



UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT 81 • CHARGER PRIDE

Expectation Night

A partnership evening for our Union 81 families

2026–2027 School Year

WELCOME

A Message from Your Superintendent



Dr. Nicole Borck

Superintendent

1

Student Teacher

Where it all began at Union 81

2

Classroom Teacher

8 Years spent teaching Union 81 students

3

Curriculum Director

9 Leading instruction district-wide

4

Superintendent

Proud to lead the district I grew up in

My entire career has been within Union 81 — this district isn't just where I work, it's a community I've grown up in and I'm proud to serve.

Meet Our Staff, By Team

Administration



Mrs. Walusek Mrs. Baldermann

Primary Team



Ms. Kamp Ms. Maheras Ms. Sisk

Intermediate Team



Ms. Langford Ms. Ramirez Ms. Bell

Middle School Team



Mrs. Meersman Ms. McLaughlin Ms. Steele

Interventionists



Mrs. Hoff Mrs. Calderon Mrs. Lang

Resource Team



Mrs. Paul Mrs. Wikert

Support Staff



Mrs. Mavrakis Mrs. Bene Ms. Mathews



Mrs. Chestnut Mr. Byerley

Specials



Mrs. Sinclair Ms. Petrauskas Mrs. Byerley



Ms. Kuhajda Mrs. Sinclair

What Stays the Same

Change can feel unsettling — so before anything else, here's what you can always count on from Union 81.



Still Completely Free

- ✓ No registration or school fees
- ✓ Free breakfast and lunch, every day
- ✓ Free field trips and activities
- ✓ Your family's tax rebate continues



What We Ask Families to Provide

- Uniforms
- School supplies

The only fee: a lost or damaged library book or school technology.

Staying Connected With Us



District Announcements

School Messenger

Our district-wide notification service. Union 81 uses School Messenger to reach families about school events, closings, emergencies, and attendance — sent by phone, email, and text.



Classroom Announcements

ClassDojo

Your child's teacher posts a Class Story update every Friday with the week ahead, and reaches out with a direct, personal messages throughout the year.

For everything else, visit our district website: www.union81.com

Getting To and From School



Zonar MyView

Track your child's bus with a real-time, map-based locator, and set up Alert Zones around your stop to get a notification when the bus is close. Download free from the App Store or Google Play. You'll also need your child's student ID number — available from Mrs. Briseno in the front office.

SCHOOL ACCESS CODE: LIN10234



Updated Car Rider Procedure

For student safety, all car riders will remain on the sidewalk rather than walking through a busy parking lot. At drop off and pick up, please pull all the way forward so we can keep the line moving safely, quickly and efficiently.

New this year: 3 buses, up from 2, for shorter routes and more reliable pickup times.

After School Care with Ivy League Kids



How the Program Works

- For students in grades K–8th
- On site after school until 6:00 PM
- Half days available too
- Flexible scheduling — pick the days that work for your family
- Balances each child's physical, intellectual, and social needs

ACTIVITIES



Sports & Recreation



Arts & Crafts



STEM Education



Snack



Homework Help

Register at ivyleaguekids.org • 815-464-1265 • Accepts the CCAP Child Care Assistance Program

Updated School-Wide Behavior Expectations

This year we’ve refreshed our school-wide behavior expectations so every classroom and common space shares the same consistent language and routines.

 **Be Kind**

 **Be Respectful**

 **Be Safe**

	Classroom	Hallway	Lunch Room	Recess / Outside
Be Kind	Use kind words	Hands to yourself	Speak kindly	Include everyone
Be Respectful	Treat others well	Use a quiet voice	Use an inside voice	Pick up after yourself
Be Safe	Use materials properly	Walking feet	Ask to leave; own food only	Stay in your area

How We Respond, Step by Step

Every classroom follows the same response ladder — but each step is delivered in a way that fits your child’s age and stage.

1



Verbal Warning

A private, one-on-one conversation — pitched to your child’s developmental level, never called out across the room.

2



Written Warning

A reflection sheet matched to the student’s age and understanding, used to name the behavior and plan next steps.

3



Parent Contact

The teacher reaches out through ClassDojo so you’re looped in early, not after the fact.

4



Office Referral

The teacher calls the office, and an administrator follows up and takes it from there.

The ladder stays consistent building-wide — the specific classroom tool teachers use (a clip chart, point system, and so on) is chosen at the classroom level.

Following the Uniform Policy Closely



What the Uniform Includes

- Navy blue or khaki pants, shorts, or skirt (no logos)
- Light blue collared polo, short or long sleeve
- Plain blue, black, or white socks
- All-black shoes — any gym shoe is fine, as long as it's black
- Sweaters/pullovers: Union Spirit Wear, or plain navy or black



Why It Matters

- Reduces distractions and social pressure around clothing
- Builds a consistent sense of school identity and pride

Starting in January: students will be required to wear tops and bottoms that follow the uniform policy, including black shoes.

SHOW YOUR SPIRIT

Spirit Wear & School Store



Spirit Wear

Union Spirit Wear sweaters and pullovers are an approved alternative to a plain navy or black layer over the uniform polo



School Store

Coming soon

Standards-Based Grading Rollout

LAST YEAR

- K–8** English Language Arts
- K–8** Social Studies
- K–5** Science

THIS YEAR — NEW

- K–8** Mathematics

Standards-based report cards move to math this year, joining ELA, Social Studies, and Science. Grades 6–8 science continues to use traditional percentage grades (A–F).

4 Exceeding

3 Meeting

2 Approaching

1 Developing

What a standard looks like: *“I can represent and solve problems involving multiplication and division.”* (Grade 3 Math)

Athletics & Activities

Activity	Grades	Season
Cross Country (Boys' & Girls')	5–8	Aug–Oct
Band	4–8	Sept–May
Student Council	5–8	Sept–May
Beta Club	6–8	Oct–May
Girls' Basketball	6–8	Sept–Nov
Boys' Basketball	6–8	Oct–Jan
Scholastic Bowl	6–8	Jan–Apr
Girls' Volleyball	6–8	Dec–Feb
Boys' Volleyball	6–8	Feb–Mar

All athletics require a sports physical, permission slip, and concussion form. Activities are subject to change based on enrollment.

Mrs. Wikert, our Athletic Director, has a table set up tonight — stop by with any questions about sports or clubs.

Clubs



Sweet Treats

Mrs. Lang & Mrs. Calderon

Weekly on Wednesdays, 2:30–3:30, rotating by grade level (K–5) across the year. Students learn to make a treat each meeting. Permission slips sent home.



Soccer Club

Mrs. Wikert

Weekly on Wednesday or Thursday, 2:30–3:30, rotating by grade level (3–8) across the year. Students learn soccer fundamentals and scrimmage. Permission slips sent home.



Art Club

Mrs. Sinclair

Weekly on Thursdays, 2:30–3:30, rotating by grade level (1–8) across the year. Students will explore different art forms. Permission slips sent home.



Bowling Club

Mrs. Lang

Weekly on Tuesdays, grades 5–8, March 9–May 18. Students head to Laraway Lanes in New Lenox to bowl for an hour.

Family Nights & Field Trips



Family Nights

We'll host family nights throughout the school year — a chance for our whole school community to connect outside the regular day.

COMING SOON

Dates aren't finalized yet. Once set, we'll share them through School Messenger and ClassDojo.



Field Trips

Trips this year will be chosen intentionally — each one closely tied to what students are already learning, deepening the curriculum.

COMING SOON

Grade-level trips aren't finalized. Trips are an extension of the school day — school rules apply, and written permission is always required.



EXCITING NEWS

A New Union 81 School Is Coming

Growth in our district means it's time for a new building — planned to open for the 2028–2029 school year.

2028–29

Planned Opening

300+

Students Served

\$0

Tax Increase Needed

The Details



Why Now

Our current building has no room left for more classrooms, and a newly approved 196-home subdivision (plus other nearby land) is expected to bring many more students.



Where

We're negotiating to purchase the home directly west of our new soccer field, so the new school keeps full access to the soccer field, playground, courts, and greenhouse.



Current Building

We're negotiating a substantial lease to S.O.W.I.C., our special education cooperative — meaning less travel for our students in that program, plus rental income for the district.



Funding

The ~\$25 million cost is financed through Debt Certificates and Alternate Revenue Bonds — no tax-increase referendum needed, and our Tax Rebate Surplus Program continues.

Classroom Presentations & Rotations



Elementary (K-5)

- Four classroom rotations
- 12 minutes per presentation
- 3 minutes to travel to the next room

Only seeing one teacher? Explore the greenhouse, STEM lab, and other spaces during your extra time.



Middle School (6-8)

Grade-level teams present together — no rotations.

6th Grade

6:00 PM

7th Grade

6:15 PM

8th Grade

6:30 PM



Food trucks open at 6:00 PM — *grab a treat!*



Have Questions Tonight?

Please come find me with anything we didn't cover — I'm happy to talk.

Dr. Nicole Borck, Superintendent



Thank You for Being Here

Together, we make Union 81 a place every family is proud to call home.

Find everything we covered tonight at www.union81.com

Dr. Nicole Borck, Superintendent • Union School District 81