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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

No School on Monday, March 31st

There will be no school for students on Monday due to teacher professional development. The district office will be open.

Have a great weekend & enjoy the warmer weather!

A Message from Dr. Grover

Helping Your Child Succeed During ISASP Testing



Dear CRCSD Families,

Next week begins the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) for all students in grades 3–11, continuing through April 17. These assessments are an important tool for understanding how students are progressing in their learning, aligned to the Iowa Core Standards. But at Cedar Rapids Community School District, we believe ISASP is more than a test—it's a chance for our students to shine.

This season is about more than bubble sheets and benchmarks. It's about confidence, growth, and celebrating how far each learner has come. Across classrooms and campuses, our students have been preparing—guided by teachers who believe in them and supported by families who stand beside them.

As we step into this moment, your partnership is invaluable. Here are a few ways you can help set your child up for success:

- Know the Testing Dates: Check your school's schedule and ensure your child arrives on time.
- Reschedule Appointments: Try to avoid interruptions on testing days. Tests must be completed the same day once started.
- Prioritize Sleep & Nutrition: A good night's rest and a healthy breakfast make a world of difference.
- Be Prepared: If required, make sure your child brings a fully charged Chromebook and any needed materials.
- Encourage a Positive Mindset: Remind them—what matters most is trying their best. Their effort is something to be proud of.

At CRCSD, one of our bold district goals is that by June 2027, 80% of our students will reach proficiency—with continued growth and reduced gaps across all student populations. It's ambitious. It's urgent. And it's possible—because we believe in our students. We believe in our staff. We believe in you.

Let them feel our confidence. Let our community see their progress. And let the results reflect the deep, transformative work happening in our schools every day.

Superintendent's Serenity: A Note from My Heart to Yours

Growth is not always loud. Sometimes, it's in the quiet courage of a child who keeps showing up. Sometime,s it's in the gentle encouragement of a parent whispering, *"You've got this."*

This testing season is more than a measure—it's a mirror of all the small victories that add up to something powerful. As a parent, your presence and belief mean everything. Whether it's packing a lunch, offering a hug, or celebrating their effort—you are shaping their confidence and their future.

Together, we are building something exceptional—where everyone is equipped, empowered, and engaged to excel.

Thank you for being a vital part of it.
With gratitude and belief,

Dr. Tawana Grover
Superintendent
Cedar Rapids Community School District

Full ISASP Testing Schedule

Elementary Schools:

- Bertram – April 7-10
- Cleveland – April 1-3 & 7-10
- CRA – April 1-4
- Erskine – April 1-4 & 8-11
- Grant – April 1-3 & 8
- Grant Wood – April 1-4 & 7-9
- Harrison – April 7-10
- Hiawatha – April 1-4
- Hoover – April 1-3, 7-9, 10-14, & 15
- JSA – April 1-3 & 8
- Kenwood – April 1-4
- Madison – April 1-4
- Maple Grove – April 7-11
- Nixon – April 2-3 & April 8-9
- Pierce – April 7-11
- Polk – April 1-4
- Trailside – April 1-4 & 8-10
- Van Buren – April 8-11
- Viola Gibson – April 2-4 & 8
- West Willow – April 2-4 & 7-10

Middle Schools:

- Franklin MS – April 1-4
- Harding MS – April 7-10
- McKinley MS – April 1-4
- Roosevelt MS – April 1-4
- Taft MS – April 7-10
- Wilson MS – April 8-11

High Schools:

- City View HS – April 2-4 & 7-10
- Jefferson HS – April 1-4 & 8-11
- Kennedy HS – April 1-2
- Metro HS – April 1-3
- Washington HS – April 2-3

Other:

- Home School – April 8-1

- Wright – April 7-10

Celebrating a Leader Who Puts Students First Dr. Tara Troester Named Iowa ACTE Administrator of the Year



We're proud to share some exciting news with our school community—Dr. Tara Troester has been named the 2024 Administrator of the Year by the Iowa Association for Career & Technical Education (Iowa ACTE)!

This honor recognizes Dr. Troester's incredible leadership and her ongoing efforts to expand opportunities for students through Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Her work connects classrooms with real-world experiences, helping students explore future careers and gain the skills they need to thrive after graduation.

Dr. Troester has spent her career building meaningful partnerships between schools, local businesses, and community organizations—opening doors for students to learn outside the classroom and see what's possible. A colleague shared, "Tara doesn't just build programs—she empowers students. She's constantly looking for the best ways to support their growth and success."

From strengthening CTE offerings to encouraging collaboration among educators and business partners, everything Dr. Troester does is grounded in one goal: putting students first.

What's Next?
As Iowa's top CTE administrator, Dr. Troester will now represent the state in a regional competition, where she'll be considered alongside leaders from across the Midwest. She'll also be recognized at the Region III ACTE Conference in Joliet, Illinois, this June.

We know she'll continue to make a lasting impact—not just here in our district but across the state and beyond. One supporter put it best: "Her passion and leadership will shape the future of career and technical education for years to come."

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Tara Troester on this well-earned recognition. We're lucky to have such a dedicated, student-focused leader in our school community!

Calling All Future J-Hawks, Cougars, and Warriors!!



CRCSD preschool and kindergarten registration is NOW OPEN for the 2025–2026 school year! We're excited to welcome your little learners into our school families and provide them with a fun, engaging, and supportive learning environment.

4-Year-Old Preschool Registration Now Open
Is your child ready to start their educational journey? Our preschool program offers an exciting introduction to school, with engaging activities that will spark their love for learning. We're also offering wrap-around care for working parents so your little one can stay at school all day!

Preschool Options to Fit Your Family:

- **FREE Half-Day Preschool:** A perfect introduction to school routines with AM and PM options available!

- **Full-Day Preschool (Tuition-Based): Just $325/month for a full day of learning.**
- **Multiple Convenient Locations:** Classes are available at several schools across the district to make it easier for families. Locations include: CRA, Maple Grove, West Willow, Grant Wood, Kenwood Leadership Academy, Johnson STEAM Academy, Viola Gibson, and Truman Early Learning Center.
- **Wrap-Around Care Services:** Your child can stay at school all day thanks to wrap-around care from our trusted partners - Head Start and Champions.

Kindergarten Registration is Open, Too!
If your child will be 5 years old by September 15, 2025, they're ready to start kindergarten in the fall! Our kindergarten classrooms provide a warm, welcoming environment where kids build strong academic and social-emotional skills to set them up for a lifetime of success.

Enroll Today - Space is Limited!
We can't wait to meet your little learner and start their educational journey together. Space is limited, so register now to secure your spot! Enroll today at http://crschools.us/enroll

Breaking Ground on the Future: Jefferson High School Celebrates New Renovation Project

Exciting things are happening at Jefferson High School! Just before spring break on March 14, teachers packed up and cleared out classrooms in the school's world language wing in preparation for a major renovation project.





Then, on March 26, the Jefferson community came together to celebrate with a ceremonial groundbreaking. The event featured inspiring remarks from Jefferson Principal Jessica Auliff, Auto Tech Teacher Jim Schweibert, School Board President Cindy Garlock, Cedar Rapids Mayor Tiffany O'Donnell, Cedar Rapids Airport Director Marty Lenss, and Superintendent Dr. Tawana Grover—each sharing their excitement for what's ahead.

This new space will house:
- State-of-the-art CTE space for numerous programs, such as auto tech, aviation, and more
- The Freshman Academy: a dedicated space designed to create a small group learning experience for 9th graders

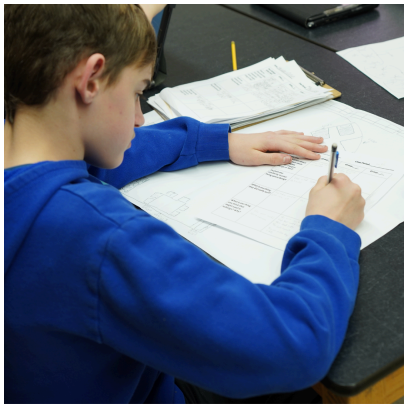
This transformative project is made possible through SAVE and PPEL funding, and it represents a powerful investment in our students' futures.

We can't wait to watch these new learning spaces take shape—and to see the opportunities they'll create for our students for years to come.





Supporting Every Reader: Cedar Rapids Educators Lead the Way



Reading challenges don't stop in elementary school—and many older students struggle quietly without the support they need. A recent *Education Week* article highlighted this national issue and featured the important work happening right here in Cedar Rapids.

At Roosevelt Creative Corridor Business Academy, Reading Interventionist Jenny Flieder and educators across the Cedar Rapids Community School District are stepping up to make a difference.

As students reach middle and high school, the focus shifts from learning to read to reading to learn. However, that shift can be a significant hurdle for students who miss key foundational reading skills. "*They've learned how to mask it*," Jenny shared in the article. "*It takes intentional screening and support to catch and help them.*"

In our schools, teachers use small-group, personalized instruction to help students rebuild their reading skills—without stigma or shame. The goal is to build confidence and open

doors for success.
Districtwide, the Office of Learning and Leadership provides data-driven tools and resources for educators, while community partners like Reading Into Success help strengthen literacy from early grades through middle school and beyond.

This work was recognized in Education Week's article, "*4 Ways Teachers Identify and Support Struggling Older Readers,*" showing that what we're doing here in Cedar Rapids is part of a bigger movement—and making a real impact.

Because every student deserves the chance to become a confident, capable reader—no matter when they find their stride.

Washington High School Speech Team Rings the Bell for 4th Consecutive State Championship



Please join us in congratulating the Washington High School Speech Team on winning their 4th straight state championship in Group Speech!

This year's award-winning performance, "Parable of Three Roses," earned the prestigious Critic's Choice honor in the Choral Reading category. As part of a proud Washington tradition, the team rang the victory bell in the courtyard and raised their new state banner in celebration.

We are so proud of these talented students and their coaches for their creativity, dedication, and continued excellence. Way to go, Washington Speech!

Jefferson Academic Decathlon Team Honored for 25th Straight State Championship



We're proud to celebrate a truly outstanding achievement by the Jefferson High School Academic Decathlon team, who were recently recognized at the Cedar Rapids City Council meeting for winning their 25th consecutive state championship!

This impressive milestone reflects the team's incredible work ethic, determination, and love of learning. Their commitment to academic excellence sets a powerful example for students across our district.

To our dedicated team members and coaches—congratulations on this well-deserved recognition. Your hard work makes our entire school community proud!

School-Based Vaccine Clinics Available for Students

The **Cedar Rapids Community School District** is partnering with **Linn County Public Health** to offer a convenient way for students to receive their **required vaccines before the start of the next school year.**

What Parents Need to Know:

- A mobile vaccine clinic will visit all middle and high schools.
- This service ensures students receive their required immunizations before school starts.

- To participate, parents must complete and return the necessary paperwork to the school's health office before the clinic date.
- Contact your child's school nurse for more details or to sign up.
- This is a great opportunity to avoid the back-to-school rush and check this requirement off your list early.

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

Mobile Clinic Schedule:

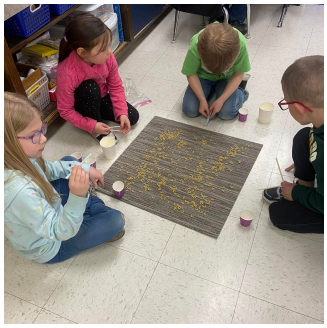
- **Kennedy High School** – April 15, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
- **Washington High School** – April 15, 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM
- **Jefferson High School** – April 22, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
- **Metro High School** – April 22, 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM
- **Franklin Middle School** – April 24, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
- **McKinley Middle School** – April 24, 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM
- **Harding Middle School** – May 6, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
- **Roosevelt Middle School** – May 6, 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM
- **Taft Middle School** – May 8, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
- **Wilson Middle School** – May 8, 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM
- **Hoover Pilo**t – May 22, 8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

If your child still needs their required immunizations, this is a simple and convenient way to get them done at school. Reach out to your child's school nurse with any questions.

Glance Around CRCSD



All types of fun and learning can take place! At Hoover Community School, kindergarten and first-grade students are having a great time in their after-school board game club.



This week, first graders at Hiawatha Elementary completed a Mystery Science activity about animal traits and survival. They used different pretend beaks to pick up pretend food.



Fourth Graders in Miss Olson's classroom at Johnson STEAM Academy integrated visual art into their math learning about symmetry with mosaics and name bugs!







It was a night of Sustainability at Cedar River Academy. Students, Staff, families, and the community came out to celebrate, learn, and grow.

They were soaring to new heights at Erskine Elementary! The buddy classrooms of Mrs. Bryant and Ms. Manley collaborated, got outside and flew kites across the sky.

Way to go, Taft Student Leadership students connected and volunteered at Truman Early Learning. The middle schoolers played, sang, and danced with our youngest learners.

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.

- KCRG: District breaks ground at Jefferson High School for college and career pathways model
- Gazette: Cedar Rapids aims to make the outdoors 'part of the classroom' at local schools as a Nature Everywhere Community

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.

March 28, 2025

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

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