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CRCSD Future Ready Today Newsletter

Listen to the Newsletter This Week!

We know life gets busy—between work, family, and everything else, it can be hard to keep up! That's why we're shaking things up and bringing you an easier way to stay in the loop. **Introducing our new podcast**! In just a few minutes, you'll get all the highlights from this week's newsletter.

Hit the button below to listen, and if something catches your ear, scroll down for all the details. You can also **find it on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music, and YouTube.**

Listen To The Podcast

Celebrating the Heart of Our Schools



Dear CRCSD Families,

This week, across Cedar Rapids Community School District, we witnessed something powerful: appreciation, connection, and shared belief.

As we celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week, I was deeply moved by the outpouring of gratitude for the remarkable individuals who show up every day to educate, inspire, and nurture our students. From thoughtful notes and decorated sidewalks to donated meals and creative acts of kindness—you reminded our educators just how valued they are.

Thank you to every family, student, PTA/PTO, and community partner who helped make this week so meaningful. Your partnership is one of our district's greatest strengths.

At the heart of CRCSD are the people who bring our mission to life each day—our teachers, paraeducators, counselors, custodians, food service workers, office staff, bus drivers, and so many others. Whether in the classroom, cafeteria, playground, or behind the scenes, our staff are the heartbeat of our schools.

I have witnessed firsthand the way our teachers wrap their arms around students—lifting them up, championing their dreams, and helping them see who they can become. They are encouragers, mentors, difference-makers, and guides. Every day, they help students discover their brilliance, navigate challenges, and reach for their highest potential.

Our teachers don't just deliver lessons—they shape futures. They help students believe in what's possible. And as a district, we are proud to be known for generations of excellent

educators whose legacy continues strong today.

Join us in celebrating our teachers—not just this week, but every day. Take a moment to thank an educator who has made a difference in your child's life. Share your appreciation on social media, write a note, or simply speak words of gratitude.

Together, let's continue building schools where every student feels known, supported, and ready to thrive.

Thank you for believing in our mission, for partnering with us, and for standing alongside us as we invest in the next generation.

With gratitude,
Dr. Tawana Grover
Superintendent
Cedar Rapids Community School District

District Updates

Not All Superheroes Wear Capes: Thank You, Teachers!

As Teacher Appreciation Week comes to a close, we want to take a moment to recognize the incredible impact our educators have every single day. While they may not wear capes, their dedication, creativity, and compassion make them true superheroes in our schools and in the lives of our students.

From inspiring young learners to persevere through challenges, to creating classrooms where all students feel seen, supported, and empowered—our teachers do it all. They build confidence, spark curiosity, and help shape the future, one student at a time.

Thank you to each and every teacher in our district for the energy you bring, the patience you show, and the difference you make. Your work matters deeply, and we are grateful for all that you do.

Leadership Transition at City View Reflects Innovation and Growth


Trevor Templeman



Dennis Becker

City View Community High School is excited to announce a new leadership structure that will go into effect on J**uly 1 (pending board approval)**, designed to support the school's continued innovation and commitment to student-centered learning.

Dennis Becker will step into the role of Head of School, and **Trevor Templeman will become Lead Instructor.** Both bring deep experience and a passion for reimagining high school in ways that prioritize student agency, community engagement, and real-world learning.

Dennis has been a foundational leader at both City View and Iowa BIG, contributing to learning environments that center curiosity, collaboration, and meaningful student work. He is currently completing a master's in Learning Sciences and remains focused on designing systems that support future-ready education.

"The future is evolving rapidly, which means we get to reimagine education from first principles. What skills create thoughtful citizens? How do we design for that? It's the most exciting challenge in education right now," said Becker.

Trevor, a founding teacher at City View, brings a creative, relationship-driven approach to teaching and learning. His curriculum design invites students to explore their identities, engage with real-world issues, and tell their own stories in powerful ways.

"I'm excited to help lead City View because we design learning experiences that matter and we engage in work that honors students' voices, stories, and potential while staying deeply connected to our community," Templeman shared.

While Dennis and Trevor will take on the day-to-day leadership of the school, **Principal Adam Zimmerman** will remain the principal of record, ensuring ongoing support, oversight, and alignment with CRCSD systems and structures.

This leadership transition is a reflection of CRCSD's broader commitment to innovation and flexible school models that meet the evolving needs of students. Please join us in congratulating Dennis and Trevor on their new roles and in celebrating the powerful work happening at City View!

New TikTok Trend Damaging Devices and Raising Safety Concerns



A troubling TikTok trend is spreading across schools nationwide, and Cedar Rapids Community School District wants families to be aware. The trend involves students inserting conductive objects—such as paper clips or pencil lead—into Chromebook USB ports. This seemingly harmless act can short out the device, permanently damaging it.

Some students may view this as a joke or prank, but the reality is serious: **damaging a school-issued Chromebook through intentional misuse is not only a safety concern, it also comes at a cost.**

What's at Risk?

- **Destroyed Devices:** The Chromebook may be permanently disabled.
- **Fire Hazards:** In other districts, these actions have caused devices to overheat, smoke, and even catch fire.
- **Financial Responsibility:** If a student damages their Chromebook intentionally or through misuse, the family is responsible for the full replacement cost of $330.

What Families Can Do

We strongly encourage all families to talk with their students about this trend and the consequences of participating in it. A few helpful steps:

- Ask your student if they've heard about this trend.
- Explain the risks—both to their safety and to your family's finances.
- Remind them that school devices are learning tools, not toys or props for social media.

CRCSD is committed to student safety and responsible use of district technology. We appreciate your help in reinforcing this message at home so students understand the very real risks and consequences of this harmful trend.

Kennedy Senior Honored with "Green CR" Award at EcoFest

Congratulations to Kennedy High School senior and Iowa BIG student Deirdre Duffy, who was recently awarded the prestigious "Green CR" Award during EcoFest on Saturday, April 26! This honor recognizes individuals making a meaningful impact on sustainability efforts within the Cedar Rapids community.

Deirdre received the award for her leadership and creativity on an Iowa BIG team initiative called “April is Earth Month.” The campaign featured a series of daily nudges—small, achievable actions to encourage local residents to embrace more sustainable practices throughout the month of April.



Her team collaborated with eleven different community partners to promote eco-friendly choices, offering both discounts and educational resources to make sustainable living more accessible.

We’re proud of Deirdre’s hard work and commitment to environmental stewardship. Her efforts are a shining example of the powerful impact students can make when they lead with purpose and partner with their community.

Truman’s “Touch a Truck” Event Brings Big Joy to Little Learners



What started as a fascination with the trash truck turned into an unforgettable experience for Truman's 4-year-old preschoolers! On Thursday, Truman Early Childhood Center hosted a special “Touch a Truck” event after staff noticed just how much excitement the children had every time a truck rolled by.



“The kids would just plaster themselves to the window to watch,” said Truman Principal Monica Frey. “We knew we had to find a way to bring that curiosity to life.”

The event featured eight different vehicles, including a semi, FedEx truck, cement mixer, fire truck, police SUV, city water truck, and a street sweeper. Each vehicle offered the children a chance to learn more about how it works, what it’s used for, and even peek inside the driver's seat.



From flashing lights and honking horns, the excitement was contagious. This hands-on experience not only delighted students—it also helped them connect learning to the world around them in a memorable, meaningful way.

A huge thank you to all of the truck operators and city workers who helped make this day so special!

Assistant Principal for The Day



Erskine Elementary 4th grader Merritt Melchert won a student raffle to serve as Assistant Principal for a Day on Monday, May 5th. She embraced her role with enthusiasm, leading school-wide bingo, managing recess, delivering morning announcements, and even navigating a staff meeting and a Level 3 disagreement. View highlights of Merritt’s exciting day on our Facebook page right now!

Celebrating the Class of 2025: Senior Walk Schedule Announced



Cedar Rapids Community School District is excited to once again celebrate a beloved tradition—Senior Walks! This special event gives graduating seniors the chance to return to their elementary schools, walk the halls one last time, and inspire the next generation of students.

Families and community members are invited to join in the celebration and cheer on our seniors as they visit their former schools. These walks are a powerful way to reflect on students' journeys and recognize their achievements as they prepare for graduation.

Here is the 2025 Senior Walk schedule:

May 13
- Van Buren | 3:00 PM | *Jefferson HS Seniors*

May 14
- Cedar River Academy at Taylor | 8:50 AM | *Jefferson HS Seniors*
- Hoover | 2:30 PM | *Jefferson HS Seniors*

May 16
- Cleveland | 3:00 PM | *Jefferson HS Seniors*

May 19
- Nixon | 9:00 AM | *Kennedy HS Seniors*
- Madison | 9:15 AM | *Kennedy HS Seniors*
- Coolidge & West Willow | 2:30 PM | *Jefferson HS Seniors*
- Kenwood | 9:20 AM | *Washington HS Seniors*
- Grant Wood | 9:30 AM | *Washington HS Seniors*
- Johnson | 9:30 AM | *Washington HS Seniors*
- Erskine | 10:00 AM | *Washington HS Seniors*
- Arthur, Garfield & Trailside | 12:45 PM | *Washington HS Seniors*
- Harrison | 3:15 PM | *Jefferson HS Seniors*

May 20
- Pierce | 8:45 AM | *Kennedy HS Seniors*
- Truman, Jackson & Maple Grove | 9:00 AM | *Kennedy & Jefferson HS Seniors*
- Grant | 9:10 AM | *Jefferson HS Seniors*
- Hiawatha | 3:00 PM | *Kennedy HS Seniors*
- Viola Gibson | 3:00 PM | *Kennedy HS Seniors*

May 21
- Wright | 3:00 PM | *Kennedy HS Seniors*

We encourage all to celebrate this milestone with our students and show your support as they close one chapter and prepare to begin another. Congratulations to the Class of 2025!

Glance Around CRCSD



Polk Alternative hosted a free clothing giveaway for



Harding Middle school 8th graders traveled to Kirkwood



Gibson Elementary kindergarten students did a

students and their families—and later opened it to the neighborhood. Families from Trailside, JSA, Franklin, Washington, and City View came to shop, helping get clothes into the hands of those who truly needed them.

Regional Center for the Financial Literacy Fair. Students have been preparing for this by picking a career, determining salary, and creating a budget. Today, they were able to make it all come together!

fantastic job last night at their music concert. This was the last music concert of the year and they ended with a bang!



Metro students are on their way home very grateful for their trip to South Dakota and the transformation that comes from spending this kind of time outside.



Van Buren Elementary had the cutest kindergarten music performance!



Through positive behavior, Taft Middle School students earned tickets toward getting a staff member pied in the face. Here are a few of our "winners"

In The News

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

- Gazette: Here's how Cedar Rapids schools' $3.5M investment will improve student safety

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.

May 9, 2025

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

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