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PPEL Thank You



The Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCSD) extends its heartfelt gratitude to the families, staff, and community members who helped to successfully renew the Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL) in Tuesday's special election. With 72% of voters supporting the renewal, the district exceeded the required majority of 51%, securing critical funding for the ongoing maintenance and improvements of district facilities.

"The renewal of our district's PPEL is more than just a funding mechanism; it's a reaffirmation of our community's commitment to public education and the future of Cedar Rapids," stated Dr. Tawana Grover, CRCSD Superintendent. *"It enables us to continue providing high-quality, equitable learning environments for all our students, and supports our dedicated staff in their mission to educate and inspire."*

"With the renewal of PPEL, we can execute on a 10-year plan to upkeep our facilities, expand opportunities, and provide transportation to ensure our students are able to attend school daily. As we move forward, we'll continue to work closely with our community, maintaining transparency and accountability in our use of these vital funds," added Chad Schumacher, Director of Operations.

CRCSD's tax rate remains one of the lowest among Linn County school districts. For more information about how PPEL funds are used, visit crschools.us/PPEL.

Emergency Response Protocols

School safety remains a top priority for CRCSD, and effective communication about emergency procedures is crucial for the entire community. In partnership with the Cedar Rapids Police Department, CRCSD is introducing updated Emergency Response Protocols for the school year, enhancing preparedness for various crisis situations. These protocols include:



Hold - This means students will leave the hallways and remain in a classroom or designated area until an “All Clear” is announced. Classroom instruction continues as normal. An example would be a medical emergency or student behavior issue.

Secure - This means students outside of the building will come inside, and all exterior doors and windows are secured. Teachers and staff will increase situational awareness, and instruction will continue as normal inside the building. An example would be when police respond to a report of shots fired in the neighborhood.

Lockdown - A Lockdown is used when an immediate threat is inside or immediately outside the school. Classroom doors are locked, and lights are turned off. Students move away from windows and doors, and they remain silent. Teachers, staff, and students will prepare to either Run, Hide, or Fight. An example would be an active shooter.

Evacuate - Teachers, staff, and students leave everything behind and follow instructions to move to a safe area outside the building. An example would be a fire or gas leak inside the building.

Shelter - Teachers, staff, and students move to a designated “shelter area” inside the building. An example would be a tornado warning.

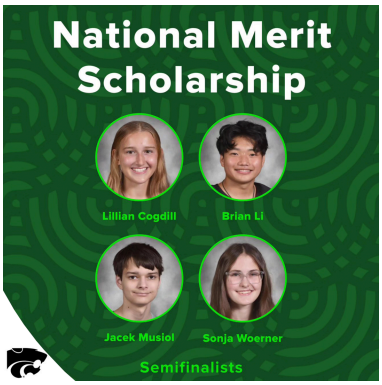
In the coming weeks, district safety leaders, Police Pals, and School Resource Officers will visit schools to ensure staff and students are familiar with these protocols.

What can Families Do to Help?

- Avoid calling or coming to the school during an emergency to keep phone lines open and prevent interfering with safety efforts.
- Ensure your emergency contact information in Infinite Campus is up-to-date. If you need assistance, contact your student's school.

If you have more questions or concerns, please get in touch with our Safety and Security administrator.

National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist



In a remarkable achievement, four Cedar Rapids Community School District students have been named semifinalists in the prestigious National Merit Scholarship Program. Lillian Cogdill, Brian Li, Jacek Musiol, and Sonja Woerner, have demonstrated exceptional scholastic abilities to earn their place among the nation's brightest students.

The National Merit Scholarship Program is a highly competitive and esteemed academic competition that recognizes outstanding students across the United States. To become semifinalists, students must score in the top one percent of students nationwide on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. A total of 165 Iowa high school students are among the 16,000 students nationally to be named as a National Merit Scholarship semifinalist.

The next step in the National Merit Scholarship competition involves meeting additional standards and submitting a detailed application, a written essay, a recommendation from a school official, and SAT or ACT test scores. The finalists will be announced in April 2025.



Trailside Elementary School Ribbon Cutting



“I love the library, it’s very impressive.”
“This is a beautiful space.”
“This school is so cool!”

These were just a few of the comments heard from the over 200 people who toured CRCSD’s newest building, Trailside Elementary School. Students, staff, families, board members, elected officials, and the media were all on hand for the official ribbon-cutting ceremony and community open house on Thursday, September 12th. Trailside currently has 435 students from the former Arthur and Garfield schools but has the capacity to hold 600, allowing for future growth. But even with its size, each grade level has its own pod, making it feel like a small community within the larger building. Each pod features its own restrooms, cooperative space, lockers, and storage. The library is a central focal point of the school, emphasizing the importance of literacy to our students. Its state-of-the-art technology, flexible learning spaces, an abundance of natural light, and geothermal all allow the district to operate the new building at a fraction of the cost of Garfield and Arthur.

See more images from the event

Kindergarten Chat

We had the opportunity to sit down with some of our youngest learners at West Willow and Grant Wood Elementary Schools to hear about their first few weeks of school. From their big dreams for the future to the new things they’ve learned and what makes their teacher and school special, these kindergarten students share their honest, funny, and heartwarming perspectives. Check out our fun “Kindergarten Chat” video to hear their true confessions and to get a glimpse into the exciting start of their education journey.



No School September 20



Just a friendly reminder that there is no school for students on Friday, September 20th. This is a scheduled teacher development day. All school and District offices will remain open. You can check out the 2024-25 CRCSD calendar to see the remaining staff learning days when school will not be in session.

We want to remind parents that CRCSD has partnered with Champions to provide all-day childcare on days when school is not in session due to professional learning for staff. Care will be available for any CRCSD kindergarten through 5th grade student at Erskine Elementary, Hiawatha Elementary, Kenwood Leadership Academy, and Viola Gibson Elementary School. In addition, Truman Early Learning Center will serve as the Champions childcare site for preschool students. Parents must register for this service with Champions before September 20th.

Hazel Health

CRCSD is partnering with Hazel Health to expand access to mental health services for all of our students! Hazel Health is a telehealth service that will help support student mental well-being without any out-of-pocket cost for families. This new resource will help us support more students, especially those who may not be our highest-need students but still would benefit from care. Student appointments will be virtual and can take place on any internet-connected device either during school hours or at home outside of school. Students will work with locally licensed therapists who speak multiple languages, understand cultural differences, and are experts in the unique needs of today's youth. Hazel Health provides short-term evidence-based teletherapy, where therapists work with a student on a particular goal, such as anxiety reduction techniques. Services are 100% confidential and are free for students.



Your student's school will share more information about this new service in the coming week. The district hopes to start accepting student appointments beginning the week of September 30th.

Important Dates

High School Homecoming Dates



Homecoming, or HoCo as students call it, is right around the corner for Jefferson, Kennedy, and Washington High Schools! It is a time for students, staff, and alumni to come together and celebrate their school. Each institution has its beloved homecoming traditions that echo the unity and spirit of our district. Below are the dates for each high school's upcoming homecoming celebrations. Check with each school on the specific times and locations of each activity.

Jefferson

- Parade: September 18
  - *see parade route map below*
- Football Game: September 19

- Homecoming Dance: September 20



Jefferson High School Homecoming parade route.

Kennedy

- Parade: September 25
- Football Game: September 26
- Homecoming Dance: September 27

Washington

- Parade and Bonfire: October 2
- Football Game: October 4
- Homecoming Dance: October 5

School Picture Days



Get those smiles ready! School pictures for CRCSD students are right around the corner. This year, CRCSD will use HR Imaging Partners, Inc. as our school photo vendor. Below is the schedule of the picture dates for each school in the District. Your student's schools will communicate any changes to these dates. Picture make-up dates are scheduled to start in October.

- Cedar Rapids Home School - 10/17
- Cedar River Academy - 9/23
- Cleveland - 9/18
- Grant Wood Elementary - 10/15
- Harding Middle School - 9/16
- Hiawatha Elementary - 9/18
- Johnson STEAM Academy - 10/10
- Kenwood Leadership Academy - 9/18
- Metro High School - 9/16
- Nixon Elementary - 9/26
- Pierce Elementary - 10/9
- Roosevelt Creative Corridor Business Academy - 10/7
- Trailside Elementary - 10/16
- Truman Early Learning Center - 10/1
- Van Buren Elementary - 10/8
- Viola Gibson Elementary - 10/8
- Washington High School - 9/16
- West Willow Elementary - 10/7
- Wilson Middle School - 10/17
- Wright Elementary - 10/3

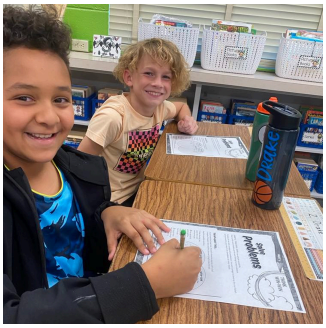
Glance Around CRCSD



This week Metro STEAM Academy students gathered the grown pumpkins and gords, which were started as seeds in their school's greenhouse.



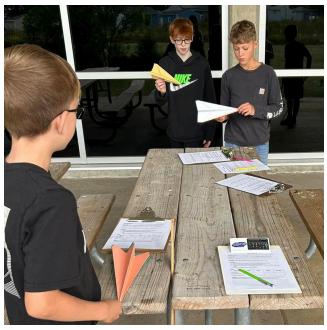
First Graders at Hiawatha Elementary created a Peter Rabbit craft to retell the story as part of the school's Fables & Stories Knowledge Unit for Language Arts.



Students at Kenwood Leadership Academy worked to create Classroom Mission Statements. They shared ideas and insights to help define their purpose and aspirations for this new school year!



Kindergarteners at Wright Elementary got to fist bump a firefighter during a visit from the Cedar Rapids Fire Department. This program introduces students to fire safety and what a firefighter looks like in their work gear.



In science class, 7th graders at Harding Middle School learn about variables. They then applied their knowledge to a paper airplane experiment.



These Maple Grove Elementary first graders were tickling the ivories in music class this week. Keyboard lessons are part of their learning happening in Music.

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:** Voters say 'yes' to Cedar Rapids school property tax that keeps kids 'warm, safe and dry'
- **KWWL:** Trailside Elementary holds ribbon-cutting event in Cedar Rapids
- **KGAN:** PHOTO GALLERY: CRCSD leaders hold ribbon cutting at Trailside Elementary Schoo

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

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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.

September 13, 2024

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

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