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# Future Ready Today Newsletter

## College & Career Pathways




It was a momentous occasion for Cedar Rapids Community School District! On October 23, CRCSD hosted a College and Career Academy Grant Award Reception, drawing district leaders, local business professionals, elected officials, and higher education partners to celebrate a game-changing achievement - a nearly $15 million Magnet Schools Assistance Program Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The celebration also unveiled the District's new College and Career Pathways, set to transform the high school experience for students. This grant will support the program by funding state-of-the-art technology, industry-specific equipment, and hands-on learning opportunities for students.

### What are College & Career Pathways?



College and Career Pathways are specialized, career-focused tracks within a high school designed to better prepare students for life after graduation. These pathways will offer a blend of academic coursework, college preparation, and career-connected learning. Students will have the opportunity to explore potential career paths through hands-on experiences like internships, job shadowing, and mentorships with local businesses. This innovative approach bridges the gap between classroom learning and real-world application, helping students develop a deeper understanding of the material while equipping them with skills for future success.

### How will this Benefit Students?

This new learning model will help students prepare for life after high school by offering opportunities to explore careers and earn college credit or industry-recognized certifications. They will also develop important real-world skills like problem solving, collaboration, adaptability, and critical thinking. By connecting students' interests with real-

world experiences, CRCSD aims to boost student engagement, improve academic achievement, and raise graduation rates.




## What Pathways will be Offered?




Over the past year, CRCSD collaborated with hundreds of students, staff, community members, and higher education professionals to determine which career pathways should be offered. The District also considered current and future workforce needs, focusing on careers that are in high demand and offer good wages.

Each high school will have its own unique pathways and academies:

- **Jefferson:** Schools of Law & Human Services, Aviation & Engineering, and Environmental Science & Sustainability.
- **Washington:** Schools of Medical Sciences, Business & Media, and Engineering & Technology.
- **Kennedy:** School of Liberal Arts.
- **Metro:** School of Health & Hospitality.

## When are Pathways Coming?




The rollout of these Pathways will begin in the Fall of 2025 with Freshman Academies at each high school. These academies will create smaller learning communities where ninth graders will take core courses with a consistent team of teachers, providing academic and emotional support as they transition into high school. During the 2026-2027 school year, College and Career Pathways for upperclassmen will be introduced.

Be on the lookout for updates as we approach the 2025 launch of Freshman Academies and the 2026 debut of College and Career Pathways in our upper grades. Together, we are equipping, empowering, and engaging all students to excel.

# News and Updates

## 5th Annual Trunk-or-Treat

Join district teachers, staff, and administrators for the fifth annual CREA/CRCSD Trunk-or-Treat THIS Sunday, October 27th. The event will be held from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. in the Kingston Stadium parking lot. District staff will decorate trunks and hand out candy and/or

trinkets to kids in attendance. Kids are encouraged to wear their Halloween costumes. This is a rain-or-shine event and is open to all CRCSD families. We hope to see you there!




## National Bullying Month

October is National Bullying Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness about bullying and encourage proactive intervention in schools and at home. Bullying can take many forms, including cyberbullying, and often leaves lasting emotional impacts on children. It's important for families to recognize the signs of bullying and support their children through open conversations and proactive steps.

If your child is struggling with bullying or its effects on their mental health, the Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCSD) offers free, confidential online therapy services through our partnership with Hazel Health. Licensed therapists are available to provide support for students facing bullying, anxiety, depression, self-esteem issues, and more. Therapy can help children process their emotions, build resilience, and develop healthy coping strategies.

Parents or guardians can easily refer their child to Hazel Health for virtual therapy sessions, available Monday through Friday from 7 AM to 7 PM. These services are accessible both at school and at home, ensuring that students receive the support they need wherever they are.

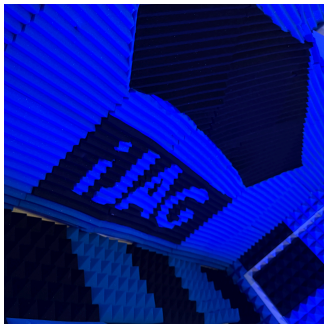
To learn more or make a referral

## Podcast Studio Ribbon-Cutting



*Is this thing on?*
Earlier this week, students from Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates (iJAG) at Jefferson High School celebrated the grand opening of their new podcast studio with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Equipped with professional sound panels, high-quality recording equipment, and comfortable furnishings, the studio has everything students need.

Supported by the Cedar Rapids Community School District, Jefferson High School's new podcast studio is a vibrant hub designed to inspire creativity and amplify student voices while enhancing essential communication skills. Students will use the studio to interview local business and community leaders, exploring potential career paths and gaining valuable insights into the professional world. As technology and media continue to evolve, it's crucial for all CRCSD students to embrace innovative formats. The podcast studio equips them with hands-on experience in content creation, technical production, and professional communication—skills that will serve them well in today's dynamic job market.










## Glance Around CRCSD



Congrats to Kennedy Debate Team of Junior Slade Pourahmadi and Sophomore Sully Reynolds on placing 2nd in their first tournament together in Novice Public Forum Debate!



Just a little off the top please! First graders at Hoover Elementary gave their plants a little “haircut” this week, trimming up the rye grass and alfalfa they planted a few weeks ago!



Fall fun at Cleveland Elementary! Students are enjoying playing in the piles of leaves and all the seasonal fun during recess this week.



Metro High School students and staff rolled up their sleeves to help save lives at this week’s Fall Blood Drive! A special shoutout to Metro alum Cassie Graves, who was as one of the phlebotomists working the event!



4th graders at Johnson STEAM Academy are working in teams and doing hands-on problem solving to learn how to multiply two-digit and three-digit numbers together.



Maple Grove had some ll-ama-zing visitors this week! To celebrate reaching their school fundraising goal, some friendly llamas stopped by to say hi to our awesome students.

## 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:** Cedar Rapids schools announces the career pathways it will offer at each high school

- **KGAN:** Cedar Rapids schools invests in future with hands-on career training for high schoolers
- **KWWL:** Cedar Rapids School District to give College and Career Pathways grant

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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October 25, 2024

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

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