



Superintendent's Message

Ripon Area School District parents, students and staff teamed up to create a smooth start to the 2024-2025 school year. To help you stay informed on the progress of our continuous quality improvement (CQI) focus, this Tiger Update highlights the District's efforts in each of the School Board's four strategic areas:

Student Engagement & Learning

- Solid education in a healthy/safe environment (*RHS Best High Schools p. 1, Initial Student Data p. 1*)
- Provide support services to ensure student success (*Summer School 2024 p. 3, Free Breakfast p. 4*)

Service and Partnership

- Increase partnerships and satisfaction through CQI (*REF #RiponRoar p. 2, Distinguished Alumni p. 2, Friend of Public Schools p. 2, Spring Board Election p. 4*)

Human Resources

- Increase opportunities to build high quality staff (*Staff Surveys p. 2, Education Week p. 4, New Odyssey Principals p. 4*)

Finance and Operations

- Refine systems to find efficiencies (*Grants p. 2, Technology and Facilities Update p. 3, Enrollment p. 3*)

Priority areas are reported to the Board and monitored throughout the year. Thank you to everyone for setting the tone for a successful and exciting school year.

Respectfully Yours,

Dr. Mary Whitrock, Superintendent of Schools
Go Tigers!

National Best High School for 6th Year



Ripon High School has been ranked as a national and state Best High School for a sixth year by US News & World Report. National rankings are based on a school's performance on state-required tests, graduation, and how well students are prepared for college. State rankings are based on students' opportunity to take Advanced Placement coursework and exams. In the nation Ripon is ranked 4,887 out of 17,655 and in Wisconsin Ripon High School is rated 156 out of 462 schools.

Fall Achievement Data

As part of the District's continuous improvement work, the School Board receives student achievement data for Grades 3-8 in math and reading three times a year using iReady, an online assessment tool. The i-Ready Fall Assessment Data by Grade Level chart below shows Ripon students' (including Odyssey Virtual) achievement from last year to this year and then compares it to student scores across the nation for 2024. Ripon is above the 2024 national normed average at every grade level.

Reading: % of Students At or Above Grade Level				
Grade (Class)	Ripon 2023	Ripon 2024*	US 2024	US 2018
Gr. 3 (2034)	28	42 (+14)	39	46
Gr. 4 (2033)	45	46 (+1)	29	30
Gr. 5 (2032)	41	39 (-2)	29	32
Gr. 6 (2031)	44	40 (-4)	31	31
Gr. 7 (2030)	42	52 (+10)	34	37
Gr. 8 (2029)	50	47 (-3)	34	41

Math: % of Students At or Above Grade Level				
Grade (Class)	Ripon 2023	Ripon 2024*	US 2024	US 2018
Gr. 3 (2034)	25	24 (-1)	13	20
Gr. 4 (2033)	28	34 (+6)	21	33
Gr. 5 (2032)	30	34 (+4)	25	37
Gr. 6 (2031)	43	36 (-7)	26	33
Gr. 7 (2030)	51	39 (-12)	24	30
Gr. 8 (2029)	36	33 (-3)	21	30

* Same group of students from the fall last year



The Ripon High School Marching Band performing their Homecoming halftime show *The Music of Bruno Mars*.

Human Resources

New Employee 30 Day Survey

- 94% noted they are provided what they need to be successful**
- 88% feel they fit in well**
- 100% reported having a clear understanding of roles**

New employees appreciate: the weekly meetings; receiving answers to questions; and regular check-ins. They asked for continued communication about roles. New staff expressed gratitude for feeling supported.

Finance & Operations

Over \$982,000 in Grants

- \$76,713** Bipartisan Safer Communities Act Stronger Connections Grant
- \$100,000** New five-year 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant at Barlow Elementary
- \$410,053** IDEA - Special Education
- \$279,074** Title Grants (I - IV)
- \$13,421** Carl Perkins Grant
- \$3,330** Fresh Fruits & Vegetables Program

Service & Partnership

ROAR for Ripon!

The Ripon Education Foundation's online **#RiponROAR** campaign is **November 18 - 22**. Their goal is to have 234 donors which represents the number of staff currently serving our students.

riponeducationfoundation.org

Service & Partnership

Friend Of Public Schools

The Ripon Noon Kiwanis and the Early Bird Kiwanis Clubs are the 2024 Friends of Public Schools. Each club provides service and care for the children in the Ripon community. Recently, the two clubs partnered to raise funds and build an ADA-compliant all-inclusive playground with 43 features for children ages 5 to 12 at Riggs Park, adjacent to the Kiwanis Splash Pad. The playground opened in July 2024 and provides a safe place for children to play from sunrise to sunset. For more than a century, Kiwanis has created opportunities for children in Ripon to be curious, safe and healthy. They believe when you give a child the chance to learn, experience, dream, grow, succeed and thrive, great things can happen.



Superintendent Mary Whitrock presents the Friend of Public Schools Award to Ripon Noon Kiwanis member Gary Rodman (above) and Early Bird Kiwanis member David Schroeder (below).



Service & Partnership

Distinguished Alumni



Cory Pollesch is the 2024 Distinguished Alumni of Ripon High School. His career has been a blend of entrepreneurship and servant leadership, all driven by his belief in the importance of the trades.

Cory entered the workforce at his father's construction company following his graduation from Ripon High School in 1987. He attended Moraine Park Technical School and earned his Journeyman accreditation in 1991. In 1999 he started his own local construction business, Pollesch Construction. Cory has mentored several local youth, encouraging them to obtain educational hands-on training.

While growing his company, Cory started a non-profit organization that has given over \$200,000 to the Ripon and neighboring school districts. Cory's service as a Ripon Kiwanian and his role on the Oshkosh Foundation Board has further solidified his commitment to community welfare. Over the years, Cory and his company have been a pillar of support for Traded Treasures Community Food Pantry, assisting as needs arise, offering anonymous help to families, and quietly supporting teens in need in our community.

Student Engagement & Learning

Summer School 2024 Highlights

The **2024 Summer School program ran for five weeks from mid-June through mid-July**. A new user-friendly registration system was implemented with positive parent feedback. Classes were offered at all grade levels, as well as a two-week high school STEM camp in July and Credit Recovery which ran throughout the summer. The district-wide 4K - 12 student orientation days on August 29 and 30 count as summer school minutes and provide a smooth transition to the new school year.

Summer School Participation					
LOCATION	2024	2023	2022	2021	*2020
Barlow Park/Journey/BPC	157	139	154	178	164
Murray Park/Quest	199	230	200	163	100
Ripon Middle/Catalyst	228	203	122	110	181
Ripon High School	377	283	309	276	231
Swimming Lessons	389	363	309	425	—
Student FTE Equivalent for Revenue	73	70	68	72	42

*Virtual only due to school buildings being closed

Finance & Operations

Facility & Technology Summer Updates

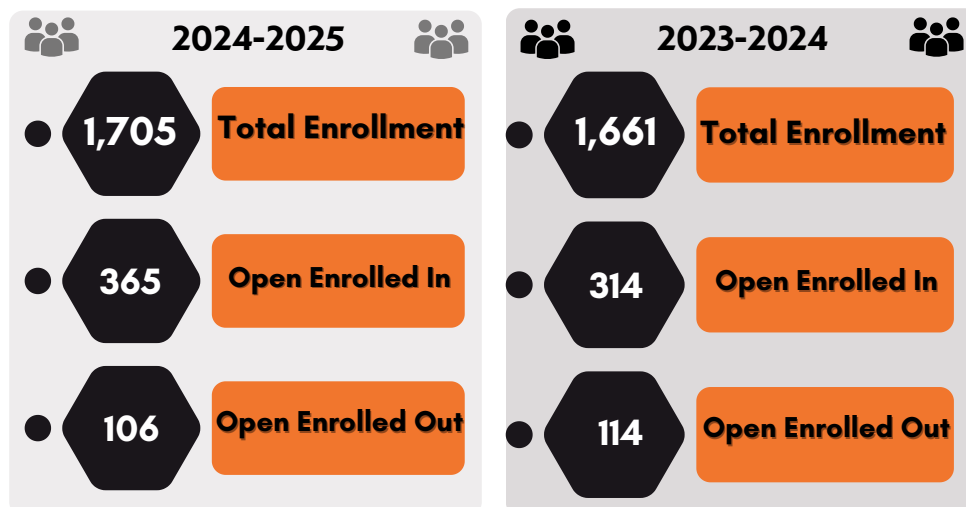
- Replaced devices for 300 students and 33 staff
- Chose Clever for single sign-on to apps
- Implemented Educlimber student data management system
- Enrolled in Cybersecurity Pilot Program
- Moved over 20 classrooms
- Added more cameras and vape sensors
- Blacktop/concrete sidewalk work
- Installed LED light panels and dimming in classrooms
- Installed Smart Boards in each middle school classroom
- Moved Crossroads to RHS site
- Opened Alternative Education program at former Crossroads site



Finance & Operations

Student Enrollment Comparisons

The District continues to gain more students through open enrollment than it loses. In September, districtwide student enrollment reached 1,705, marking an increase of 44 students compared to the previous year. This growth was primarily driven by higher enrollment in the in-person 4-year-old kindergarten program and at Odyssey Academy.



Student Engagement & Learning

7,800 Served Breakfast

Free breakfast continues to be offered to all students. The number of breakfasts served in September include: 2,865 at Barlow Park; 1,655 at Murray Park Quest; 1,135 at RMS and 2,155 at RHS. RHS numbers rose significantly compared to just 798 in September 2023. Changes to the morning advisory helped increase the total breakfasts served at the high school. The School Board approved using food service fund balance to continue to provide a nutritious breakfast option every morning.



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MISSION STATEMENT

Empowering learners, engaging community, enriching the world.

VISION STATEMENT

One of Wisconsin's finest school districts, fostering excellence for all through innovation.

ORGANIZATION VALUES

Integrity	Excellence
Commitment	Collaboration
Innovation	Kindness

POSTAL CUSTOMER



TIGER UPDATE EXCELLENCE THROUGH INNOVATION FALL 2024



Human Resources

Odyssey Welcomes New Principals



Vincent Propson
 Odyssey High School Principal

This school year the Odyssey Governance Council and Ripon School Board approved Vince Propson and Samantha Behnke to serve as principals of Odyssey Academy of Virtual Learning. Mr. Propson was the Ripon High School Assistant Principal and Athletic Director, he remains in both positions at 70% of his contract and added 30% as Odyssey High School Principal. The School Board approved Becki Baird as an assistant athletic director at 30% to work under the direction of Mr. Propson.



Samantha Behnke
 Odyssey Elem & MS Principal

Mrs. Behnke serves as the Odyssey Elementary and Middle School Principal at 70% with the remaining 30% as interventionist at the high school. Mrs. Behnke previously served as an instructional coach in Oshkosh.

"Mr. Propson and Mrs. Behnke both have reputations as outstanding educators and are prepared to lead Odyssey Academy of Virtual Learning to even greater success," stated Superintendent Whitrock.



Finance & Operations



St Wenceslaus Street updates have been completed by Ingalls Field. The field perimeter fence will be installed to complete the project.

Spring School Board Election

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

Incumbent Seats:

Betsy Heffernan
 Kelly Nielsen
 Gary Rodman

Deadline to declare candidacy
 January 7, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.



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