

High School Update

September 2026

Strategic Plan in Action

From the Principal's Desk

September has brought a strong and purposeful start to the 2026–27 school year at Rush City High School. With students and staff back in the building, one of our primary themes for this school year is **"The Power of Consistency."** We are intentionally focusing on setting clear, high, and consistent expectations across all areas of our school community, academic instruction, student behaviors, safety, and relationship-building.

To kick off the year, administration held dedicated grade-level class meetings with students in 7th–9th grade, 10th–11th grade, and our Senior class. These meetings provided a valuable opportunity to communicate building-wide expectations surrounding school safety, anti-bullying, our ROAR values, and academic support options. Above all, we emphasized that **relationships are #1 at RCHS**, and we actively encouraged every student to get involved in our wide variety of clubs, athletics, and co-curricular activities.

There is a fantastic momentum in the building as students and staff settle into daily routines and work together toward a successful school year.

ACHIEVE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Progress: Establishing consistent, high-leverage instructional strategies and strengthening school-wide learning frameworks.

- **The Power of Consistency in Tier 1 Instruction:** RCHS is maintaining an intentional focus on high-quality, Tier 1 instruction across all classrooms using the GANAG framework to support student learning and engagement.
- **Consistency in Academic Expectations:** Establishing clear building-wide standards for homework expectations and academic support systems to ensure every student has the tools needed to succeed.
- **High School Continuous Improvement Team (CIT):** The RCHS CIT met for its second session of the year to continue building team cohesion, defining core goals, and solidifying our strategic priorities for the 2026–27 school year.

FOSTER A POSITIVE AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Progress: Defining clear behavioral expectations, prioritizing safety, and deepening connections with students.

- **Tier 1 Behavioral Expectations:** Implementing consistent building-wide expectations to foster a respectful and focused learning environment, including standard hall pass practices, clear cell phone guidelines, and the "4 at the Door" initiative for daily student connection and greeting.
- **Safety & Emergency Preparedness:** Principal McDonough, Assistant Principal Oftedahl, and School Resource Officer (SRO) Deputy Michelle Lalonde met to review safety protocols and coordinate the district's emergency drill schedule.
- **Successful Emergency Drills:** RCHS conducted its first lockdown and fire drills of the school year. Students and staff executed all procedures exceptionally well, demonstrating efficiency and seriousness throughout.

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Progress: Partnering with regional organizations and empowering students through positive engagement.

- **Lakes Center Collaboration:** Met with Michelle Hooper from Lakes Center Youth & Family Services to explore and expand educational engagement opportunities for high school students.
- **Promoting Student Involvement:** Encouraging 100% student participation in extra-curricular activities, athletics, and clubs to foster belonging, school pride, and strong peer-to-adult relationships.

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Progress: Maintaining strong operational systems, staffing alignment, and smooth school start routines.

- **Smooth Operational Start:** Efficient execution of opening-week schedules, transportation routines, and administrative procedures across the secondary building.
- **Ongoing Safety & Operational Coordination:** Continued close alignment between building administration, district office staff, and local public safety partners to maintain a secure and well-managed facility.

LOOKING AHEAD

Things are moving smoothly as fall routines take hold:

- Continued implementation and monitoring of Tier 1 instructional and behavioral expectations.

- Ongoing work with the High School Continuous Improvement Team (CIT) to drive building goals.
- Fall athletics, activities, and school spirit events are in full swing.
- Planning for upcoming parent-teacher connections and student progress checkpoints.

We are proud of the strong, consistent foundation our staff and students have set in these first weeks, and we look forward to a rewarding and successful school year ahead.

Go Tigers!