

# EMPOWER

## CMHS STUDENTS RECEIVE SUPPORT THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS

On May 9, 2024, Crete-Monee High School celebrated its annual Scholarship Night, honoring the achievements of graduating seniors and the generosity of local businesses and organizations. The Class of 2024 received \$1,847,799 in scholarships, reflecting the community's commitment to academic success.

A highlight of the evening was the Witherite Law Group's presentation of 21 renewable four-year scholarships worth \$2,500 each, totaling \$190,000. Maya Hightower, a CMHS alumna and the firm's Director of Community Relations, emphasized the importance of supporting students' higher education pursuits. The district also launched the Educators Rising Honors Society and partnered with the Golden Apple Scholars Program to support future educators. Principal Lamont Holifield expressed pride in the Class of 2024, acknowledging their hard work and bright futures.

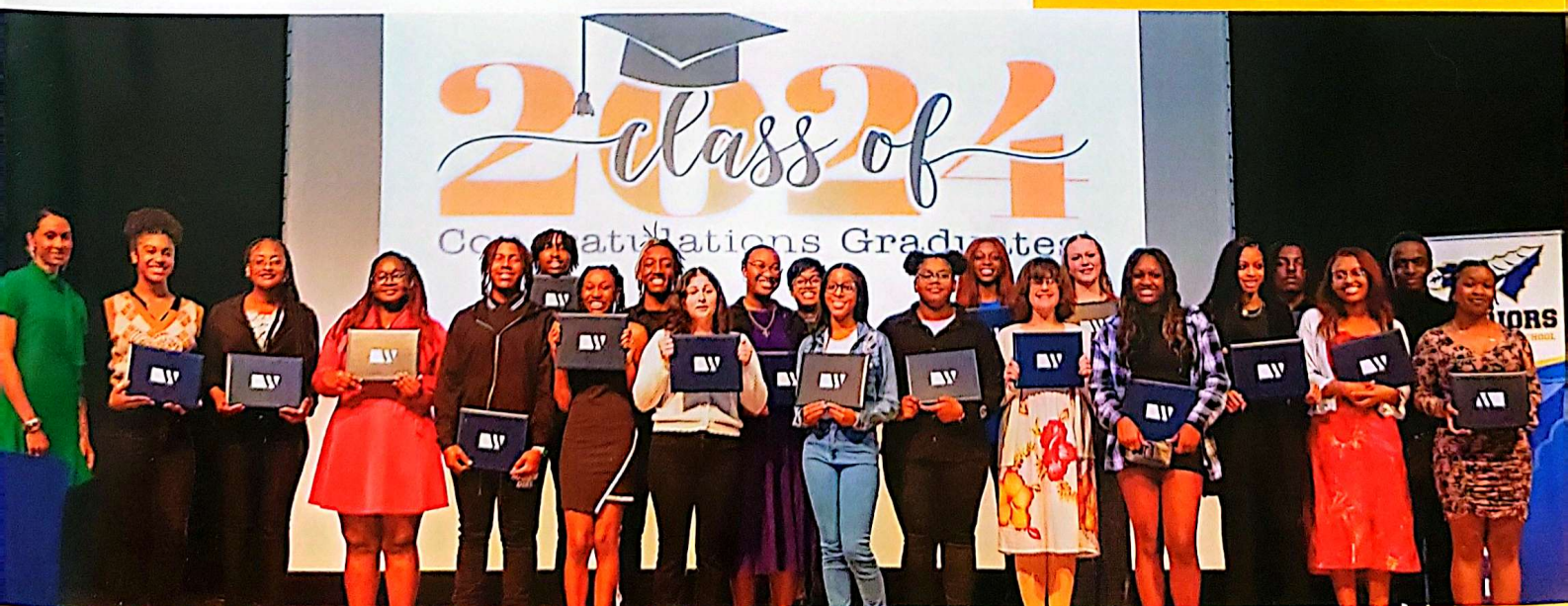
Alumnus Amon Jamal Nickerson awarded ten students \$2,500 renewable scholarships, with an additional \$3,000 first payment, totaling a \$15,000 investment. Nickerson and Hightower received Alumni of the Year Awards on June 3, 2024.

Gina Brown, grandmother of Ethan McCall (CMHS Class of 2023), created the Ethan McCall Driver Education Assistance Program to help students afford driver's education. Brown was honored at the Student Awards Ceremony and pledged to continue funding the initiative annually.

We congratulate all scholarship recipients and wish the graduating seniors continued success!

### Special thanks to local organizations for their scholarship contributions, including:

- Community Block Club of University Park
- Crete Lions Club
- Crete Masonic Lodge
- Crete-Monee Education Association
- Crete-Monee Warrior Boosters
- Crete Woman's Club
- Jim Becker Memorial
- Will County Farm Bureau
- Will County Soil & Water
- Witherite Law Group
- Village of University Park





# NEWSLETTER

## CRETE-MONEE SD 201-U



### IMPORTANT DATES

**AUGUST 6-8**  
NEW STUDENT KINDERGARTEN SCREENINGS AT ELC

**AUGUST 10**  
SUPPORT DAY, 9 AM - 12 PM AT CMHS FIELDHOUSE

**AUGUST 21**  
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (GRADES 1-9)

**AUGUST 23**  
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (K & 10-12)

**AUGUST 26**  
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL (PREK)

*Unity Starts With "U"*

### Message from Dr. Kara Coglianese, Superintendent



I am delighted to serve each of you again as we embark on the 2024-2025 school year. It is with great joy and anticipation to welcome students and staff back to continue our educational commitment at Crete-Monee SD 201-U.

We wrapped up our previous strategic plan, achieving six key goals and strategies to prepare our students for the future. This year, we are building on that strong foundation with our new 2024-2028 district strategic plan, which will guide our priorities and vision for the future. Our plan will be the driving force on key areas and initiatives, ranging from academics to community engagement.

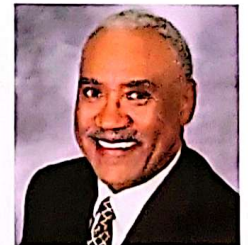
As you read more about the accomplishments of our district, students, staff, and community in the upcoming pages, I invite you to engage and celebrate our schools and district's accomplishments. Together, we will create a community that engages, empowers, and positively impacts each other.

Dr. Kara Coglianese  
Superintendent



### A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

As we embark on a new academic year, we are excited and committed to providing the best educational experience for every student in our district. Over the past few months, we have been diligently working on several initiatives. We have completed our new district strategic plan, which will guide us until 2028, continued education through summer school, upgraded our facilities, and prepared for another successful school year.



I am also excited to share that the Illinois State Board of Education has selected our district to participate in the new Pre-to-K Project. We are one of three districts in the State that is taking part in this wonderful initiative promoting developmentally appropriate and evidence-based practices while building an equitable and sustainable continuum of learning and well-being across the early years from Preschool to Kindergarten and beyond. The main goal is to provide a quality transition to Kindergarten.

We deeply appreciate your ongoing support and look forward to working together to make our district the best place to raise and nurture our children and community. We continue our motto: Unity Starts with "U"!

Yours in Service,  
Maurice Brown

### MONEE EDUCATION CENTER (MEC) BUILDING TO BE SOLD

On January 30, 2024, Crete-Monee School District 201-U announced a public hearing to discuss the closure of Monee Education Center (MEC) at 5154 W. Main St. in Monee. The decision, set for on or around July 1, 2024, was open for public comments during three separate hearings.



Students and staff moved to the new south wing at Crete-Monee High School on January 8, 2024, with their last day at MEC on December 21, 2023. MEC previously served as a therapeutic environment for middle and high school students, with 31 students enrolled at the time of its closing. These students are now part of Crete-Monee High School's Bridges program.

The district decided to close MEC and invest in an addition at the high school due to health, life, and safety violations cited at the MEC property. On April 16, 2024, during the Committee of the Whole meeting, the Board of Education discussed the sale of the building and the use of the proceeds. Two options were presented, and the district is still reviewing its options, aiming to sell the property by this fall.