SHARE:

Join Our Email List

be you. BE CRCSD.
EVERYONE • EQUIPPED • EMPOWERED • ENGAGED • EXCEL

CRCSD Future Ready Today Newsletter





College and Career Pathways Parent Advisory Team Kicks Off with Engaging Discussions

The first College and Career Pathways Parent Advisory Team meeting took place on Wednesday, January 8th, bringing together 91 parents, staff, and community members for an evening of collaboration and meaningful dialogue.

The primary focus of this first meeting was the Freshman Seminar course, a key component of the upcoming Freshman Academies launching in the 2025-2026 school year. Participants worked in small groups and school-based teams to discuss the course's structure, content, and purpose. By the end of the meeting, the group reached a consensus on their formal recommendation:

- The Freshman Seminar should be a yearlong, required course, but students should have the option to opt-out if they meet specific criteria.

This recommendation, along with student, staff, and community input, will provide key input for district and building personnel to consider as final decisions on the program are made.

To ensure every participant felt heard and valued, the district administered a survey at the end of the meeting. The survey assessed whether attendees felt they could provide meaningful input, whether their voices were heard, and whether they could support the final recommendation. Key findings from the survey include:

- 100% of participants responded with “yes” or “somewhat” when asked if they felt comfortable giving input during the meeting. 89.5% of those responses were “yes.”
- When asked if all voices were listened to and considered during the meeting, 92.1% of participants responded with “yes” or “somewhat.” 68.4% of those responses were “yes.”
- Participants rated their support for the group’s final recommendation on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest level of support. Overall, about 70% of respondents rated their support at a 4 or 5, indicating strong support for the proposal.

We are extremely grateful for the advisory members' time and dedication and are excited to continue our work together in designing this innovative program so that it can benefit all

students.

The next Parent Advisory Team meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 21st, from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. The agenda will include finalizing criteria for opting out of the Freshman Seminar course and further planning for the launch of the Freshman Academies.
If you're interested in joining the Parent Advisory Team, we are still looking for diverse perspectives from our elementary and middle schools to enrich the group. If interested, send an email to communityrelations@crschools.us

Join the Cedar Rapids Community School District Career Fair!



Are you interested in becoming part of the Cedar Rapids Community School District for the 2025-26 school year? We're hosting a career fair for teacher candidates, and we'd love to meet you!

Date: March 13
Time: 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Location: Educational Leadership and Support Center, 2500 Edgewood Rd. NW, Cedar Rapids

At the event, you'll have the opportunity to:

- Participate in on-site interviews with district administrators.
- Learn about the district's competitive pay scale and employee benefits.
- Explore additional opportunities such as coaching sports, leading clubs, and substitute teaching.
- Connect with the Cedar Rapids Education Association Teacher's Union to discover more about the support and resources available to educators.

Don't miss this chance to kickstart your teaching career with us! We look forward to meeting you and discussing how you can make an impact in our schools.

New Registration Dates



The 2025-2026 Student Registration Dates are changing. **New Student Registration**, which will include any NEW student to CRCSD entering Kindergarten through 12th grade for the 25-26 school year, opened on **January 6, 2025**. Children who are five years old on or before September 15, 2025, are eligible for Kindergarten this fall. Please note that preschool registration will open at a later date.

You can register here.

Magnet School Lottery Now Open!
The Cedar Rapids Community School District Magnet Lottery is now open for grades K-8. Families interested in exploring unique, theme-based learning opportunities are encouraged to apply. Information about High School Magnet programming will be shared at a later date as we continue to collaborate with staff and families on Pathways programming details. Learn about the lottery here.

Our **Annual Verification will open on April 1, 2025**. Parents must complete the Annual Verification for all current CRCSD students each year to verify that they are attending a CRCSD school for the next school year, update important contact information, and complete yearly permission forms.

Attendance Changes for 2nd Semester

Revisions have been made to the district's attendance policy for the 2024-2025 school year, effective at the start of the second semester on **January 21, 2025**. As you may

recall, our district revised our attendance policies earlier this year to comply with the state's new legal requirements established in Iowa Code SF 2435. These changes provided clearer guidelines for families and encouraged consistent student attendance for their academic success.



Reminders from the Initial Policy:

- A student is considered chronically absent if they miss **10% or more of the days in a semester** (approximately 56 hours or 8 days). If this threshold is reached, the school will send a certified letter to the parent/guardian and notify the county attorney.
- At **15% absenteeism**, the student and their parent/guardian must attend a School Engagement Meeting with school officials to develop an Absenteeism Prevention Plan. Weekly attendance updates are then sent to the student's Parents/guardians for the remainder of the school year.
- Truancy occurs when a student misses 20% or more days (approximately 112 hours or 15 days) in a grading period or semester.
- **All Medical/illness-related absences are unexempt unless a doctor's note is submitted within 48 hours of the absence.**
- All absences, whether exempt or not exempt, count toward the total time missed and are included in the 10% and 15% absenteeism rates.

Revised Attendance Policy:
Based on feedback and attendance data from the first semester, we have decided to make a slight revision to the CRCSD Student Attendance Policy, **effective January 21, 2025**. We are making a slight change to how medical/illness-related absences are handled to better support all families and ensure equity. This change still ensures our compliance with Iowa Code updates (SF 2453) and our commitment to fostering regular student attendance.

- **Medical/Illness-Related Absences:**
  - Starting January 21, students will be allowed up to **8 *exempt* medical/illness-related absences per semester WITHOUT requiring a doctor's note**.
  - Beginning with the **9th illness-related absence**, a doctor's note will be required and must be submitted within **48 hours** of the absence to be considered exempt. If no doctor documentation is submitted, the absence will not be exempt and count towards the student's total absenteeism.

Why Attendance Matters:
Regular attendance is vital for your child's academic growth and long-term success. Each missed day means lost opportunities for learning and engagement that are difficult to make up. Developing strong attendance habits builds persistence and responsibility, preparing students for college, careers, and life.
We understand that challenges can sometimes make regular attendance difficult. Our district is here to support families in overcoming these barriers. If you need assistance or have concerns about attendance, please reach out to your student's principal or guidance counselor. Together, we can ensure your child stays on track for success.

Beating the Winter Blues: Support for Students During the Colder Months

As winter sets in, students may feel less motivated, more tired, or even sad. Known as the "winter blues," these feelings are common but can interfere with school and well-being.

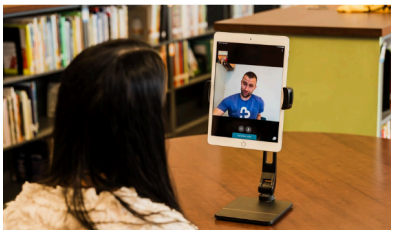
Hazel Health is here to help. Through our telehealth services, students can quickly connect with licensed therapists for compassionate, personalized care. Whether it's learning coping strategies or receiving ongoing support, we're committed to helping students feel their best.

Tips for managing the winter blues include:

- Getting outside for daylight and fresh air

- Staying active with regular movement
- Keeping a consistent daily routine
- Talking openly about emotions

If your child is struggling, don't wait—reach out via Hazel Health today for support. Together, we can make this winter a little brighter. Learn more about our services here.



Reminders

No School Reminders

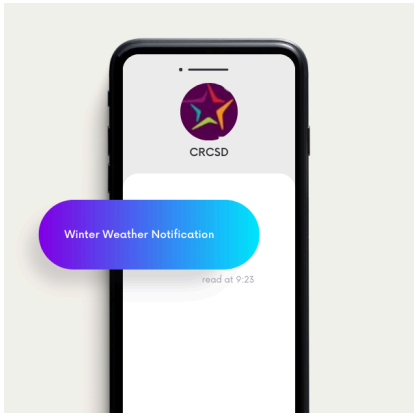


Just a reminder, there will be no school for students on January 17 for a Teacher Directed Day.

There will also be no school on January 20 for a Staff Professional Learning Day. Champions will also be closed on January 20.

The district office will remain open.

Winter Weather Communications



Since we have already had our first winter weather delay of the school year, we wanted to provide information on the district's winter weather communications procedures.

The safety and well-being of students and staff is our top priority, and the decision to modify the school day due to extreme weather conditions is no simple matter. Every weather event is different and requires district leaders to consider a multitude of factors.

The district tries to make weather-related decisions as early as it is clear that we will need to change our regular schedule. That said, sometimes Mother Nature does not appreciate our need to meet timelines. We hope you can appreciate and understand that as well. District weather-related decisions are communicated through multiple district communication platforms: School Messenger (phone calls, e-mails, and text messages), the district website, the district's Facebook page, and local media/news outlets.

Late Start/School Delay:
Delaying the start of school due to weather conditions that are expected to improve throughout the school day.

- If we are delaying the start of the school day, the decision will be made and communicated before 5:30 AM, if possible.
- There will be no morning preschool, morning practices, and before-school programs. Full-day preschool at Truman Early Learning Center will be delayed by two hours.
- School breakfast will still be served at all schools when students arrive.
- The district will monitor the weather conditions throughout the morning and reassess if any changes to the late start should be made.

Classes Canceled/Schools Closed:
Canceling classes due to weather conditions that make it exceedingly hazardous or impossible for school buses to travel their routes and/or for employees and students to report to school safely. These dangerous conditions are not expected to improve throughout the school day.

- If possible, the decision will be made and communicated before 5:30 AM.
- All CRCSD schools and preschools will be closed. There will be no before or after-school programs/practices or school events for elementary and middle schools.
- Each building's administrator or athletic director manages and communicates the cancellation of high school activities, practices, and athletic events.
- All weather-related cancellations must be made up.

Early Dismissal:
Releasing schools early due to weather conditions that are expected to worsen throughout the school day.

- If possible, the decision will be made and communicated by 10:00 AM.
- Early dismissal times may vary depending on weather conditions, but typically, they are as follows: High Schools and Middle Schools—1:20 PM, and Elementary and Preschools—2:20 PM.
- No afternoon preschool, after-school programs, afternoon-school practices, or evening activities unless otherwise noted.
- Each building's administrator or athletic director is responsible for managing and communicating any cancellations of high school activities, practices, or events.
- Lunch will be served to students if school is dismissed early.

Glance Around CRCSD



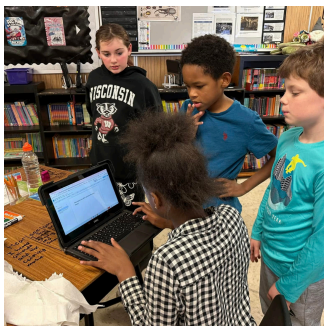
The Educational Talent Search program at UNI celebrates two exceptional Jefferson and Washington seniors who earned scholarships through the generosity of the Aegon Transamerica Foundation in partnership with UNI TRIO Talent Search.



This week, Hoover's third-grade students enjoyed hands-on architecture activities and shared their experiences through reflective writing.



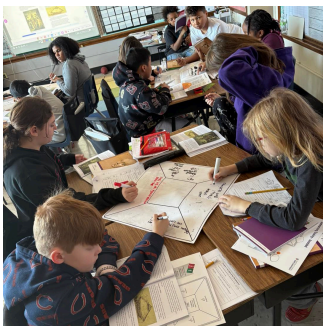
Did you know Harding's library has one of the highest circulations in the district? With books organized by genre, Harding's Media Specialist Mrs. Wrage helps students explore their interests—over 11,741 books have been checked out this year!



To achieve her Instructional Empowerment Implement



This week, Maple Grove's third-grade students



Mrs. Mitchell's students at Harrison teamed up during,

Badge, Brittney Steinkamp at Johnson STEAM Academy demonstrated seven key teaching effects, fostering a classroom where students take charge of their learning.

collaborated to refine their writing, staying focused and engaged.

CKLA literacy to explore the Renaissance, using Instructional Empowerment summarizing thinking mats to collaborate and share their insights.

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 what Iowa schools want to be addressed by lawmakers
- Gazette: Government notes: Cedar Rapids schools' holding teacher career fair
- Gazette: Cedar Rapids schools' new human resources rep working on staff retention, recruitment
- KGAN: Washington High School: New learning model to build students' problem-solving skills
- KGAN: Cedar Rapids students awarded $2,500 scholarships during basketball game halftime ceremony

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.

January 10, 2025

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

Unsubscribe | Update Profile | Constant Contact Data Notice

Constant Contact

Try email marketing for free today!