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Cedar Rapids Community School District

Victory Bell Rings at Washington



At Washington High School, there's a long-standing tradition: when a team or individual wins a State Title, they head to the Washington courtyard to ring the victory bell in celebration. This Thursday morning was no exception, as the bell resounded loudly, marking Washington junior Isla Hamilton's triumph in the solo mime category of the State Speech Competition.

In this category, performers have five minutes to convey a story solely through facial expressions and movement. Hamilton's piece, titled "*What Was I Made For*?" explores the journey of a high school upperclassman as they look back on their memories and contemplate post-graduation plans, college choices, and professions as they leave childhood and becomes an adult. Hamilton's performance took top honors at the competition, winning her the title and a "State Award" banner.

"*I feel like I am doing good things for my school and representing Washington and caring for the legacy my classmates have put in place before me*," adds Hamilton.

Congratulations on this well-deserved honor!

Black History Month

CRCSD Board Member Awarded at Iowa State House



As Black History Month came to a close this week, Board of Education Director Nancy Humbles was honored at the Iowa State Capitol for her contributions to education and community engagement. State representatives Art Staed and Tracy Ehert commended Humble's accomplishments on the capital floor. They highlighted Humbles' longstanding commitment to CRCSD students and local community organizations. They also highlighted her historic election in 2009, becoming the first African American member of the Cedar Rapids Community School District's school board.

Rep. Staed described Humbles as a compassionate and honest individual with a strong work ethic, unafraid to tackle challenging tasks. Throughout her life, Nancy has dedicated

herself to supporting and empowering underserved populations. She advocates for others' success and has made a lasting impact on her community.

“Our lives are richer because of the work that Nancy has done to integrate diversity in our community, and I am thankful for her work and dedication to helping others,” expressed Rep.Tracy Ehert.

Congratulations to Director Humbles on this honor.

5th Graders Share Insights with High School Peers



As part of their Black History Month celebrations, 5th graders at Wright Elementary School had the opportunity to learn about the rich history and significance of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Each student researched an HBCU of their choice and then created a trifold power board to showcase their findings.

With help from Washington’s Black Student Union and school counselors, the 5th graders created a pop-up exhibit with their HBCU displays in the halls of Washington High School, where they become ambassadors for their institutions. They shared what they had learned with several classes of Washington students. Some even handed out brochures, wristbands, and stickers that their college or university had sent them. Some students were excited to hear that a few high school students were already planning to attend their HBCU when they graduated.

Wright's 5th-grade teacher, Candra Brnes, was the driving force behind the project. She wanted to teach her students about the significance of HBCUs and expose the High School students to the different opportunities offered by HBCUs. Something she said she was not aware of when she graduated high school.

Event Photos

RCCBA Students Experience Diversity and Inclusion



Recently, over 100 student leaders from Roosevelt Creative Corridor Business Academy (RCCBA) had the opportunity to travel to Camp Tanager for an afternoon of learning and collaboration. This experience was possible through a partnership with Tanager Place and their "Diverse Voices" series.

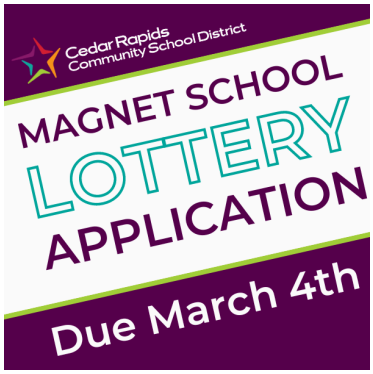
Upon arrival, students were treated to lunch, followed by a compelling keynote address from Dr. Erika L. McDowell, a nationally renowned leader in Diversity and Inclusion. Dr. McDowell’s insights helped to set the tone for the engaging afternoon ahead. For the remainder of the day, students participated in workshop sessions, exploring the top of “belonging.” They engaged in reflective exercises, drawing from their personal experiences, to create a plan to help foster a more inclusive environment in their school. Students are eager to implement their plan, which includes initiatives such as peer mentorship programs, mediation opportunities, more access to a diverse assortment of clubs and organizations, and additional training around cultural competence.

Justin Blitz, Principal at RCCBA, was also excited about these students’ potential to drive positive change in the school. “*RCCBA leadership and staff are confident that these*

students will be a catalyst for change and a model for student leadership and empowerment," shared Blitz.

News and Updates

Magnet School Lottery Closes March 4th



We wanted to remind families that the deadline to apply to the Magnet School Lottery for the next school year (2024-2025) is Monday, March 4th. We encourage all families to explore the six magnet schools CRCSD offers. Magnet schools offer a unique and innovative learning experience focused around a specific theme - sustainability, S.T.E.A.M., leadership, business, and community impact - that can nurture a student's interests, talents, and career goals. For more information about CRCSD magnet schools and to submit a lottery application, visit crschools.us/magnet.

New Art Exhibit on Display



CRCSD art educators celebrated the diversity within our buildings and the district and their personal experiences in a new art exhibit titled "Unity and Diversity." All artwork in the exhibit began on a wooden board, meant to represent some of the shared hardships they have overcome over the last few years. The jute cord in each piece represents the unifying thread that connects them all - their continued drive to share the value of making, presenting, connecting, and responding to visual art with their students and the community.

"*We had a great time working together to create this exhibit and modeling for our students the standards we teach them every day*," said Washington art teacher Erin Ennis.

The exhibit is currently on display in the David L. Benson Gallery at CRCSD Educational Leadership and Support Center. Click here to see exhibit photos.

Jefferson Show Choir Competition

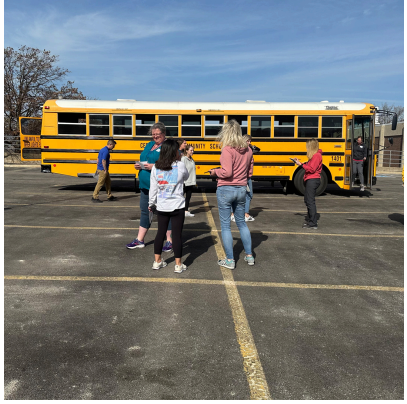


Jefferson High School is gearing up for an action-packed weekend as they host the Jefferson Show Choir Invitational. Throughout the weekend, schools from around the area will be competing for the top honors. Friday evening will showcase the talents of middle school groups, while Saturday will feature performances from high school show choirs. Best of luck to all of the CRCSD schools competing.

Training For a Bus Emergency

Even though students and teachers had no school on Monday, it didn't mean the learning stopped. Several school nurses and members of the district's transportation department had the opportunity to participate in a simulated mass-casualty incident with area emergency responders. The simulation played out in a parking lot at Kirkwood Community

College and depicted a school bus accident with several injuries and casualties. They even had volunteers play the crash ”victims” who had sustained varying injuries.



The program's goal was to train personnel on how to respond in an emergency by giving participants hands-on experience. The simulations have many moving parts, helping to test participant’s communication, multi-agency coordination, patient triage, and movement to medical facilities. While CRCSD hopes we never have an incident like this occurs, we believe participating in training like this helps staff hone their skills so they can be better prepared if we do.

MVC Conference Basketball Honors

The Mississippi Valley Conference recently released its list of all-conference honors for high school boys basketball. CRCSD would like to congratulate all of our district athletes who have been chosen for the MVC all-conference teams. We would also like to commend Kennedy High School boys’ basketball coach Jon McKowen for receiving the “Coach of the Year” honors.

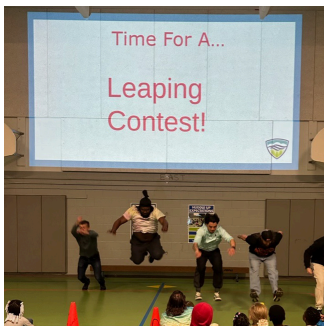


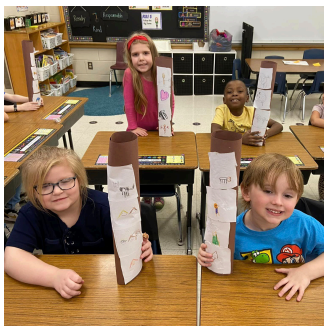
Sports Honors

PPEL - Did You Know?

Just like how you maintain your home, our school facilities also need attention and resources to keep them maintained and safe. The Physical Plant and Equipment Levy, or PPEL for short, is how the district finances the maintenance, upkeep, and repairs of our facilities and vehicles. This vital revenue source is also used to enhance school safety and make ADA upgrades. CRCSD has been using PPEL for over 50 years, thanks to the community’s continued support. But, our current voter-approved PPEL is set to expire in 2025, so we will be asking voters in September to continue it for another 10 years. For more information on PPEL and the projects it has funded in our buildings, click here.

Glance Around The District







During a Thursday assembly, Cedar River Academy students learned and celebrated what is “Leap Year.” They also held a “leaping contest” to honor the day.

Kindergarteners at Hiawatha Elementary made their own totem poles as part of their social studies lessons on Native Americans.

Teachers and students from McKinley STEAM Academy opted for outdoor classrooms to capitalize on the outstanding weather earlier this week, doing their lessons at tables outside the school.



Mount Mercy students hosted a basketball clinic for 4th & 5th graders at Garfield Elementary, where they learned the basics of playing basketball.



Kennedy’s boys’ basketball team is headed back to the state tournament. They will take on Dallas Center-Grimes in the quarterfinals on March 6th.



3D printers were humming along this week at Arthur Elementary School. The 3rd grader students got the opportunity to print keychains they designed during a library lesson.



5th graders at Johnson STEAM Academy participated in the 2024 Build Iowa Design Challenge, and then the rest of the school voted on the homes they thought were the safest and the most creative.



Students at City View had the opportunity to visit Travero in Fairfax as part of their community discovery initiative. During the visit, students learned about Travero’s logistics role in supply chain management.



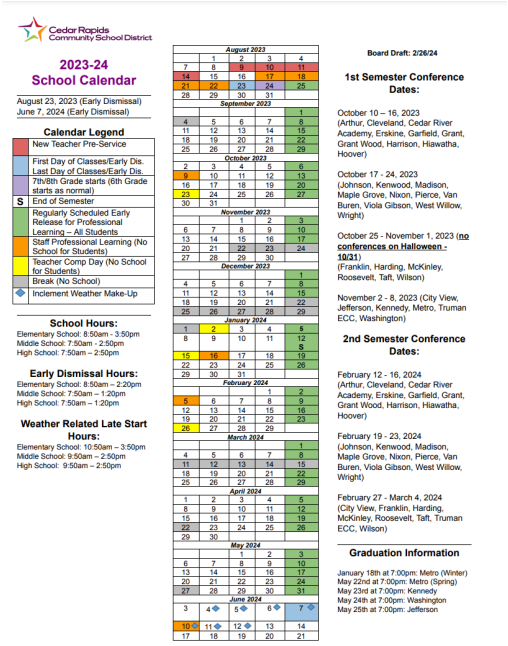
Metro High School’s Black Student Union had the opportunity to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly renovated African American Museum of Iowa. Superintendent Dr. Grover also spoke at the event.

CRCSD In the News

In case you missed it, here are recent items in the news media about or of interest to students, teachers, and parents of Cedar Rapids Community School District.

- **Gazette:** Unsung Heroes celebrates Black Iowan trailblazers in education, music
- **Gazette:** Cedar Rapids kids celebrated for kindness, leadership with ‘14 Under 14’ awards
- **KGAN:** Students strike a bond: Bowling event creates a lane of joy for kids with disabilities

District Calendars



Cedar Rapids Community School District

2023-24 School Calendar

August 23, 2023 (Early Dismissal)
June 7, 2024 (Early Dismissal)

Calendar Legend

- New Teacher Pre-Service
- First Day of Classes/Early Dis.
- Last Day of Classes/Early Dis.
- 7th/8th Grade starts (6th Grade starts as normal)
- S End of Semester
- Regularly Scheduled Early Release for Professional Learning – All Students
- Staff Professional Learning (No School for Students)
- Teacher Comp Day (No School for Students)
- Break (No School)
- Inclement Weather Make-Up

School Hours:
Elementary School: 8:50am - 3:50pm
Middle School: 7:50am - 2:50pm
High School: 7:50am – 2:50pm

Early Dismissal Hours:
Elementary School: 8:50am – 2:20pm
Middle School: 7:50am – 1:20pm
High School: 7:50am – 1:20pm

Weather Related Late Start Hours:
Elementary School: 10:50am – 3:50pm
Middle School: 9:50am – 2:50pm
High School: 9:50am – 2:50pm

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June 2024

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Board Draft: 2/26/24

1st Semester Conference Dates:

October 10 – 16, 2023 (Arthur, Cleveland, Cedar River Academy, Erskine, Garfield, Grant, Grant Wood, Harrison, Hiawatha, Hoover)

October 17 - 24, 2023 (Johnson, Kenwood, Madison, Maple Grove, Nixon, Pierce, Van Buren, Viola Gibson, West Willow, Wright)

October 25 - November 1, 2023 (**no conferences on Halloween - 10/31**) (Franklin, Harding, McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, Wilson)

November 2 - 8, 2023 (City View, Jefferson, Kennedy, Metro, Truman ECC, Washington)

2nd Semester Conference Dates:

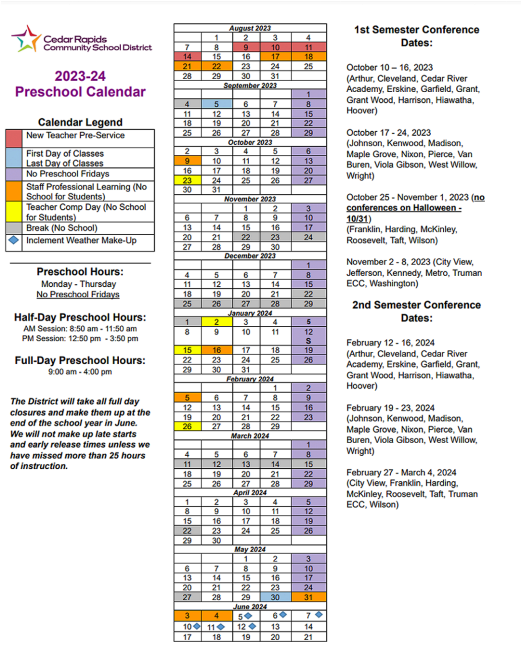
February 12 - 16, 2024 (Arthur, Cleveland, Cedar River Academy, Erskine, Garfield, Grant, Grant Wood, Harrison, Hiawatha, Hoover)

February 19 - 23, 2024 (Johnson, Kenwood, Madison, Maple Grove, Nixon, Pierce, Van Buren, Viola Gibson, West Willow, Wright)

February 27 - March 4, 2024 (City View, Franklin, Harding, McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft, Truman ECC, Wilson)

Graduation Information

January 18th at 7:00pm: Metro (Winter)
May 22nd at 7:00pm: Metro (Spring)
May 23rd at 7:00pm: Kennedy
May 24th at 7:00pm: Washington
May 25th at 7:00pm: Jefferson



Cedar Rapids Community School District

2023-24 Preschool Calendar

Calendar Legend

- New Teacher Pre-Service
- First Day of Classes
- Last Day of Classes
- No Preschool Fridays
- Staff Professional Learning (No School for Students)
- Teacher Comp Day (No School for Students)
- Break (No School)
- Inclement Weather Make-Up

Preschool Hours:
Monday - Thursday
No Preschool Fridays

Half-Day Preschool Hours:
AM Session: 8:50 am - 11:50 am
PM Session: 12:50 pm - 3:50 pm

Full-Day Preschool Hours:
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

The District will take all full day closures and make them up at the end of the school year in June. We will not make up late starts and early release times unless we have missed more than 25 hours of instruction.

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[2023-24 School Calendar]

[2023-24 Preschool Calendar]

Visit our Calendar page

[Jefferson High School Activities Calendar]

[Kennedy High School Activities Calendar]

[Washington High School Activities Calendar]

CRCSD is hiring! [View open positions and apply here.]

[Learn more about breakfast and lunch meals here.]

[View your school's virtual backpack]

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Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Cedar Rapids Community School District not to discriminate in educational programs and/or activities on the basis of race, creed, color, gender, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity, socioeconomic status, national origin, religion, disability, age (except for permitting/prohibiting

students to engage in certain activities) or genetic information and in employment opportunities on the basis of age, race, creed, color, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, disability or genetic information. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact Darius Ballard, Chief of Human Resources, Educational Leadership and Support Center, 2500 Edgewood Rd NW, Cedar Rapids, IA, (319) 558-2000.

March 1, 2024

Cedar Rapids Community School District | 2500 Edgewood Dr NW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52405

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