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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

A Message from Superintendent Grover



Dear CRCSD Families,

For over 100 years, Cedar Rapids Community School District has been committed to providing students with a high-quality education in safe and productive learning environments. As our needs evolve, our goal remains the same—to ensure that every learner has what they need to succeed while keeping our schools in good shape for generations to come.

I am incredibly grateful to the **more than 3,000 community members, including over 800 CRCSD parents**, who have already shared their voices through our bond survey. **Your feedback is shaping this proposal, and your input matters.**

We recognize that any tax increase is a real consideration for families, which is why we have **carefully reduced the plan to four critical projects**—addressing essential safety upgrades, maintaining our buildings, and making responsible financial decisions that benefit both students and taxpayers.

If you haven't had a chance to take the survey yet, **please complete it online or return it by mail before March 5**. You should have received a reminder email with your unique link and code. If you need another copy or assistance, just let us know.

To better understand the cost, impact, and long-term savings tied to this proposal, I invite you to hear from **Chad Schumacher, our Director of Operations**, as he breaks it all down in the video below.

Strong schools build strong communities. Together, we can **honor the past and preserve the future.**

With gratitude,

Dr. Tawana Grover
Superintendent, Cedar Rapids Community School District

Watch The Video

Learn More & Stay Informed
Visit build.crschools.us to explore the details of the bond initiative. Your input is crucial—help us build a stronger future for our students and schools!

Superintendent's Serenity: Our Students, Staff, and Community Strong



The choices we make today will define the possibilities of tomorrow. This is a moment to come together, to listen, and to shape a plan that reflects both the needs of our students and the values of our community.

Every voice helps us make the best decisions for the future. Education is core to a strong community and must remain a foundation for generations to come. Let us move forward with wisdom, care, and a commitment to what truly matters. With gratitude for the conversations, collaboration, and shared dedication to our students, we take the next step together.

Last Chance! Today is the Final Day to Enter the Magnet School Lottery



Attention parents and community members! Today is the last day to submit your application for the **Magnet School Lottery**—don't miss this incredible opportunity to shape your child's future!

Magnet schools offer specialized programs that inspire creativity, innovation, and academic excellence. Whether your child has a passion for STEM, the arts, language immersion, or a unique educational approach, our magnet programs provide enriching experiences tailored to their interests and learning style.

Why Choose a Magnet School?
- Rigorous, high-quality education
- Specialized programs to fit your child's talents and interests
- Diverse and inclusive learning environments
- Innovative teaching methods

If you haven't applied yet, there's still time—but **you must act fast!** Applications close later tonight.

Don't let this opportunity pass by! Apply today and give your child the chance to thrive in a learning environment designed just for them.

Enter Magnet Lottery

Unlocking Literacy Success: How CKLA is Transforming Learning for Cedar Rapids Students

Have you ever wondered what makes reading and writing click for young learners? The Cedar Rapids Community School District is seeing incredible results with the **Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) program**, and teachers are eager to share the success!



In a recent video, Becky Pionke, Hiawatha Elementry Kindergarten teacher, highlights how CKLA makes a **tangible difference in student literacy**. This structured approach to language arts goes beyond traditional reading lessons—students are developing stronger comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills in a way that feels natural and engaging.

What Makes CKLA So Effective?

- Stronger Vocabulary & Comprehension – CKLA's knowledge-building approach helps students retain information better and make connections across subjects.
- Engaging Storytelling & Nonfiction – Instead of rote memorization, students explore rich stories and informational texts that spark curiosity.
- Confidence in Writing & Speaking – Teachers report that students are more eager to express their ideas, showing clear growth in communication skills.
- A Proven, Research-Based Approach – CKLA is designed to build foundational literacy that aligns with how children naturally learn.

What Parents Are Seeing at Home
Many parents may notice their children using **more significant vocabulary words**, sharing fun facts from class, and showing more enthusiasm for reading time. Becky Pionke, featured in the video, emphasizes that CKLA helps kids become **readers and confident learners** – a crucial step for future success.

The Cedar Rapids Community School District is committed to giving students the **best tools for lifelong learning**, and CKLA is proving to be a game-changer.

Want to see CKLA in action?

Watch The Video

How We Decide Weather-Related School Delays & Closures



As we navigate another Iowa winter, we want to take a moment to explain how and why we make the decision to delay or close school due to weather conditions. **Our top priority is ensuring the safety of all our students**, and we recognize that getting to school in bad weather presents unique challenges—whether students ride the bus, walk, or arrive by car. At the same time, we understand schools serve as a hub for meeting so many needs for students. Because of this, we do not make the decision to cancel school lightly.

Some of the key factors we assess include:

- **National Weather Service (NWS) Advisories & Warnings** – We participate in NWS webinars for major weather events, such as snowstorms and extreme cold, and if needed, we speak directly with NWS staff for guidance.
- **Current & Forecasted Conditions** – We analyze current and/or predicted snowfall amounts, ice accumulation, wind chill, and the timing of the weather event to understand the potential impact.
- **Real vs. Wind Chill Temperatures** – Extreme cold can pose serious risks, especially for students walking to school or waiting at bus stops.
- **Current & Expected Road Conditions** – Our staff drive local roads early in the morning to assess whether they are safe for travel. We also consult with the City regarding road-clearing efforts and anticipated improvements.
- **Collaboration with Other Districts** – We often coordinate with neighboring school districts to make decisions together, ensuring consistency for families across the area.

When Will Families Be Notified?
Timely communication is essential, and we aim to notify families by:

- **5:30 PM the night before** when possible
- **5:30 AM the day of** if a morning assessment is needed
- **7:30 AM** if a delay turns into a full closure

We appreciate your understanding and patience as we work to make the safest decisions for our students and staff.

High School Course Registration



Attention Parents! High school course registration for the 2025-2026 school year is now underway for current 9th-11th grade students. Each school has a registration process that helps students review their academic plans and select classes for the next school year.

Each high school's available courses can be found in the CRCSD Program of Studies. We encourage families and supportive adults to dedicate time to discussing their student's academic plans and course selections. You can find it under the Student & Family tab on our website under the *quick links*, or click here to access it directly. If you have any questions, please reach out to your student's school counselor.

For families of incoming 9th graders, the *Rising 9th Grade* orientation and course registration process will begin in March. High school counselors will visit middle schools to present information about high school and the registration process. There will also be an 8th-grade student assembly and a family event at each high school. Stay tuned for more information on 9th-grade orientation, course registration, and events.

Scholarship Opportunities



In partnership with the Cedar Rapids Community Schools Foundation (https://crcsf.com) and local partners, the Cedar Rapids Community School District, would like to highlight some of our local scholarship opportunities to ensure students and families are aware of the resources available. Be sure to visit the Cedar Rapids Community Schools Foundation Scholarship Page for CRCSD-specific scholarship details. Visit Scholarship Opportunities for links to applications and deadlines.

Don't miss out on these valuable opportunities—start exploring and applying today!

Van Meter and Barry Boyer are excited to offer multiple scholarships of $2,000 each! The intent of the Barry Boyer Power Your Future scholarship is to encourage and support more young people going into the electrical trade. Up to five $2000 scholarships are available to students who are graduating high school and going into the electrical trade to become an electrician. The scholarship may go towards tools, steel-toe boots, outerwear, and other applicable apprenticeship fees. Due March 15th.
https://www.vanmeterinc.com/power-your-future-scholarship

Linn County Public Health Mobile Vaccine Clinic

Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Linn County, Iowa

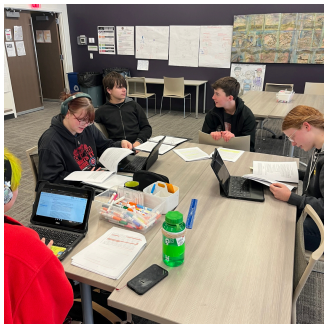
The Cedar Rapids Community School District has partnered with Linn County Public Health to provide students with an opportunity to get their required vaccines before school starts next fall. A mobile vaccine clinic will be coming to all Middle School and High School locations. Please see below for the exact dates and times they will be at your child's school. If you are interested in your child receiving vaccines at this mobile clinic, please contact your child's school nurse.

Please note that additional paperwork must be completed and returned to the health office before your child can be seen at the mobile clinic. Now is a great time to beat the back-to-school rush and get the required vaccines done ahead of time at your child's school!

School	Date	Time
Franklin Middle School	April 24th	9:00am - 11:00am
McKinley Middle School	April 24th	12:30 pm - 2:30pm
Harding Middle School	May 6th	9:00am - 11:00am
Roosevelt Middle School	May 6th	12:30 pm - 2:30pm
Taft Middle School	May 8th	9:00am - 11:00am

Wilson Middle School	May 8th	12:30 pm - 2:30pm
Kennedy High School	April 15th	9:00am - 11:00am
Washington High School	April 15th	12:30 pm - 2:30pm
Jefferson High School	April 22nd	9:00am - 11:00am
Metro High School	April 22nd	12:30 pm - 2:30pm
Hoover Pilot	May 22nd	8:30am - noon

Glance Around CRCSD



City View Mock Trial is gearing up for regionals—support the team by ordering a shirt!



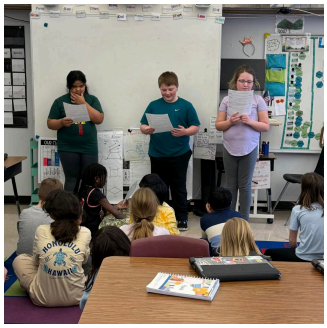
Congrats to Eleanor Spangler, Viola Gibson's American Legion essay winner! Fifth graders wrote about the flag's meaning, with the winner advancing to state for a chance to earn $500.



Metro students explored the Kirkwood Cadaver Lab with Nick, attended an admissions presentation, and toured the Sim Lab with Tiffany.



Cedar River Academy's Stuart II students took their SOS learning to the ice arena to practice winter sports.



Nixon Elementary 4th graders showcased their talent in readers theatre performances—future actors in the making!



Washington High School spread Valentine's Day cheer with valentine grams, delivered by sophomore class officers.

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.

February 21, 2025

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

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