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Future Ready. Today.

Cedar Rapids Community School District

Students Honors

Kennedy Basketball Playing for the Title



This week, the Kennedy High School boy's basketball team has been competing in the state tournament in Des Moines. Kennedy went undefeated in their regular season games, only the second time in their 56-year history. The Cougars won their state quarterfinal matchup 66-45 over Dallas Center-Grimes on Wednesday, redeeming themselves from last year's tournament outcome. Advancing to the semifinal, they faced Ankeny on Thursday evening. After a hard-fought battle, the team emerged victorious with a 63-51 win.

Tonight at 7:00 PM, the team will battle West Des Moines Valley in the championship game, marking Kennedy's first appearance in the finals in 35 years. Fans attending the game in Des Moines can purchase tickets online and are encouraged to participate in the "white out" by wearing white tees. For those unable to attend in person, the game will be broadcast live on Dabl (Mediacom channel 121, ImOn channel 717) or available for streaming on the Iowa High School Sports Network website or app for a fee. Go Cougars!

State Academic Decathlon Success



Last weekend, teams from Jefferson, Kennedy, and Washington High Schools competed in the State Academic Decathlon, showcasing their hard work and intellect. Each team emerged victorious, winning several medals and ready to celebrate their accomplishments.

For those unfamiliar with the Academic Decathlon, these competitions test students in ten areas: art, economics, essay, interviewing, literature, mathematics, social science, science, speech, and music. All questions are centered around a common theme. This year's theme is "Technology and Humanity." All team members must participate in all ten events, which include multiple-choice tests, speeches, interviews, and essays. Preparation for this rigorous competition begins in August and includes weekly study sessions throughout the year, totaling an estimated 600-800 hours of studying.

Kennedy's Academic Decathlon team secured 2nd place overall in the state competition, marking their best result in over five years. Team members also walked away with gold medals in the math, speech, and music categories. This achievement earned them the opportunity to participate in the online National Academic Decathlon Competition in April.

Kennedy's team includes Tori Paga, Charity Oduor, Samuel Sanders-Licher, Malick Sogur, Sarah Martin Trainor, Hayley Faust, Sophie Cobert, Katie Hubbs, and CJ FitzPatrick.

Washington High School made an impressive return to the competition after not competing since 2020 and earned 4th place in their division. Individual team members also brought home gold medals in the interview, literature, and Overall Scholastic Alternate categories. Washington was also invited to compete in the online National Academic Decathlon Competition. Members of Washington's team are Amaris McFarland, Annika Perez, Courtney Willis, Gabrielle Moffat, Kaydance Barnes, Preston Longwisch, Reagan Stock, Rya McFarland, and Shelby Parmer.

However, it was Jefferson High School's team who stole the top honors, clinching the state championship. The team not only received 50 out of the 90 individual medals but also claimed 8 out of 9 overall individual awards. Sophomore Avery Murray also emerged as the highest scorer in the state. This win marks Jefferson's 24th consecutive state academic decathlon title. The team moves on to the in-person National Academic Decathlon Competition in Pittsburgh in April. Jefferson Team members include Joseph Heeren, Sydney Proctor, Avery Murray, Ethan Caton, Ali Hardy, Tristan Cassady, Ian Shanstrom, Finlay Kelley, Killian Schlotfelt, and Kelly Morgan.

Congratulations to all of our teams, and best of luck at the Nationals!



Kennedy Jazz Band

For the first time in school history, the Kennedy High School Jazz Band has qualified for the Iowa Jazz Championship! This esteemed recognition comes after the ensemble secured second place in the NEIBA district competition over the weekend. The annual Iowa Jazz Championships showcases 60 of the state's top high school jazz ensembles vying for top honors and the state title. The championship competition will take place on April 2nd at Iowa State University. Tickets for the event are available for purchase online. Congratulations to Director Stephanie Williamson and all the talented student musicians on this remarkable achievement!



Academics

Career and College Academies & Pathways Overview



The Cedar Rapids Community School District announced on March 1, 2024, during the all high school staff professional development session at Washington High School, a significant step in our commitment to student success and helping every student be future-ready. The district is looking to introduce college and career academies and pathways into our high schools. These programs will launch in Fall 2025 with freshman academies and then complete career academies and pathways for all high school grades in Fall 2026.

Designed to equip students with essential skills for today's workforce, these innovative programs offer specialized, career-focused education to provide students with a clear path to success, whether they choose immediate employment or further education after graduation. In academies, a team of teachers will collaborate to provide a specialized career-focused curriculum for all subjects. For pathways, on the other hand, students can add career-focused courses to their regular high school curriculum.

More than just a new educational approach, career and college academies and pathways represent a transformative shift in preparing students for the future. The district aims to ensure every student is equipped for career and college, empowered for life, and engaged in community and civics. These programs create an engaging and relevant learning environment by integrating rigorous academics with hands-on learning and industry partnerships. The goal is not just career preparation but also empowering students to be active community members, shaping a stronger, more vibrant future for all.

More information and staff and community conversation dates will be coming soon.



Reminders & Updates

As we approach our much-anticipated spring break, we wanted to remind you that there is no school from March 11th through March 15th. Please note that all district offices will be closed on Friday, March 15th, and there will be no Future Ready Today district newsletter. We hope everyone enjoys this well-deserved time off and takes the opportunity to rest, unwind, and recharge. We look forward to welcoming students back on Monday, March 18th, as we prepare for the final eleven weeks of the school year.



Get Ready to "Spring Ahead!"



This is a friendly reminder that Daylight Saving Time starts this weekend, on Sunday, March 10th. Make sure to turn your clocks forward one hour before you go to bed on Saturday night. For some people, it can be hard to “spring ahead” and lose one hour of sleep. But this also means we will get extra daylight in the evenings. This is also a great time to check the batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms to ensure they work properly.

Looking for Things To Do?



Looking for activities to keep your kids busy and engaged over spring break or during the summer? Check out CRCSD’s “Virtual Backpack,” an excellent resource for finding district and community-wide opportunities for your students and family. The website enables you to search for upcoming events by your student’s school or through themed categories. Be sure to check back often to stay up-to-date on the latest community activities, events, camps, sports leagues, volunteer opportunities, and more.

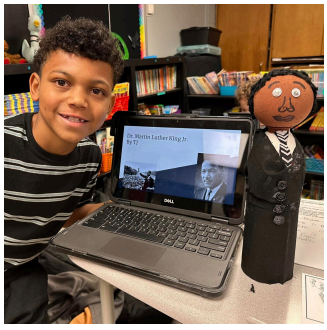
Click here to start exploring

School Breakfast Week



This week is National School Breakfast Week (NSBW). During the first week of March, this special week celebrates the National School Breakfast Program and the vital role a nutritious school breakfast has in powering students for success. It helps to reduce childhood hunger, supports good nutrition, and ensures that students can get the most out of their school day. Children who eat breakfast have increased alertness and improved moods throughout the morning, making for a better learning experience in the classroom. Cedar Rapids Community School District serves breakfast daily at all of our school buildings. For a breakfast menu, click here. Join us in promoting the importance of breakfast and making sure all kids get the food they need to focus and excel in the classroom.

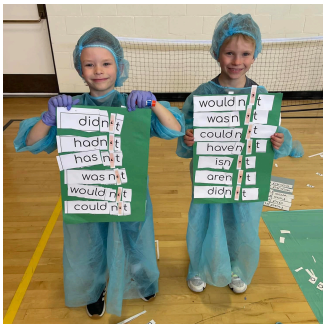
Glance Around The District



Students at Johnson STEAM Academy created “bottle



This week was Read Across America Week. To celebrate,



First graders at Erskine Elementary School became

people" of influential African Americans in history. They then made a biography presentation to teach others about them.

Viola Gibson students dressed up like their favorite book characters. They had princesses, superheroes, animals, wizards, and more!

"word doctors" this week and did some major surgery on words to turn them into contractions.



After reading Jack and the Beanstalk, 4th graders at Pierce Elementary were challenged to make the tallest and sturdiest beanstalk they could from newspapers and masking tape.



Students from McKinley STEAM Academy participated in the Young Entrepreneurs Market at Newbo City Market last weekend, selling their handcrafted items.



4th and 5th grade students at West Willow Elementary staged the musical "We Haz Jazz: A Musical History of Jazz." Students sang performed jazz songs and shared how jazz spread across the country.



At Cleveland Elementary School, students in art class designed and made paper airplanes. Once done, they got to test them in the hallway.



1st graders from Garfield Elementary School visited Indian Creek Nature Center to learn how maple syrup is made. They got to tap a tree and taste fresh maple syrup!



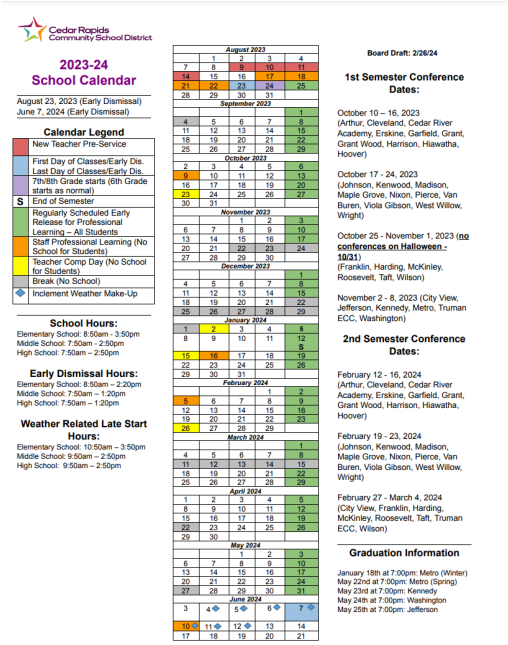
Metro's FIRST Robotic Competition team has been working hard to prepare for the regional competition. For the competition, students design, build, and code robots to tackle a series of challenges.

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:** Project-based learning at City View comes to life with 'soil expo'
- **Gazette:** Iowa schools 'flying blind' as they struggle to meet new budget deadline
- **KCRG:** Washington High School junior wins speech championship

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

August 2023

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September 2023

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October 2023

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November 2023

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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:

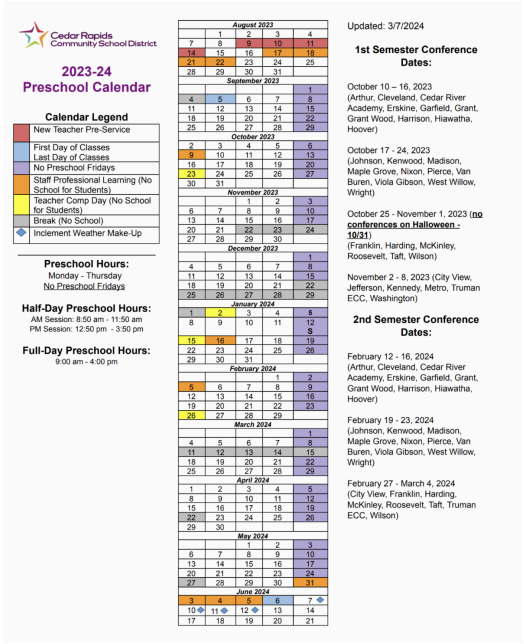
February 12 - 16, 2024
(Arthur, Cleveland, Cedar River Academy, Erskine, Garfield, Grant, Grant Wood, Harrison, Hiawatha, Hoover)

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

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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 8, 2024

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

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