



FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL NEWSLETTER • 2026

Welcome Back — What a Day!



A Message to Our Entire School Community

 FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

A Note From Our CEO

What an incredible first day! Walking through our hallways this morning, I was filled with such pride and joy seeing the energy, laughter, and enthusiasm radiating from every corner of our schools. To our students — whether you are returning with familiar faces or stepping through our doors for the very first time — welcome home. You are the heart of everything we do here, and today reminded me exactly why this work matters so much. Carry yourselves with pride, dress for success (it matters), and always get your academic hustle on. That is the expectation.

To our teachers, administrators, and support staff: none of what happened today would have been possible without your tireless dedication. The days of preparation, the early mornings, the careful planning — it all showed. Our school community is strong because of the extraordinary people who show up every single day ready to give their best, even when it is challenging. And to our parents and families, thank you for trusting us with your most precious gifts and allowing us to be part of your child's journey. Your partnership is what truly makes this a community.

As we look ahead at the year before us, I am filled with nothing but optimism. There will be challenges, of course — that's how growth happens (growth doesn't happen when you're comfortable) — but I know with absolute confidence that together, we are capable of something truly remarkable. Let's make this our best year yet. Let's celebrate every milestone, lift each other up through every hard moment, and never lose sight of the joy that brought us all here today. I am here for you and I am cheering for you all the way to make Irvington great.

Shoutouts to Our Amazing Community

As we reflect on an incredible first day, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to every member of our school community. Your dedication, hard work, and vibrant spirit make our school a truly special place.



To Our Teachers

Thank you for your incredible preparation, from meticulously organizing classrooms to crafting engaging lesson plans. Your warm welcomes made every student feel valued and excited to learn. I saw teachers who set their rooms up for collaborative learning and this makes my heart smile! Keep at it! You got this!



To Our Administrators & Staff

A huge shoutout for keeping everything running smoothly behind the scenes. Your tireless efforts ensure a safe, organized, and supportive environment for all of us. Irvington is blessed to have such careful, knowledgeable, and steadfast leaders.



To Our Students

Your courage in embracing new beginnings, your boundless curiosity, and your fantastic attitudes lit up our hallways today. We are so proud of each and every one of you! Always carry yourselves with pride in your appearance. How you present yourself matters in this world and Irvington is the training ground for adulthood.



To Our Parents & Families

We deeply appreciate your unwavering support, trust, and invaluable partnership. Together, we are building a strong foundation for our children's success and well-being. I humbly ask for your support and engagement as the school system embraces some changes out of love for our students and community. If you have questions or concerns, please email your school leadership. If you cannot get a response I can be reached at rmaldonado@ics-charter.org.

What's Coming Up

Keep an eye on these important upcoming dates and events as we kick off the new school year.

August 26th, 2026

6pm Governing Board meeting @ IPA

September 15th, 2026

Meet the CEO and CAO Town Hall @
ICES cafetorium @ 5:30pm: Feedback
forum

October 5-9, 2026

Fall Break Week

September 7th, 2026

No School in observance of Labor Day

October 2, 2026

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Here's to an Amazing Year Ahead! 🎉

Thank you to every single person who made today so special. Whether you're a student finding your seat for the first time, a teacher who stayed late to prepare, a parent who packed that perfect lunch, or a staff member who made sure everything ran smoothly — you are the reason these schools are extraordinary. We can't wait to see what this year brings. I want to leave you with this tidbit that I read last night as I was perusing the internet looking for ideas that set Irvington apart from all other school communities: **Love cannot exist without expectations and accountability.**

All of us, including adults, need to hold ourselves accountable to one another. Otherwise, the relationship you have with your loved ones isn't symbiotic, it's one-sided. Those types of relationships can be toxic and destructive. Let's uplift one another by supporting each other in our endeavors to grow as people. That love language looks different for everyone and I encourage all of us to exercise the ways we respect and care for one another out loud. E.g. my love language is leading and helping those I lead by encouraging innovation and empowering everyone to set personal and professional boundaries for the sake of the community we live in (i.e. following rules, but advocating for oneself when it is appropriate).

I am extremely proud to be a Raven and I am eager to receive feedback. We will be sending out surveys soon to all stakeholders, including students.

Together, we are the Irvington Way! Go Ravens! Have a wonderful and successful school year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Maldonado (Dr. M)

