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August 28, 2025

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PODCAST VERSION

Listen To The Newletter

We know you all have busy schedules, 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

BELIEVE: OUR INCREDIBLE FIRST WEEK



FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL HIGHLIGHT REEL



The excitement of a brand-new school year filled our halls this week as students returned for the first day of school! From warm welcomes at the door to smiles in the classrooms, it was a day full of energy, connection, and new beginnings.

We've gathered some of our favorite moments into a quick video so you can experience the joy and excitement alongside our students and staff.

Check Out the Video

NO SCHOOL SEPTEMBER 1 - LABOR DAY



Just a reminder that there is no school for students, and all District offices will be closed on Monday, September 1st, in observance of Labor Day. You can check out the full calendar for future school holidays and scheduled no-school days.

Full 25-26 District Calendar

SAFE & SECURE LEARNING NIGHT

On Tuesday, September 16th, CRCSD will be hosting a Safe and Secure Learning Night at the Educational Leadership and Support Center at 2500 Edgewood Rd. NW, from 5 PM to 6 PM.

Parents and community members are invited to attend to learn more about the district's agreement with the DOJ, the tiers of behavior support for students, and an overview of the district's Safe and Secure Learning Team. The event will also be live-streamed for those who cannot attend.

The district has worked diligently with our school buildings to ensure that we are implementing approaches to student behavior that are evidence-based, positive, and the least restrictive means of responding to each student. As a result, our efforts provide a heavy emphasis on prevention and de-escalation strategies such as truly knowing and understanding the reason for individual student behaviors, giving a student choices, listening to a student, and encouraging/collaborating with the student to find a solution.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Ryals Parker, Chief of Area 2, Special Services, and Behavior Supports.

CRCSD REMAINS COMMITTED TO A SAFE AND SECURE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL

The Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCSD) wants every family to know that our schools are safe places for all students. Keeping students safe and ready to learn is our top priority.
The law says that no student can be kept out of school because of their immigration status. CRCSD does not ask about, keep, or share any student's immigration status. If law enforcement, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), comes to a school, we have clear rules to follow. Only building administrators and central office leaders will speak with law enforcement. This helps make sure we follow the law and also protect the rights of our students and families.
Student records are private. By law, schools cannot share student information unless there is a legal reason. If someone asks for more than basic "directory information," parents or guardians will be told. Students cannot be interviewed or taken from school without parents being contacted and the law being reviewed.

CRCSD has a list of resources available for families who want them.

Full Message and Resources Here

CHAMPIONS PRICING

Recently, Champions shared information with families regarding price increases for the 2025-26 school year. Since that time, the Cedar Rapids Community School District has worked closely with Champions to ensure that pricing remains affordable for our families.

We are pleased to share that we were able to reach an agreement that reduces the previously announced rates. This agreement ensures that our families will either see no price increase or a reduction compared to Champions' 24-25 school year pricing. Final pricing for the 2025-26 school year is as follows:

Before School (AM Program)
1–2 days: $21 (no increase); 3–5 days: $32 (no increase)

After School (PM Program)
1–2 days: $40 ($3 savings); 3–5 days: $60 ($10 savings)

Before & After School Combined
1–2 days: $61 ($3 savings); 3–5 days: $92 ($10 savings)

Please note: you may not see these updated prices reflected in your first invoice of the school year. However, the adjustment will be made, and the correct pricing will be reflected beginning with your second invoice.

We are grateful to Champions for working with us to provide a high-quality program at a more affordable cost for families.

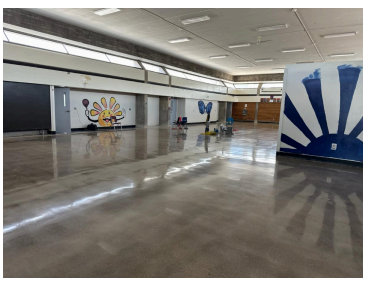
FRESH UPDATES AT POLK

Over the summer, Polk Alternative Education Center received some exciting updates to make the school even more welcoming for students and staff. The carpet in the IMC, which was original to the building, had become worn and difficult to maintain. It often caused extra work for the custodial team and even posed tripping hazards. To address this, the district removed the old carpet, stripped the glue, and cleaned, polished, and sealed the floors, giving the space a fresh, safe, and low-maintenance update.

The improvements don't stop there! Painters brightened the building by updating all the doors, entries, and inlets with a beautiful light gray finish. In addition, Polk welcomed back a familiar face, former student and current Metro High School student, Anthony Russ, who created a mural to bring color and energy to the walls. His artwork adds a unique, welcoming touch for our elementary students and showcases the talent of our CRCSD students.







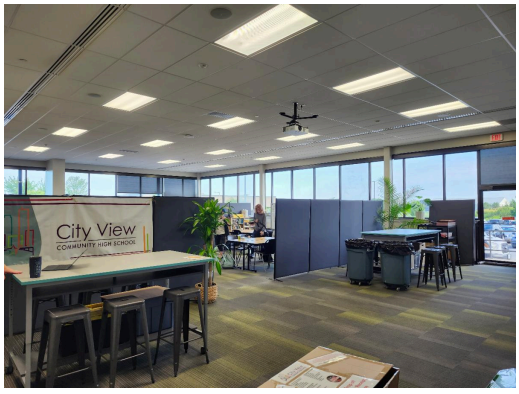
NEW LOCATIONS FOR CITY VIEW & IOWA BIG

We're thrilled to share updates about some exciting changes and partnerships that will further enhance the student experience in our district.

City View Community High School is proud to continue and expand its partnership with Kirkwood Community College, opening the door to even more opportunities for students to take college-level courses and earn credit while still in high school. Now located within Kirkwood's Linn County Regional Center on Boyson Road in Hiawatha, City View offers students a unique learning environment where high school and college experiences come together under one roof. This new location enhances City View's innovative, student-centered learning model by connecting students directly to hands-on programs, industry-relevant coursework, and supportive pathways that align with their individual goals and interests.

We're also excited about Iowa BIG's new location in the heart of downtown Cedar Rapids. They are taking City View's old space on the second floor of the Economic Alliance building. This vibrant setting will open doors to unique partnerships and connections, giving students the chance to engage with community businesses, nonprofits, and city leaders. These real-world experiences will allow our students to take full advantage of the opportunities around them while continuing to learn in innovative ways.

Together, these moves represent powerful steps forward in preparing our students for life beyond the classroom.



HIGH SCHOOLS RECOGNIZED ON NATIONAL LIST

We're proud to announce that Jefferson, Kennedy, and Washington High Schools have earned award recognition on the U.S. News & World Report's Best High Schools list! Kennedy High School ranked highest in our district, followed by Washington and Jefferson.

This honor highlights the dedication of our students, teachers, and staff to creating a strong, supportive

learning environment. Being recognized on this national platform is a testament to the daily hard work, innovation, and excellence of our schools. Congratulations to our entire school community!

SCHOOL PICTUE DAYS



Get those smiles ready! It’s hard to believe, it’s already time for school picture days. 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 retake days will be in October and November.

Fall Picture Dates

CELL PHONE POLICY REVIEW



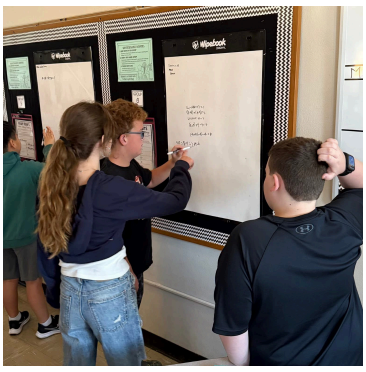
After these first few days of school, please take a moment to check in with your student about how they are feeling with the new cell phone policy. Your support and conversations at home help us make this transition smoother for everyone.
As a reminder, all cell phones, headsets, earbuds, smartwatches, smart glasses, etc. should be silenced or turned off AND out of sight in your student’s backpack or locker. If you need to get a hold of your student during the school day, please call the school’s main office.

We Believe In Our Students

The first day of school is here! Our halls were filled with excitement, smiles, and a few first-day jitters as students returned to classrooms ready to learn and grow. We’re looking forward to a year filled with new opportunities, friendships, and achievements. Thank you to our staff, families, and students for making the start of the school year such a positive one! Here’s are just a few of the special first day moments we captured.



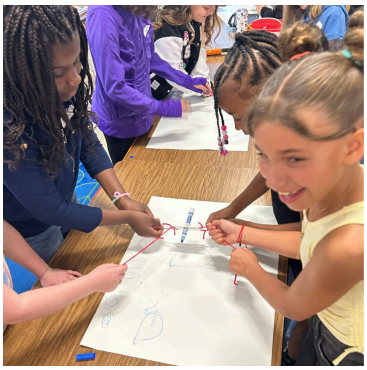




Trailside Elementary



Cleveland Elementary



Harding Middle School



Jefferson High School

Grant Elementary

Franklin Middle School



West Willow Elementary



Harrison at Madison Elementary



Johnson Steam Academy

Your School's Virtual Backpack

CRCSD Is Hiring! Apply Here

Breakfast & Lunch Menus

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: $117 million bond for Cedar Rapids schools gets enough signatures to make ballot — **Read Here**
- Gazette: 53 years into teaching, Barry Wilson has no plans to retire — **Read Here**

- Gazette: Cedar Rapids schools aims to build trust with new strategic communication plan — Read Here
- Gazette: Hundreds of Cedar Rapids 9th-graders get focused guidance in new Freshman Seminar — Read Here
- KGAN: Students return to classes in Cedar Rapids, new cell phone policy in place — Read Here

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.

Sign Up To Receive This Newsletter Weekly

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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