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Cedar Rapids Community School District

Message from the Superintendent



Today, I am writing to address a matter that has deeply affected our school community over the past few days. It is with a mix of relief, gratitude, and reflection that I share this message with you. As many of you are aware, a social media threat was made against the school district this past weekend. In these trying times, it's easy to let fear and uncertainty consume us, but it's also during such moments that the strength of our community truly shines.

We want to commend the Cedar Rapids Police Department for their professionalism, dedication, and unwavering commitment to resolving this matter. Their assistance and resources were paramount in ensuring the safety and security of our community. We are grateful for the support they provided us concerning the enhanced security measures that were implemented over the week. This collaboration between two governmental agencies serves as an example of civic responsibility and the invaluable support of our partners in law enforcement.

We would like to express our utmost gratitude to our parents for entrusting us with the safety and security of your students. We understand the apprehension and distress that can arise during such an incident, especially when an active investigation is underway. We appreciate your patience and understanding during this time, knowing that we cannot always reveal all the pertinent details to safeguard the integrity of the case and to prevent copycat incidents. Your cooperation is crucial in helping us to make our schools better. Please speak to your students and let them know that fighting, violence, and any other forms of misconduct that may jeopardize the safety of others are unacceptable in our schools and in our community.

To our staff, you deserve nothing but the highest praise for your unwavering support and cooperation through this ordeal. We understand that these are unprecedented and difficult times, but despite the challenges, you came together as a united front, showing resilience, determination, and compassion. As an administrative team and on behalf of the Board of Education, we extend our heartfelt appreciation for your uncompromising allegiance to our students. Despite feeling unsure and uneasy, you showed up to school each day and provided reassurance and a sense of stability for our students, fostering an environment where they feel safe and supported. Your steadfastness inspires the community to place their trust in our system. We see you, and we thank you.

Students, we want you to know that we deeply care about your well-being and believe in your strength and resilience. It is imperative that we come together to end all the senseless fighting, violence, and threats that have been taking place in our schools and community. This is your moment to take a stand and say, "enough is enough." We urge you to speak up and report any suspicious activities or behaviors that you come across. You should feel safe and secure in your schools because living in fear is not conducive to academic success or personal growth. We want to remind you that these threats are not harmless pranks, and they will be taken seriously. It is time for us to rise up and work together to create a safer and more conducive learning environment for everyone.

While this incident has been difficult, it has also served as a reminder of the importance of fostering a culture of unity, empathy, and vigilance. We must continue to look out for one another and work to provide a nurturing environment for our students to learn and grow. As we move forward, I want to reassure you that we will continue to prioritize the safety and well-being of our students and staff. We will also work to provide support and resources for those who may need it during this time of healing and recovery.

Here's to working together as a united community to foster an atmosphere of trust, support, and positivity!

-Superintendent Dr. Tawana Grover

Iowa's Safe+Sound App

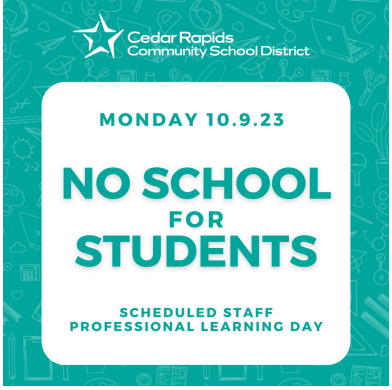


The State of Iowa has rolled out a new app designed to help create a more safe and secure learning environment in Iowa schools. The Safe+Sound App allows users to report anonymous tips of students in crisis, school violence, self-harm, threatening behavior, and any other forms of misconduct that may jeopardize the safety of students and staff. The app can also upload screenshots, images, and videos that may be relevant to a report. The reports are monitored 24/7 by trained dispatchers, who then pass the information to school administrators and local law enforcement.

According to Safe+Sound, all information shared is confidential, and involvement is voluntary. The free Safe+Sound app is available for download on the App Store and Google Play.

No School for Students - October 9

Just a reminder that there is no school for students on Monday, October 9, as it is a scheduled staff development day. You can check out the 2023-24 CRCSD calendar to see the remaining staff learning days when school will not be in session. School employees will be present in the buildings on Monday.



District Spotlight

A Beloved Metro Tradition Returns



Last week, twelve Metro High School students traded in their textbooks for a week-long adventure to the Boundary Water Canoe Area (BWCA). The BWCA is a remote wilderness area located along the U.S.-Canada border in northeastern Minnesota and contains a mixture of forests, glacial lakes, and streams.

The BWCA Fall Canoe Trip has been a long-standing tradition for the Metro Outdoor Education Program. While this annual trip dates back to 1974, they did have to take a short pause due to the COVID pandemic. This year was their first trip back since the break.

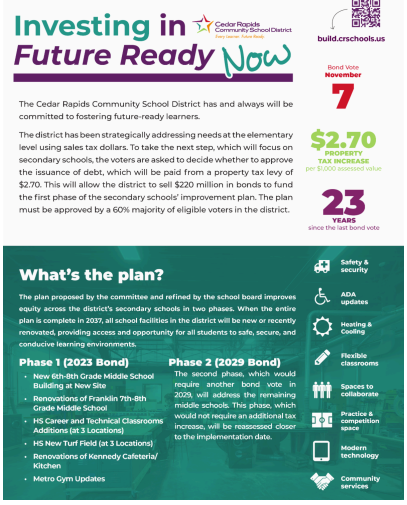
Led by four experienced teachers, the students canoe, camp, hike, and fish. They get to discover the beauty of nature while also gaining invaluable lessons in outdoor survival, conservation, land stewardship, history, and science. But the trip also teaches them essential life skills like leadership, teamwork, relationship building, and personal introspection. They learn to take calculated risks, practice critical thinking skills, and develop self-reliance.

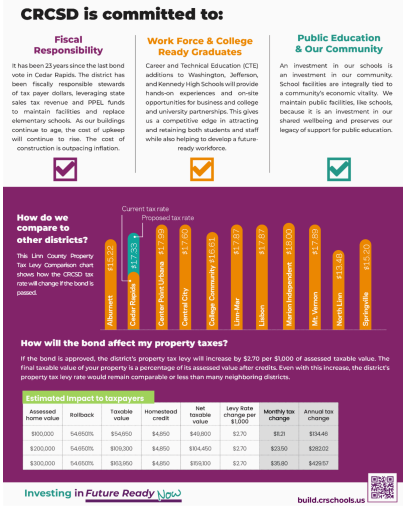
But in the end, the group leaders hope that every Metro student who partakes in this adventure gains a newfound respect for nature, a deeper appreciation for the environment, and a set of skills and memories that will last a lifetime.

News, Updates, & Reminders

Bond Basics

The CRCSD bond referendum is now officially on the ballot for the November 7th election. We wanted to provide you with some educational information about the bond so you can make an informed decision on election day. Over the next few weeks, we will be sharing videos with information about the bond, projects that will be funded by the bond, and how it will impact families.





Kennedy Fall Production



The Kennedy High School Theatre Department has been working hard on its fall theatre production, which is a rendition of *The Anxiety Project*. *The Anxiety Project*, written and composed by Kennedy graduate Rachel Dean, is a musical that explores true stories of the effects of anxiety, depression, and other mental illnesses. The story follows senior psychology student Avery as she works to finish her thesis - a study of the mechanics of mental illness and how science can change lives. Soon, Avery becomes immersed in the lives of the patients in her study as they struggle with anxiety, depression, suicide, and medication. Catch the show October 5-7, 12, and 13 at 7:00 p.m. at Kennedy High School. Click here to get your tickets today.

Playtime Poppy Season Announced

Playtime Poppy Children's Theatre has announced its upcoming 2023-2024 Season, which will feature performances by Jefferson, Kennedy, and Washington high school students. Mark your calendars for these upcoming fun, family-friendly shows. For more information, click here. Besides their community plays, Playtime Poppy also brings art-integrated programming to many of the CRCSD elementary schools throughout the year.



Glance Around The District



The Washington Cheer Squad cheered on participants Sunday morning at the annual Especially for You Race Against Breast Cancer in downtown Cedar Rapids



A group of Roosevelt students had the opportunity to visit Bloomsbury Farm to learn about farming, marketing, and the many facets of running a small business.



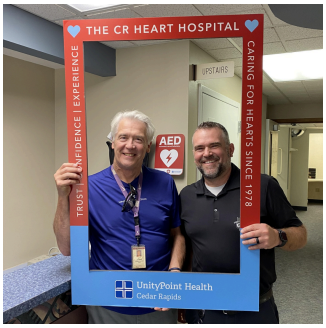
Jefferson and Kennedy High School Students in the LatinX Club performed Latin dances for students at Wright Elementary as part of the school's Hispanic Heritage Month celebration.



2nd graders at Erskine Elementary School had an amazing day learning at Wickiup Hill Learning Center on Wednesday.



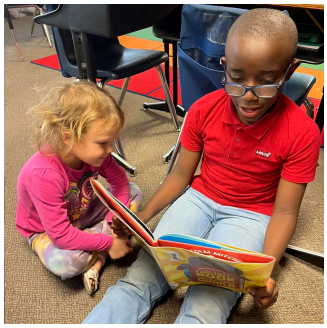
Students at Garfield Elementary are working on their gymnastics moves with Mr. Duffy in PE this week.



Kingston Stadium has a new AED (Automated External Defibrillator) thanks to a gift from the St. Luke's Heart Saver Grant Program.



Things are progressing nicely at this year's Student-Build House. This week, students are building and raising the exterior walls of the home. This is the 51st house to be built by students.



Harrison 4th graders got the opportunity to read to the school's kindergarteners and 1st graders this week. The 4th graders really enjoyed being leaders and getting to spend some time with the younger students!



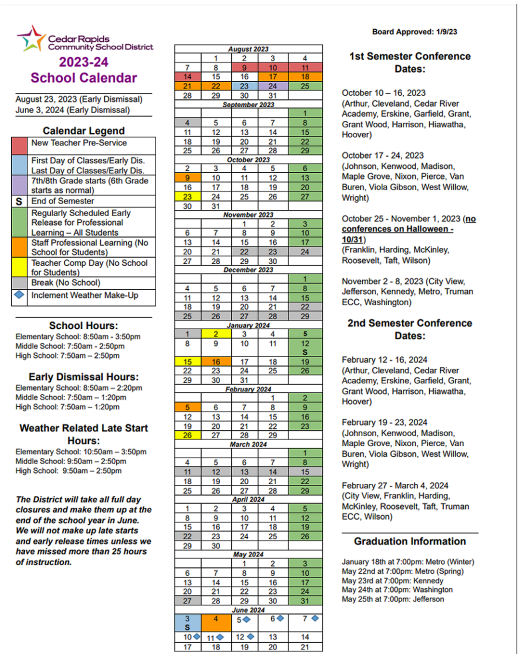
Congratulations to Mrs. Kane at Taft Middle School for being named the September winner of KCRG's A+ for Education Award. Her paraeducator nominated her for the honor, and KCRG surprised her last week with the award.

CRCSD In The News

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

- Gazette - Kids uniquely connect to learning at new project-based high school

District Calendars



Cedar Rapids Community School District

2023-24 School Calendar

August 23, 2023 (Early Dismissal)
June 3, 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

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.

August 2023 | September 2023 | October 2023 | November 2023 | December 2023 | January 2024 | February 2024 | March 2024 | April 2024 | May 2024 | June 2024

Board Approved: 1/9/23

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:

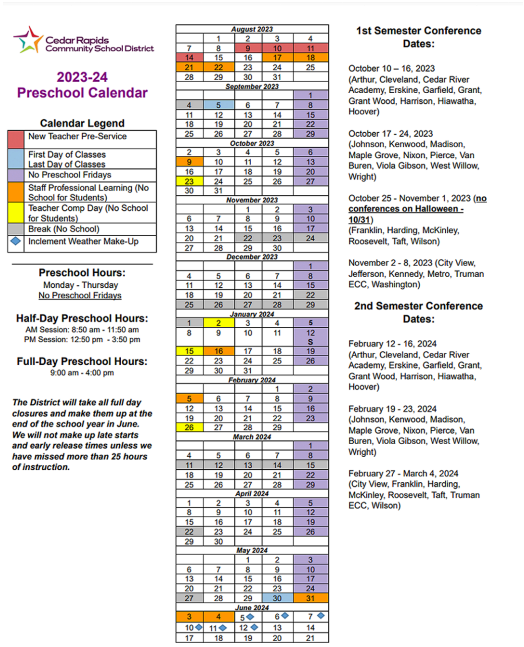
February 12 - 16, 2024
(Arthur, Cleveland, Cedar River Academy, Erskine, Garfield, Grant, Grant Wood, Harrison, Hiawatha, Hoover)

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]

[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]

Follow us on social media for the latest updates:

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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.

October 6, 2023

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

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