

PROCLAMATION

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK AND INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENTS AT OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL & FENWICK HIGH SCHOOL

WHEREAS the American Field Service was formed in 1914 in France, with the mission of supporting injured soldiers during World War I by operating a civilian ambulance corps; and

WHEREAS this mission continued in 1941–1945, supporting injured soldiers during World War II; and

WHEREAS in 1947, the American Field Service—now AFS–USA—transformed its mission from wartime aid to intercultural exchange, promoting peace and understanding across nations; and

WHEREAS intercultural exchange and the hosting of international students have become the central means of advancing this mission; and

WHEREAS AFS–USA places students annually with host families in Oak Park and River Forest as part of a global network that welcomes thousands of students worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the week once known as International Education Week (IEW) has been redesignated by AFS as Global Learning Week (GLW), continuing the celebration of intercultural learning and exchange, and will be observed November 17–21, 2025; and

WHEREAS, international education and exchange strengthen democracy by fostering mutual understanding and global connections that enrich our schools and communities; and

WHEREAS, AFS has placed just under 1,000 students across the United States this academic year, with the Greater Chicago Area Team placing 47 students—an increase of nearly 50% from last year—leading the nation in placements; and

WHEREAS, within Oak Park, six international students are attending Oak Park and River Forest High School (five with AFS and one through another program), and two AFS students are studying at Fenwick High School, residing in nearby Berwyn and Cicero; and

WHEREAS, one OPRF student recently returned home from a full-year AFS scholarship in Indonesia, and five visiting Fenwick students—including two hosted in Oak Park—completed a two-week exchange this past October; and

WHEREAS, Oak Park's strong participation this year marks a record for the local team and a point of community pride, reflecting the Village's enduring commitment to global connection and cultural exchange.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Vicki Scaman, President of the Oak Park Village Board, hereby proclaim **November 17–21, 2025, as Global Learning Week in Oak Park**, a time to celebrate the impact of international education and to honor the families and students who bring the world to our Village.

DATED this 11th day of November 2025.

Vicki Scaman,
Village President

ATTEST

Christina M. Waters,
Village Clerk