



Palos Heights School District 128

12809 S. McVicker Ave • Palos Heights, IL 60463
Phone: (708) 597-9040 • Fax: (708) 597 9089 • www.palos128.org

Merryl B. Brownlow, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Dear Palos Heights District 128 School Community,

After careful reflection, I am sharing my plan to retire at the conclusion of my contract in 2025-2026, marking seven years of service to this exceptional district. This has been a difficult decision because of the incredible people including the Board of Education, staff, students, families and community partners that make up this unbelievable school system. I have been so fortunate to feel the love and support of so many along the way.

Throughout my tenure, the district has steadfastly maintained a focus on what matters most – our children. We learned invaluable lessons together about the power of relationships with students, community, and colleagues. I have come to greatly appreciate the unique bonds this school community creates. During difficult times, this school community demonstrates remarkable support, flexibility and resilience, remaining solution-focused through any challenge that comes your way.

You have created a culture of belonging of which I could not be more proud to be a part of. It has been a true honor and most fulfilling experience to learn and grow as a person and professional throughout my time in this district. I have watched our district accomplish extraordinary things over the years we have been together including:

- Developing the Portrait of a Learner framework, emphasizing wellness, innovation, perseverance, communication, and citizenship - a framework that has become the north star and continues to inform school improvement planning and the decisions made on behalf of our students
- Completing comprehensive program reviews resulting in improved teaching and learning practices including English Language Arts K-8, Mathematics K-8, Science K-8, Social Studies 6-8, Library K-5 and STEM K-8
- Enhancing our MTSS system and strengthening our approach to meeting diverse student needs to provide appropriate supports
- Expanding extracurricular programming to help every child find their place
- Meeting the needs of our growing enrollment of over 150 students while addressing the needs of an increasingly diverse student population
- Expanding our preschool program and securing almost half a million dollars in grant funding to support its expansion
- Establishing long-range plans for facilities, finances, staffing, and teaching excellence

It has been my greatest privilege to serve alongside such dedicated educators who consistently prioritize student needs above all else. The foundation you've built will continue to support student success for generations to come. I have been so fortunate and grateful to have worked alongside an incredible Board of Education that truly lives our motto, *Where Children are First*. Their unwavering commitment has allowed me to support your many accomplishments. Palos Heights will always hold a special place in my heart as I move forward with what life's journey has in store. For now, I will continue to lead with the same passion, commitment and love that I brought to this role when I started. I look forward to finishing strong and continuing to celebrate your accomplishments during this last leg of my tenure here. The Board of Education will share its plans regarding the search for your next leader at its January 29, 2025 Board Meeting. Those plans will be shared with the full community in the Board of Education Meeting recap to be sent out following that meeting.

With deepest gratitude for the opportunity to serve,

INDIAN HILL
12800 S. Austin Ave
(708) 597-1285

CHIPPEWA
12425 S. Austin Ave
(708) 388-7260

NAVAJO HEIGHTS
12401 S. Oak Park Ave
(708) 385-3269

INDEPENDENCE JR. HIGH
6610 W. Highland Dr
(708) 448-0737