment opportunities that actively involve students and deepen their learning experiences.

Refine our Multi-Tiered Student Support System: Strengthen the MTSS framework to ensure students receive timely, tiered academic and social-emotional supports based on their individual needs.

High-Quality Staff:

Build a culture where talented educators grow, lead, and inspire every learner.

Strengthen Staff Recruitment, Retention, Development, and Workforce Stability: Build a strong and stable workforce by attracting high-quality staff, supporting professional growth, and implementing strategies that improve retention.

Promote Staff Voice, Climate, and Transparent Communication: Foster a positive workplace culture by encouraging staff input, maintaining open communication, and ensuring transparency in decision-making.

Advance Staff Diversity, Well-Being, and Inclusive Workplace Culture: Cultivate a diverse, supportive, and inclusive work environment that prioritizes employee well-being and equitable opportunities for all staff.

Family & Community Partnerships:

Unite families, schools, and the community to ensure every student thrives.

Strengthen Communication, Transparency, Education, and Trust with Families & Community. Strive for clear and open communication to assure families feel informed, valued, and connected. When trust is strong, families are better able to support their child's learning and partner with schools.

Expand and Deepen Family Engagement: Actively involve families in their child's education. Creating flexible and inclusive ways to engage helps all families feel welcome and able to participate. Make expectation clear and provide tools and support.

Strengthen Community Partnerships to Support Student Success: Strong community partnerships provide extra support and opportunities for students and families. Partnering helps support the **whole child**—academically, socially, and emotionally.

Resources:

Build lasting stability through transparent, responsible stewardship.

Ensure Equitable Allocation of Resources and Support Services: Distribute resources and support services strategically to ensure all students and programs receive the support needed to succeed.

Strengthen Financial Planning, Prioritization, and Sustainability: Implement strategic budgeting and long-term financial planning to align spending with district priorities and maintain fiscal stability.

Strategically Integrate Technological Needs: Expand the thoughtful use of technology, including AI, while improving systems to support reliable, secure, and future-ready learning environments.

OUR GOALS & STRATEGIES
The five goals and strategies ensure the District's implementation of the plan. Each icon to the left is a visual representation of its goal. Each goal has a Strategic Plan Action Team made up of parents, community members, employees, and administrators. These teams will meet throughout the plan.

For a video recapping our Strategic Plan Refresh process, scan the code below.

Business & Finance: An Award Winning Department!

For Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance/ CSBO Stacey Mallek, District 25 is more than a workplace. It is home.

A graduate of Patton Elementary School and Thomas Middle School, Mallek grew up in Arlington Heights and now helps oversee the financial stewardship of the district that helped shape her.

"I was born here and raised here, and I feel that I have the same values as our community," Mallek said. "I feel like District 25 is my home."

That personal connection to the community has guided Mallek throughout her career and helped earn her one of the highest honors in school business leadership.

This year, Mallek was named the recipient of the Illinois Association of School Business Officials (IASBO) Ronald E. Everett Distinguished Service Award. Presented annually to a single school business official, the award recognizes exceptional leadership, service, and contributions to the school business profession across Illinois.

While the honor recognizes Mallek's individual accomplishments, she is quick to credit the work of the entire Business & Finance Department.

Together, the team manages the district's financial planning, budgeting, payroll, benefits, purchasing, transportation, and numerous operational functions that support students and staff every day. Their work helps ensure District 25 remains fiscally responsible while providing outstanding opportunities for students.

2026 RONALD E. EVERETT DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

33 CONSECUTIVE YEARS CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING

"My goal is to show my community I know exactly where their money is going and what we are doing with it," Mallek said.

That commitment to transparency is reflected in another remarkable achievement. This year, District 25 earned its 33rd consecutive Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO International).

The award recognizes school districts that go above and beyond standard reporting requirements by producing an annual comprehensive financial report that is accurate, transparent, and accessible to the public. While final numbers aren't out for this year just yet, last year District 25 was one of just 63 educational organizations in Illinois and 524 nationwide to receive the recognition.

Each year, Mallek and her team take the district's audited financial information, interpret the data, explain what it means, and publish the report on the District 25 website so community members can better understand how district resources are being managed.

Scan this code to learn more about district finances.

"When interpreting the District's financial information, I ask myself, 'If I'm a community member reading this, what do I want to know about these numbers?'" Mallek said. "Not everyone is comfortable calling the office and asking questions."

For Mallek, however, the work is about more than awards and recognition.

It is about giving back to the community that invested in her, serving the families she once sat beside in District 25 classrooms, and ensuring residents can trust that their schools are being supported with transparency, accountability, and care.

As District 25 continues to look toward the future, Mallek and her team remain committed to the values that have guided their work for decades: responsible stewardship, clear communication, and service to the community they proudly call home.



THE BOARD: front row: Deb Tranter, Member | 2025-29, Greg Scapillato, President | 2025-29, Dr. Anisha I. Jogee, Member | 2025-29, **back row:** Kevin Michael, Vice President | 2023-27, Melissa Buchberger, Member | 2025-29, Elizabeth Nierman, Secretary | 2023-27, Brian Cerniglia, Member | 2023-27



Connect With Us

Live Broadcast of Meetings: The District 25 Board of Education regular meetings are broadcast live via YouTube. The link to each regular meeting is available the week of the meeting on our website (www.sd25.org/BoardAgenda#BOELivestream).

bOARDBuzz Meeting Recap: After each meeting, District 25's Department of Communications compiles and emails a recap of the happenings at the Board of Education meeting. To view these recaps visit our website (www.sd25.org/CatchUpOnMeetings), or to sign up to receive these recaps, email our Head of Communications & Storytelling, Adam Harris (aharris@sd25.org).

Meeting Recordings: The meetings are archived on our website (www.sd25.org/CatchUpOnMeetings).

Email us: Sending an email to BoardFeedback@sd25.org will reach the entire Board and the Superintendent at once. The Board President will respond to emails and phone calls on behalf of the Board of Education.

Also, please keep an eye on our District calendar, District social media accounts, and District newsletters for in-person opportunities to connect with us throughout the school year!

The School Board is the guardian of the public trust and our board members take that job to heart. Through the policies they make and guidance they give the District, our School Board is essential in establishing the standards and philosophies by which District 25 is run.

Elected by the residents of Arlington Heights to ensure that District 25 is adding value to this Village, our board makes decisions and guides this District to be of service. District 25's Board of Education affirms the unique role of public education, whereby each community collectively pools its resources for the common good through the education of its students. Therefore, our Board seeks to uphold and improve public education for Arlington Heights.

To our District 25 community:

Hello, and welcome to summer! We hope you are making the most of the many wonderful opportunities this time of year brings. This may be time with friends and family, vacations, pool time, sports, concerts, or parades. Whatever summer means to you, enjoy!

In this year's annual message, I want to take the opportunity to pull back the curtain and share a bit about your Board of Education.

We are a team of dedicated, duly elected volunteers, comprised of both current and former D25 parents. We bring diverse skills, experiences, interests, and viewpoints together as a cohesive, focused governance team. In fact, your Board of Education has received the coveted School Board Governance Award from the Illinois Association of School Boards for the second consecutive time.

Our guiding principles are outlined in key documents available to the public: Board Policies, Board Protocols, and the recently refreshed District Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan. You can find all of these on the District 25 website at sd25.org.

There is one more key element to our governance: YOU!

On behalf of the Board, I invite you to engage with us in the way you prefer - come to a meeting, or reach out via any of the ways listed in the "Connect with Us" section on this page. Your voice is important to us, and your perspective is valued.

We are honored to do this work, grateful for the community's trust, and focused on providing responsive, responsible leadership as a Team of 8 in collaboration with our Superintendent, Dr. Brian Kaye.

Thank you, and enjoy summer!

- Greg Scapillato

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ADMINISTRATION

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Superintendent

Dr. Becky FitzPatrick
Asst. Superintendent of Student Learning

Jana Gach
Director of Food & Nutrition Services

Adam Harris
Head of Communications & Storytelling

Diane Kaffka
Asst. Superintendent of Student Services

Andrea Luessow
Director of Student Learning

Stacey Mallek
Asst. Superintendent for Business / CSBO

Kendra Perri
Asst. Superintendent for Personnel & Planning

Ryan Schulz
Director of Facilities Management

Sandy Voss
Director of Business

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Member

Dr. Anisha I. Jogee
Member

Deb Tranter
Member



Students at Greenbrier Elementary enjoy their sunny field day. Thanks as always to the parent/guardian volunteers.

WE ARE HIRING!

CROSSING GUARDS. FACILITIES TEAM. FOOD SERVICE EMPLOYEES. TEACHING ASSISTANTS. AND MORE!

Scan the code to learn more.