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Cedar Rapids Community School District

A Message From the Superintendent



Good afternoon, Cedar Rapids Community School District families. I wanted to thank you for taking the time to vote on November 7th. While the district's $220 million bond did not pass, our commitment to providing an exceptional education for our students remains unshaken.

There have been a lot of thoughtful considerations regarding the future of our facilities, and our decisions have always been about what is best for our students and staff. While we may be a little discouraged with the results, we are also encouraged. This process gave us an opportunity to engage with the community, having conversations and answering questions that expanded beyond our facilities. We look forward to continuing this.

In the coming weeks and months, we will have opportunities forthcoming to continue to problem-solve our facilities. Our Board of Education and district leaders will reassess our priorities and explore ways to engage with our parents and community. Your input and collaboration will be crucial as we navigate these challenges together and define a path forward.

This is still our opportunity to build together.

Superintendent Dr. Tawana Grover

News and Updates

Congratulations to Newly Elected Board Members



Congratulations to the four Cedar Rapids school board election winners! We welcome back incumbents David Tominksy, Cindy Garlock, and Jen Neumann, and we welcome newcomer Kaitlin Byers. We would like to thank everyone who ran for the open seats. Also, thank you to Dexter Mershbrock for your years of service on the CRCSD Board of Directors and for supporting our educators and students.

Veterans Day Celebrations



Each year on Nov. 11, we recognize Veterans Day, which provides the opportunity to honor and thank those who have served or are currently serving in the U.S. military. Originally, this date was observed as Armistice Day, which commemorated the end of World War I, which occurred on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. The holiday was later renamed Veterans' Day in 1954.

At CRCSD, we want to instill in our students the importance of showing gratitude to those who protect our freedom. Several schools across the district held their own Veterans Day celebrations today to thank those who have or are currently serving in the military.



- Johnson STEAM Academy held a veterans parade and assembly this afternoon. They invited veterans from the community to attend, along with friends and family members. Students sang songs and had a guest speaker, Mr. Lange, who is serving in the Army.



- Grant Wood Elementary's G-Clef Show Choir, comprised of 4th and 5th grade students, had the opportunity to sing at the Mt. Vernon Road Hy-Vee's annual Veterans Breakfast. Veterans in attendance at the breakfast also received a thank you card created by the students.



- The 4th and 5th graders at Harrison Elementary School had a program and concert to show their appreciation and thank their family and friends who have or are currently serving in the military.

You can see more photos from each of these schools' programs using the button below.

See More Photos

The district would also like to recognize and honor our employees who have served in the military. Thank you for your contributions to both our schools and our nation! Please note that there may be more veterans on our staff, but these are the ones who submitted a recognition form.

- **Arthur Elementary**
  - Jennifer Ritchie - National Guard - 1.5 years
- **ELSC**
  - Steven Peterson - Army - 2 years
- **Franklin Middle School**
  - Melissa Guerpo - Marine Corp - 8 years
- **Garfield Elementary**
  - Becky Cullen - Navy - 5 years
- **Grant Elementary**
  - Carol Marshall - Army - 3.5 years
- **Harding Middle School**
  - Robert Cassidy - Navy - 4 years
  - Richard Rees - Air Force - 1 year
- **Harrison Elementary**
  - Stacia Barnard - Army National Guard - 6 years
  - Michael Schmid - Army - 5 years

- **Hiawatha Elementary**
  - Kimberly Comisky - Air Force - 6 years
  - Josh Hutton - Marine Corp - 4 years
- **Jefferson High School**
  - Rebecca Egli - Army Reserves - 11 years
- **Kennedy High School**
  - Scott Netser - Marine Corp and Navy Reserves - 20 years
  - Joshua Eaton - Army - 23 years and counting
- **McKinley STEAM Academy**
  - Richard Ortega - Navy - 20 years
- **Nixon Elementary**
  - Alicia Laufer - Army Reserves - 6 years
- **Polk AEC**
  - Jen Morris - Air National Guard - 8 years
- **Van Buren Elementary**
  - Deborah Covington - Women's Army Corps & US Army -9 years
- **Viola Gibson Elementary**
  - Kim Herr - Air Force - 5 years
  - Tony Hartmann - Air Force - 4 years
- **Washington High School**
  - Rodney Egel - Marine Corp - 6 years

National Homeless Youth Awareness Month



November is National Homeless Youth Awareness Month. Each year, Cedar Rapids Community School District assists over 300 students who are experiencing homelessness or near homelessness in our schools. That number may be surprising to many who work outside the school district.

Homelessness is defined as a student who lacks a "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." This includes students living in hotels, campgrounds, vehicles, or shelters and those doubling up with family or friends due to loss of housing due to economic hardship. These children are more likely to experience hunger and emotional and behavioral issues. They also have a lower high school graduation rate than other children.

CRCSD is committed to meeting the needs of ALL our students and helping to eliminate barriers to our student learning, like homelessness. If you know a CRCSD student/family who is homeless or near homeless, please encourage them to contact their school's homeless liaison. They serve as the primary contact between homeless families and school staff, and they can assist families as they work through this difficult time.

While the district cannot provide financial assistance, it does offer homeless students free transportation to and from school, free school meals, and additional support/services for their academic success. The district can also help to identify services and resources available through community partners that can provide assistance. Click here to see a list of resources.

CRCSD invites all students and staff to wear green on Friday, November 17th, to show support to those affected by homelessness and bring awareness to the topic.

Mississippi Valley Conference Football Honor

The Mississippi Valley Conference has released its all-division selections for High School Football. CRCSD would like to congratulate all of our district athletes who have been chosen for the all-conference teams. Congratulations!



See the honorees

Jefferson Cheer Trio Takes Tops at State



Jefferson High School students Eli Tonkollie, Gracie O'Brian, and Sophia Parker took home the 2023 Iowa Coed Stunt Group State Champions last weekend at the State Cheerleading Championship. The talented group demonstrated exceptional athleticism and precision while performing their routine featuring high-skill cheer stunts and techniques. This victory not only highlights the individual talents of each team member but also reflects their hard work and dedication.

"We made some changes to their routine right before the state competition, adding new stunts and skills to try and boost their scores. They only had days to master it so they could execute it at a high level," shares coach Bridget McWhorter.

McWhorter says they hit every single stunt at the competition, scoring 8 points higher than any other team and clinching the state title. Congratulations to the team on this outstanding achievement!

Glance Around The District



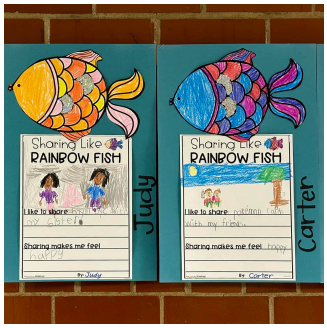
This week, the brave 3rd graders at Viola Gibson dissected owl pellets in science class and recorded what they found.



Students and staff at Van Buren Elementary School celebrated the 50th day of school on Tuesday by dressing up in 50s attire.



The 4th and 5th graders at Garfield Elementary School had some fun playing in the fall leaves.



1st graders at Hoover Elementary have been working on their reading with the book The Rainbow Fish. The book teaches students about sharing. Students then colored their own rainbow fish and wrote about what they like to share.



The Girls on the Run team at Cleveland Elementary School spent their last practice making blankets for Critter Crusaders. It was a fun way to work together and support the community.



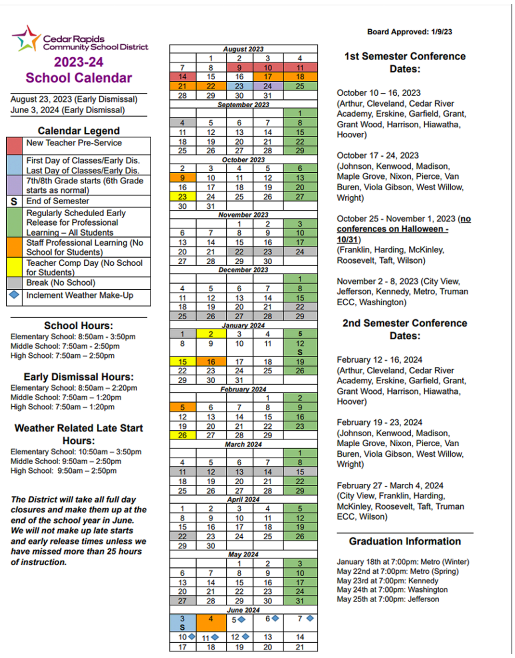
A group of Washington High School students attended the L.E.A.P. (Leading & Excelling Academically & Professionally) Conference at Mt. Mercy University. They learned about leadership, good decision-making, and the next steps after graduation.

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:** Cedar Rapids schools 'back to the drawing board' after bond referendum fails
- **Gazette:** Newcomer Kaitlin Byers, three incumbents elected to Cedar Rapids school board
- **KWWL**: Bond supporters not discouraged by failed vote, hopeful for new plan

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

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September 2023

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October 2023

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November 2023

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December 2023

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April 2024

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May 2024

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June 2024

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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)

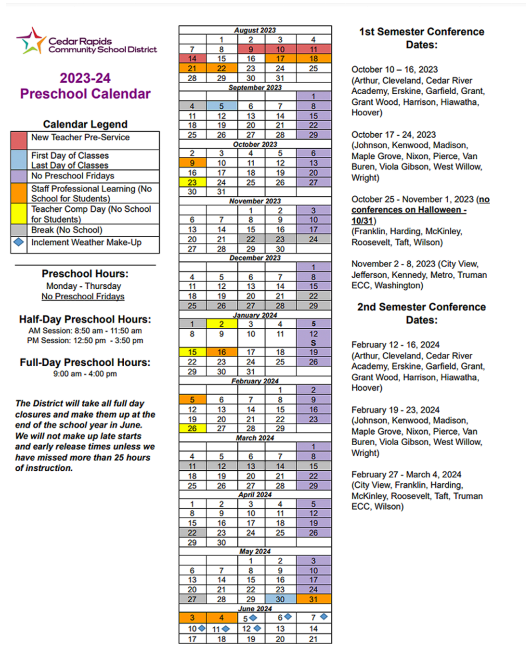
February 19 - 23, 2024
(Johnson, Kenwood, Madison, Maple Grove, Nixon, Pierce, Van Buren, Viola Gibson, West Willow, Wright)

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

[2023-24 School Calendar]



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 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:

Sign up for Future Ready Today

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.

November 10, 2023

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

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