

November 13, 2025

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Listen To The Newsletter

We know you all have busy schedules, so we are sharing this important information through a short podcast-style recording. Click the button below to listen to an overview of the newsletter, and then you can dive deeper by reading below!

Listen Now

DR. GROVER'S MESSAGE

Dear CRCSD Families,
For generations, the Cedar Rapids Community School District has been the heart of this city, a place where children's dreams take root and futures are shaped. Today, we stand at a defining moment. This is not a moment of despair, but a moment of disclosure, a time for honesty, collaboration, and shared purpose.

Since 2020, our district has experienced a steady decline in enrollment, a total reduction of more than 1,800 students over the past five years, including 622 this year. This is not unique to Cedar Rapids, districts across Iowa and the nation are experiencing similar trends due to shifting demographics, school choice, and smaller incoming student populations. Still, we must address what this means for us locally. Because enrollment directly impacts funding, this decline affects how we staff, plan, and allocate resources. We must plan carefully as we seek to become the district of choice for our community.

This is a call for awareness, unity, and collective action as we work together to strengthen our schools and support every student. Our focus is on a path forward

that right-sizes our organization while ensuring every student continues to have access to high-quality instruction, innovative programs, and the support they need to thrive.

Next Steps for CRCSD

- **Engage District and School Leaders:** Initiate conversations with campus administrators to implement the staffing model that was developed for the 2025-26 school year and identify efficiencies across the organization.
- **Create Strategic Planning & Community Coalition:** The launch of a coalition of parents, educators, and community partners, working alongside the Board, to co-design a multi-year plan that aligns facilities, staffing, and student needs with our district's long-term vision.
- **Launch a Unified Enrollment Campaign:** A comprehensive marketing initiative funded primarily through grants to inform families of our programs and offerings in CRCSD.
- **Advocate:** Continued work at the state and federal levels to secure funding that truly meets the needs of public education.

Your voice is critical. We invite families, staff, and community members to join our Community Coalition to help develop a strategic plan for increasing enrollment and ensuring CRCSD continues to be a district of choice.

CLICK HERE to join the coalition

Together, we can ensure Cedar Rapids schools remain a place where every student is known, challenged, and cared for, and where families and staff feel valued and empowered as partners in shaping our future.

Sincerely,
Dr. Tawana Grover
Superintendent
Cedar Rapids Community School District

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



We are ecstatic to celebrate an exceptional elementary student, **Connor Gass** from West Willow Elementary. He has been selected for the innovative **Iowa Pathfinder Stars Program**!

Connor is among just twenty-one Iowa elementary students chosen for this new extension of the National Math Stars program. This prestigious recognition is a testament to his incredible mathematical talent, as he scored in the top 2% in mathematics on the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress when was a third grader.

This program is modeled after the groundbreaking 1997 Mars Pathfinder Mission. The Pathfinder Stars Program is designed to support and accelerate the talents of these young mathematicians for the next 10 years, continuing through high school.

- Expert Guidance: Students will receive expert guidance from the National Math Stars team.

- Learning Opportunities: They will have access to fun, community-based learning experiences.
- Financial Support: Students may qualify for financial assistance to help cover the cost of STEM-related advanced courses and camps.

This flexible, parent-led program offers outstanding opportunities for Connor to develop his passion and proficiency in mathematics further. Please join us in congratulating this young rising star!

NO SCHOOL MONDAY

We would like to remind all our families that there will be no school for students on Monday, November 17, 2025. The staff has professional learning. Enjoy the long weekend students!

CONSIDER KENNEDY NIGHT

Kennedy High School is rolling out the green carpet for Consider Kennedy Night on November 17th. This exciting event is designed to showcase all the amazing things that make Kennedy a great place to learn and grow, and is open to all prospective high school students and families.

- Monday, November 17
- 6:00-7:30 PM
- Kennedy High School Auditorium
- RSVP to attend

Attendees will have the opportunity to meet Kennedy's teachers, coaches, and principals; explore the wide variety of student clubs, athletic teams, and fine arts programs; enjoy live performances from Kennedy Theater, Show Choir, and the Jazz Band; take a guided tour of the building; and learn about Kennedy's strong academic programs that prepare students for college and beyond. As a bonus, Kennedy Theater is giving every attending family two free tickets to *Playtime Poppy's "How the Grinch Stole Christmas: The Musical."*

Please help spread the word to families considering high schools for their students.

SNAP SHUTDOWN FAQ

Why aren't SNAP benefits going out on time in November?
The federal government has been shut down since September 30 as Congress argues over annual spending bills. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has said they do not have enough contingency funds to pay November's SNAP benefits in full, and have told states not to load November SNAP benefits onto participants' EBT cards.

How many people are being affected?
There are currently over 270,000 Iowans receiving a total of $45 million in SNAP benefits every month. SNAP benefits are issued onto EBT cards the 1st through the 10th of the month. Depending on how long the government shutdown lasts, a delay in November benefits could impact some or all SNAP participants in the state.

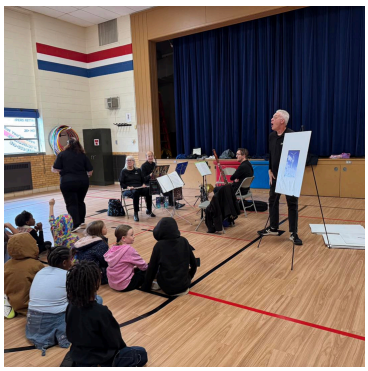
Can I use any SNAP benefits that are still on my EBT card in November?

Yes, you can still use any remaining SNAP benefits on your EBT card after October 31st.

How quickly will I get my November benefits once the government re-opens?
November SNAP benefits that are delayed will be issued as quickly as possible once the federal government re-opens. The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services has said that they “will work as quickly as possible to ensure benefits are available. We will communicate the timing as details are finalized.”

Where can I go to get help with food?
Local food pantries are here to help. Find the nearest food pantry by visiting: feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank.

We Believe In Our Students



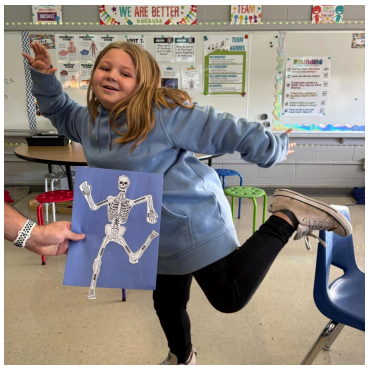
Cleveland's 3rd grade had the woodwind quintet from Orchestra Iowa visit.



McKinley welcomed over 400 future bears to McKinley STEAM Academy for an exceptional preview performance of Willy Wonka Jr.



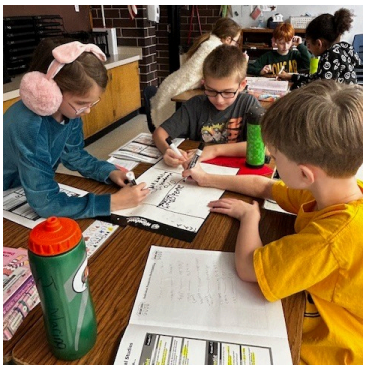
Metro STEAM Academy had a very successful first week as a market shopkeeper. They will return to the market next week with Friday to Sunday hours and new products.



KLA’s 3rd graders brought their CKLA unit to life when a local chiropractor visited for a Q&A about the muscular, skeletal, and nervous systems. The classroom was full of giggles, “aha!” moments, and proud little scientists.



Wright’s 4th graders had a fantastic morning joining the Hy-Vee Veterans Day Breakfast! They did an outstanding job singing and showing their appreciation for the brave men and women who have served our country.



During Pierce’s 4th-grade social studies, the Progressive Era unit, Mrs. Stecker's students are looking at a photo through the lens of a Geographer, Economist, Historian, and Political Scientist.

IN THE NEWS

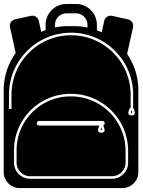
In case you missed it, here are recent news items about, or of interest to, Cedar Rapids Community School District students, teachers, and parents.

Gazette: Improved test scores, fewer behavior referrals in C.R. schools because of new learning model

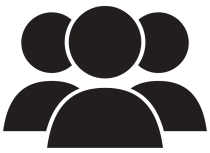
Read Here

KCRG: Cedar Rapids Schools board president responds to resignation call

Read Here



Your School's Virtual Backpack



CRCSD Is Hiring! Apply Here



Breakfast & Lunch Menus

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, Educational Leadership and Support Center, 2500 Edgewood Rd NW, Cedar Rapids, IA, (319) 558-2000.

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Jefferson Activities Calendar



Kennedy Activities Calendar



Washington Activities Calendar

Cedar Rapids Community School District
Every Learner: Future Ready

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

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