

WELCOME TO TAFT



Parent/Student Handbook

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Staff Directory

Main Office

558-2243, option 3

Mr. Gilchrist	Principal
Mr. Neilly	Associate Principal
Miss Moore	Principal Secretary
Mrs. Malamphy	Associate Principal Secretary
Ms. Clark	Engagement Specialist

Counselor's Office

558-2243, option 4

Mrs. Hinrichs	Counselor
Mrs. Kitterman	Counselor
Mrs. Pladna	Counselor
Mrs. Messina	Counselor Secretary

Attendance Office

558-2243, option 1

Mrs. Hartman	Attendance Secretary
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Clinic Office

558-2243, option 2

Mrs. Nederhoff	School Nurse
Mrs. Utterback	Health Secretary

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Mr. J. Gilchrist	Principal; jgilchrist@crschools.us
Mr. S. Neilly	Associate Principal; seneilly@crschools.us
Ms. M. Clark	Engagement Specialist; moclark@crschools.us
Mrs. M. Courtney	Instructional Design Strategist; mcourtney@crschools.us

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Mrs. K. Davenport	Behavior Technician; kdavenport@crschools.us
Ms. D. English	School Safety Liaison; deenglish@crschools.us
Ms. M. Lucero	SEBH Intervention Specialist; mlucero@crschools.us
Mr. R. Koehler	Special Education Interventionist; rkoehler@crschools.us
Mr. S. Nowland	Special Education Interventionist; snowland@crschools.us

LANGUAGE ARTS

6 th -Mrs. K. Balvanz	kbalvanz@crschools.us
6 th -Mrs. C. Buelow	cbuelow@crschools.us

7 th -Mrs. L. Marzen	lmarzen@crschools.us
7 th -Mrs. K. Panoch	kpanoch@crschools.us
8 th -Mrs. L. Marzen	lmarzen@crschools.us
8 th -Mrs. K. Panoch	kpanoch@crschools.us
8 th -Mrs. J. Hemann	jhemann@crschools.us

SOCIAL STUDIES

6 th -Ms. A. Jackson	anjackson@crschools.us
6 th -Mr. M. Kane	mkane@crschools.us
7 th -Ms. A. Monsef	amonsef@crschools.us
7 th -Mrs. C. Suter	csuter@crschools.us
8 th -Mr. M. Kane	mkane@crschools.us
8 th -Mr. S. Koepke	skoepke@crschools.us
8 th -Mrs. C. Suter	csuter@crschools.us

SCIENCE

6 th -Mrs. J. Anderson	jlanderson@crschools.us
6 th -Mrs. K. Balvanz	kbalvanz@crschools.us
6 th -Mr. J. Thorpe	jthorpe@crschools.us
7 th -Mrs. J. Anderson	jlanderson@crschools.us
7 th -Mr. S. Koepke	skoepke@crschools.us
7 th -Ms. R. Miller	rmiller@crschools.us
8 th -Ms. R. Miller	rmiller@crschools.us
8 th -Mr. S. Koepke	skoepke@crschools.us
8 th Earth Sci. – Mr. J. Thorpe	jthorpe@crschools.us

MATH

6 th -Mr. A. Brannan	abrannan@crschools.us
6 th -Mrs. J. Hemann	jhemann@crschools.us
6 th -Mrs. M. Paustian	mpaustian@crschools.us
6 th Adv.-Mrs. M. Paustian	mpaustian@crschools.us
7 th -Mr. A. Brannan	abrannan@crschools.us
7 th -Ms. L. Riha	lriha@crschools.us
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8 th -Mrs. B. Meade	bmeade@crschools.us
Algebra-Mrs. B. Meade	bmeade@crschools.us

ELL

Scott Bleuer	sbleuer@crschools.us
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MUSIC

Ms. A. Kegel-6th and 7th	akegel@crschools.us
Mrs. V. Shanley-8th and Jazz	vshanley@crschools.us
Mr. J. Neswick-Vocal and Show Choir	jneswick@crschools.us
Mr. J. Clearman-Orchestra	jclearman@crschools.us

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Mr. J. Heald	jheald@crschools.us
Mrs. E. Seely	eseely@crschools.us

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mrs. A. Bradford-Spec. Ed. Strategist I	ambradford@crschools.us
Ms. T. Hemmingsen-Spec. Ed. Strategist I. 8th	themmingsen@crschools.us
Mrs. S. Kane-Spec. Ed. Strategist II	skane@crschools.us
Mrs. B. Lehman-Spec. Ed. Strategist I. 6th	blehman@crschools.us
Mr. I. Shelton-Spec. Ed. Strategist I, 7th	ishelton@crschools.us
Brian Trester-Behavior Focused	btrester@crschools.us

EXPLORATORY TEAM

Mr. K. Gaster- Computer Science	kegaster@crschools.us
Mrs. S. Novak- Art	snovak@crschools.us
Mr. B. Ranard- Engineering Tech	branard@crschools.us
Dr. J. Sebring- Wellness	jsebring@crschools.us

PACT

Mrs. A. Engelmann	aengelmann@crschools.us
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BUILDING PERMANENT SUBS

Ms. M. Aarhus	maarhus@crschools.us
Mr. M. Erger	merger@crschools.us

LIBRARY

Ms. C. Hogan- Media Specialist	chogan@crschools.us
Ms. E Gardner-Media Secretary	egardner@crschools.us

ACTIVITY COORDINATOR

Mr. S. Koepke	skoepke@crschools.us
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COUNSELORS

Mrs. B. Hinrichs	bhinrichs@crschools.us
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Mrs. A. Kitterman
Mrs. K. Pladna

akitterman@crschools.us
kpladna@crschools.us

PARAPROFESSIONALS

Melody Cook
Maiana Cue
Kaitlyn Eskridge
Jenna Gallagher
Kristina Galvan
Valerie Jones
Mary Kaltenbach
Anitha Kamalumpundi
Dawn O'Connell
Kaylee Pline
Mike Van Voltenberg
Tanae Wilson
Shayla Wesley-Shanks

FOOD SERVICE

Mrs. B. Ferry- Cafeteria Manager bferry@crschools.us
Mrs. L. Boll
Ms. E. Haney
Mrs. T. Herber
Mrs. A. Jordan
Ms. C. Scott
Mrs. K. Smith

CUSTODIANS

Mr. D. Jandik- Engineer djandik@crschools.us
Mr. D. Murphy- Night Engineer dmurphy@crschools.us
Mr. J. Bartels
Mr. J. Gaskill

2025-2026 ACTIVITIES PROGRAM CALENDAR-TAFT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Activities Coordinator: Steve Koepke

7th Grade Activities		
Football Practice Begins 8/26 Coaches: Mr.S. Koepke	Tennis-Boys Practice Begins 8/26 Coach:	Cross Country-Boys & Girls Practice Begins 8/26 Coach: Mr. P. Copeland

Volleyball Practice Begins 8/26 Coach: Ms. A. Smith	Soccer-Girls Practice Begins 8/26 Coach: Mrs. K. Eskridge	Basketball-Boys Practice Begins 10/13 Coach: Mr. K. Gaster
Swimming-Girls Practice Begins 10/13 Coach: Mrs. K. Klein	Swimming-Boys Practice Begins 12/1 Coach: Mrs. T. Fettkether	Basketball-Girls Practice Begins 12/1 Coach: Mr. Kevin Gaster
Wrestling-Boys Practice Begins 1/13 Coach: Mr. M. Kane Mr. C. Garber	Wrestling-Girls Practice Begins 1/20 Coach: Mrs. Seely	Track & Field-Boys Practice Begins 3/23 Coach: Mr. R. Eivins
Track & Field-Girls Practice Begins 3/23 Coach: Mrs. B. Hinrichs	Tennis-Girls Practice Begins 3/23 Coach: Mr. S. Koepke	Soccer-Boys Practice Begins 3/23 Coach: Mr. J. Thorpe

8th Grade Activities		
Football Practice Begins 8/26 Coaches: Mr. M. Kane Mr. C. Garber	Tennis-Boys Practice Begins 8/26 Coach:	Cross Country-Boys & Girls Practice Begins 8/26 Coach: Mr. P. Copeland
Volleyball Practice Begins 8/26 Coach: Mrs. B. Hinrichs	Soccer-Girls Practice Begins 8/26 Coach: Mrs. K. Eskridge	Basketball-Boys Practice Begins 10/13 Coach: Mr. S. Koepke
Swimming-Girls Practice Begins 10/13 Coach: Mrs. K. Klein	Swimming-Boys Practice Begins 12/1 Coach: Mrs. T. Fettkether	Basketball-Girls Practice Begins 12/1 Coach: Mr. S. Koepke
Wrestling-Boys Practice Begins 1/13 Coach: Mr. M. Kane Mr. C. Garber	Wrestling-Girls Practice Begins 1/20 Coach: Mrs. Seely	Track & Field-Boys Practice Begins 3/23 Coach: Mr. M. Hilby
Track & Field-Girls Practice Begins 3/23 Coach: Mrs. K. Eskridge	Tennis-Girls Practice Begins 3/23 Coach: Mr. S. Koepke	Soccer-Boys Practice Begins 3/23 Coach: Mr. J. Thorpe

FINE ARTS

Band Directors: Ms. A. Kegel
Mrs. V. Shanley

Drama Director: Mr. J. Neswick

Mr. J. Thorpe

2025-26 A/B School Calendar

A
B

Student Award Opportunities

Taft Yearly Student Award Opportunities

Award Name	Item	Grade	Criteria	Number Awarded	Award Date
Purple Honor Roll	Certificate	6-8	Proficient on 21st Century Skills in all classes for the semester	Unlimited	1st Semester Awards Assembly, Mailed during the summer for 2nd Semester
Gold Honor Roll	Certificate	6-8	90% Proficient on all Content Standards in all classes for the school year	Unlimited	Mailed during the summer
99th National Percentile Rank Award	Trophy	6-8	At least one score at the 99th NPR on any subtest of the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress	Unlimited	2nd Semester Awards Assembly
90th National Percentile Rank Award	T-shirt	6-8	At least one score at the 90th NPR or better on any subtest of the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress	Unlimited	2nd Semester Awards Assembly
Taft Scholar Award	T-shirt	6-8	Grow by at least 10 points on both the Math and ELA sections of the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Schoolwide Progress	Unlimited	2nd Semester Awards Assembly
PARRT Award	Certificate and T-shirt	6-8	Exemplify the qualities of Personal Best, Active Listening, Respect, Responsibility, and Trustworthiness	Each teacher may select one student	Monthly
Student of the Semester	Certificate	6-8	Demonstrate excellence in the subject area OR have shown remarkable academic growth during the semester	One student from each class per semester	1st and 2nd Semester Awards Assemblies
4-Sport Award	T-shirt	7-8	Participate in 4 sports in a single year	Unlimited	2nd Semester Awards Assembly
Intramural Award	T-Shirt	6-8	Participate in at least 3 intramural activities or clubs in a single year	Unlimited	2nd Semester Awards Assembly

Taft 3-Year Cumulative Student Award Opportunities

The following awards are presented to 8th grade students based on their history at Taft.

Each award is presented at either the Practice Assembly or the Final 8th Grade Assembly.

Drew Wall Leadership Award	Medal	Serve as a Student Leadership member during 8th grade year	Unlimited
Kirkwood Access Scholarship	Scholarship	Multiple Criteria	One
E.C. Whiteman Fine Arts Award	Plaque	Most Outstanding Fine Arts Student	Two
Richard Pinney Art Award	Plaque	Most Outstanding Art Student	One
Exploratory Awards	Plaque	Most Outstanding Student in each of the Exploratory Classes	One per Expl. Teacher
President's Award for Educational Excellence	Certificate	For the 8th grade year, achieve the Purple Honor Roll for 1st semester AND attain a score at the 85th percentile rank or higher in math or reading on the ISASP	Unlimited
President's Award for Educational Achievement	Certificate	For the 8th grade year, achieve the Purple Honor Roll for 1st semester OR attain a score at the 85th percentile rank or higher in math or reading on the ISASP	Unlimited
Perfect Honor Roll	Certificate	Achieve all possible Honor Rolls at Taft (7 Honor Rolls). Purple Honor Roll for both semesters in 6th and 7th Grade and 1st semester in 8th Grade. Gold Honor Roll for 6th and 7th Grade - Note: 2nd Semester 8th Grade Honor Rolls are not considered for this award	Unlimited
Excellent Honor Roll	Certificate	Achieve 6 of the 7 possible Honor Rolls as described above	Unlimited
Les Yeager Language Arts Award	Medal	Most Outstanding Language Arts Student	One per LA Teacher
Loy Klingman Mathematics Award	Medal	Most Outstanding Mathematics Student	One per Math Teacher
Social Studies Award	Medal	Most Outstanding Social Studies Student	One per SS Teacher
Science Award	Medal	Most Outstanding Science Student	One per Sci. Teacher
Drama Award	Trophy	Participate in at least one theatrical performance each year for three years	Unlimited
PACT Award	Plaque	Participate in at least one PACT activity each year for three years	Unlimited
Principal's Award	Medal	Successful completion of a class taken at the high school	Unlimited

Grading at Taft: Standards-Based Grading paired with a Traditional Letter Grade

Standards-Based Grading

Understanding my child's grades

Taft teachers report grades in Infinite Campus using a standards based grading approach. Use the information below to understand how to interpret your child's grades and support their learning.
[Click here](#) for a more detailed look at Taft's Standards-Based Grading approach.

Content Standards

Essential Question: Is my child understanding the content being taught?

E Exceeding	The student has demonstrated a deep understanding that goes beyond the standard.
P Proficient	The student has met the standard.
D Developing	The student has met some, but not all, of the standard.
I Incomplete	The student is far from reaching the standard.
N No Evidence	The student has submitted no evidence of learning or the evidence is mostly blank.

 Parents can support your child in understanding the content standards by practicing the academic skills being taught in each class.



21st Century Skills

Essential Question: Is my child being responsible in their classes?

P Proficient	Assignment completed Turned in on-time.
D Developing	Assignment completed, but turned in late.
I Incomplete	Assignment turned in, but incomplete.
N No Evidence	Assignment not turned in (also marked as "Missing").
Note: "E" is not typically used as an indicator for 21st Century Skills. However, you may see it on rare occasions for specific assignments.	

 Parents can support your child by encouraging them to complete their work on time and to try their best on every assignment.

Letter Grade Conversion

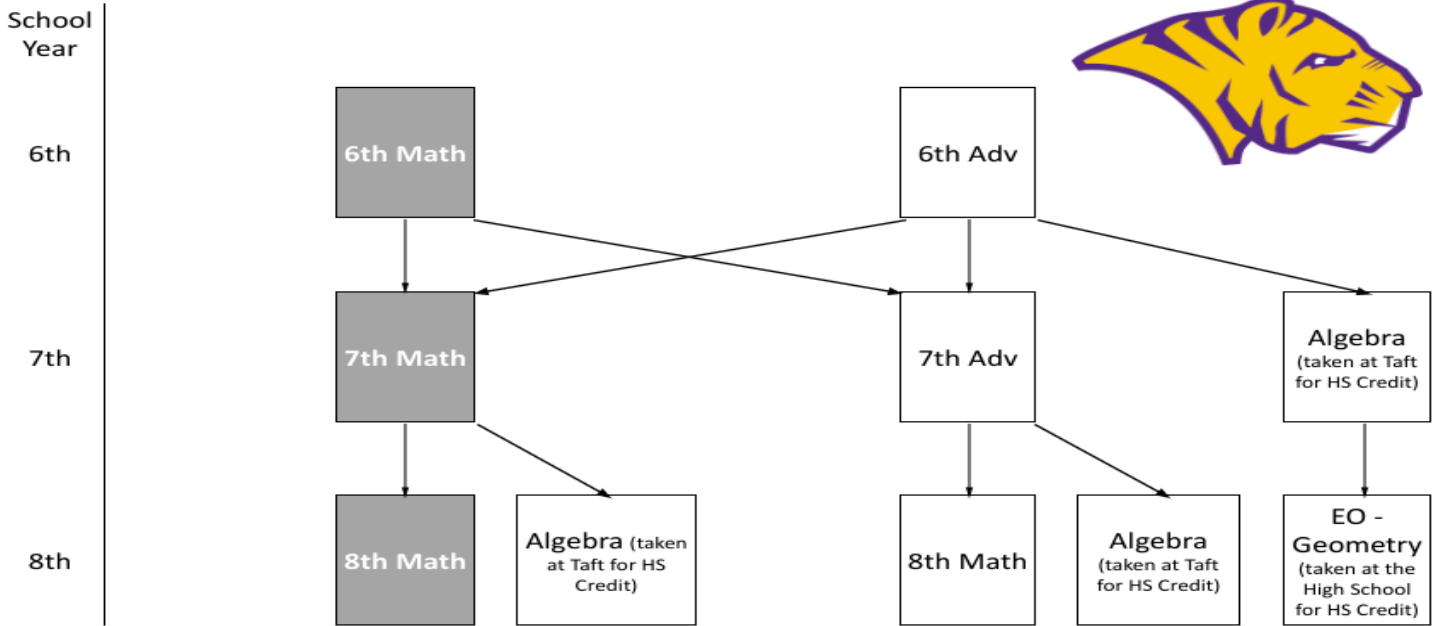
To aid students in the transition from middle school to high school, students will receive letter grades in each course. Students will still receive standards-based score marks of Exemplary, Proficient, Developing, Incomplete, or No Evidence on all assignments and for each standard assessed in a class (**EPDIN**). However, those marks will also generate a traditional letter grade from A to F for each course.

CRCSD high school students receive letter grades from A to F for their performance in each course. Taft students will maintain focus on essential standards, but understanding letter grades will help them set goals for improvement and more readily transition to high school.

How is the letter grade calculated?

Letter Grade	Composite of All Priority Standards Marks
A	All standards are Proficient and at least one is Exemplary
B	All standards are Proficient, no more than one is Developing
C	All standards are Proficient or Developing
D	At least one standard is marked Incomplete
F	At least one standard is marked No Evidence

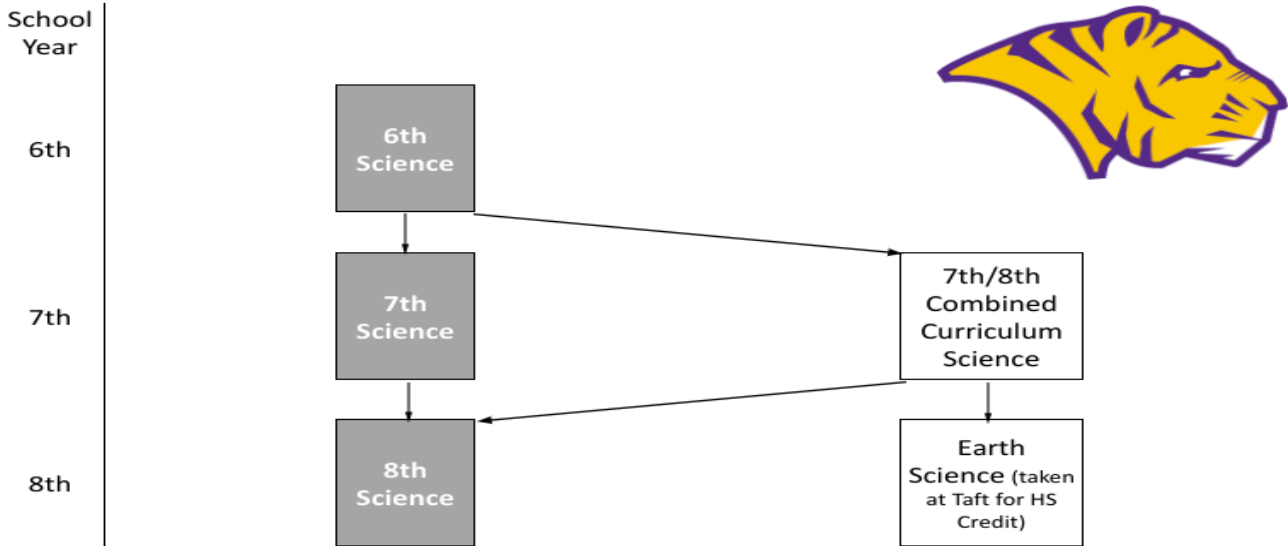
TAFT MATHEMATICS



Terms:
Adv = Advanced Math Program
EO = Expanded Opportunities Program

Interpreting the Pathways:
The grey boxes represent the Standard Path that most students follow. All other pathways are determined by various criteria (ISASP, GPA, etc.)

TAFT SCIENCE



Interpreting the Pathways:

- * The grey boxes represent the Standard Path that most students follow.
- * The 7th/8th Grade combined curriculum class will cover all the 7th and 8th grade curriculum in one year's time. Selection criteria include grades, ISASP data, and teacher recommendation.
- * Students who do not earn an A or B in the Combined Curriculum class should take 8th Grade Science during their 8th grade year instead of Earth Science.
- * Earth Science is a high school course taught at Taft. High school credit and GPA are affected.

Definitions

In this handbook, the word "parent" also means "guardian" unless otherwise stated. An administrator's title, such as superintendent or principal, also means that individual's designee unless otherwise stated. The term "school grounds" includes the school district facilities, school district property, property within the jurisdiction of the school district or school district premises, school-owned or school-operated buses or vehicles and chartered buses. The term "school facilities" includes school district buildings. The term "school activities" means all school activities in which students are involved whether they are school-sponsored or school-approved, whether they are an event or an activity, or whether they are held on or off school grounds.

Taft Mission

To provide a quality education for all students while educating the whole child in an environment of respect for self, others, and the school environment.

Jurisdictional and Behavioral Expectations Statement

This handbook is an extension of board policy and is a reflection of the goals and objectives of the board. Every effort has been made to summarize school policies and regulations to provide a basic understanding of the district's expectations for students attending school. More detailed regulations can be found in the School Board Policy manuals located online through the CRCSD website.

The Board believes inappropriate student conduct causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment, interferes with the rights of others, and/or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors on school premises. Appropriate classroom behavior allows teachers to communicate more effectively with students.

Students will conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age & maturity and with respect and consideration for the rights of others while on District property or on property within the jurisdiction of the District; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management, and welfare of the District.

Students who fail to abide by the District's policies, regulations, and procedures and the applicable student handbook will be disciplined for conduct which disrupts or interferes with the education program; conduct which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the District or school activity; conduct which disrupts the rights of other students to participate in or obtain their education; conduct that is violent or destructive; or conduct which interrupts the maintenance of a disciplined atmosphere.

The District may impose a range of disciplinary measures for acts of misconduct. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, removal from the classroom, detention, suspension from school, suspension from participation in extracurricular activities, and expulsion. The discipline imposed will be based upon the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident and the student's record. Consequences for the misconduct will be fair and developmentally appropriate in light of the circumstances. The imposition of discipline will be within the discretion of the individual responsible for imposing the discipline. In instances where there has been a violation of the law, as well as school rules, appropriate law enforcement officials will be contacted and may become involved in the District's administration of discipline. The District reserves the right to seek restitution from the parents/guardians of a student or the student for damage caused by the student.

Teachers and/or others who are in charge of a classroom must be the administrators of classroom discipline. Therefore, minor disciplinary offenses are the responsibility and obligation of the classroom teacher. When a situation arises wherein the educational process is substantially interfered with, it then becomes the responsibility of the administration to assist in the disposition of the discipline problem.

Removal from the classroom means a student is sent to the building principal's office. It is within the discretion of the person in charge of the classroom to remove the student.

Detention means the student's presence is required during non-school hours for disciplinary purposes. The student can be required to appear prior to the beginning of the school day, after school has been dismissed for the day, or on a non-school day. Whether a student will serve detention, and the length of the detention, is within the discretion of the licensed employee or the building principal, disciplining the student.

Suspension means either an in-school suspension, an out-of-school suspension, a restriction from activities or loss of eligibility. As in-school suspension means the student will attend school but will be temporarily isolated from one or more class while under supervision. An out-of-school suspension means the student is removed from the school environment, which includes school classes and activities. A restriction from school activities means a student will attend school and classes and practice but will not participate in school activities.

Expulsion means an action by the Board to remove a student from the school environment, which includes, but is not limited to, classes and activities, for a period of time set by the Board.

Following the suspension of a special education student, an informal evaluation of the student's placement will take place. The individual Education Program (IEP) is evaluated to determine whether it needs to be changed or modified in response to the behavior that led to the suspension. If a special education student's suspension, either in or out of school, equals ten days on a cumulative basis, a staffing team will meet to determine whether the IEP is appropriate.

Reference: School Board Policy 604

Absence and Attendance

Regular attendance, as well as being on time to school and class, is essential for students to obtain the maximum benefit from school and take full advantage of educational opportunities provided by the district. Students and guardians are required to follow District and school rules and procedures regarding attendance as outlined in Board policy 602 and to align with the State of Iowa's Compulsory Education Law Chapter 299.

The Cedar Rapids Community School District believes that excessive student absenteeism and tardiness is an early warning sign of poor academic achievement and puts students at risk of dropping out of school. An absence is any time a student does not access instruction (physically or remotely as designated). Absences will be recorded as part of a student's attendance record and tracked through Infinite Campus.

Absences: It is the responsibility of the guardian to notify the student's attendance center as soon as the guardian knows the student will not be attending school. This can be done via phone call or email listed above 24 hours a day. If the school is not notified of the absence, it will be counted as unexcused. The guardian may rectify this by giving verbal or email notice within two days of the reason for the absence or provide necessary documentation. The administrator reserves the right to verify an absence as excused or unexcused and may

request evidence or written verification of the student's reason for absence. Student absences approved by the administrator are excused absences. Excused absences may include, but are not limited to:

- Illness - as long as an attendance contract is not in place
- Medically documented chronic or extended illness, hospitalization, or doctor's care, or school nurse's approval
- Medical or dental care
- Death or serious illness in the family
- Religious holidays requiring absences from school
- Court appearances or other legal proceedings beyond the control of the family
- Class time missed because of attendance at a school-sponsored trip or activity
- Other verified emergency as approved by the building administrator
- Other reasons which can be justified from an educational standpoint and which are approved by the building administrator

Students who are absent from school for any reason will be expected to make arrangements with appropriate school staff to recover the missed learning. Students are able to earn full or partial credit for the missed school work as agreed upon by the student and school.

Students who wish to participate in school-sponsored activities must attend school at least one-half day on the day of the activity unless permission has been given by the administrator for the student to be absent.

Responding to Excessive Absenteeism: School staff will follow District procedures to address attendance concerns. Guardians and students are expected to ensure an absence from school is a necessary absence. Truancy is the act of being absent without an excuse as defined by Board policy 602 which occurs through the failure to regularly attend school hours as established by the Board in the school calendar.

Reference: School Board Policy 602

Procedures: The first day the student is absent and each day of his/her absence, parents should call Mrs. Hartman in the attendance office 558-2243, option 1. In addition, voicemail will be used 24 hours a day, for any parent needing to call to leave messages regarding absences. If we do not receive a call, we will attempt to contact the home or parent/guardian's workplace or cell phone.

Permission to leave early:

Permission to leave school before 2:50 pm may be obtained by calling the Attendance Secretary and they will find your student for you. The parent/guardian would be contacted ASAP. Students who leave classes or school for any reason without permission are considered truant.

Make Up Work during Absences: If a student has been absent for three (3) days, a parent may call the attendance office and request homework. Assignments will be available for pick up in the attendance office at the end of the following day, or in the buckets outside the Attendance Office Window.

Most assignments are also available in Infinite Campus. Using Infinite Campus or course-specific Google Classroom sites is the best option for students who miss 1 or 2 days of school.

Truancy

Truancy is defined as being absent from school or class without an approved excuse. Truancy may lead to detention, possible suspension or consequences deemed appropriate by administration depending on the circumstances.

Truancy may also be an absence which the parents excuse but the school deems unacceptable. This situation might occur if it is felt that student absenteeism has been excessive. As per Iowa code 299.1 cases of chronic absenteeism may be referred to the Executive Director of student services for further action. (We would prefer to work through any issues at the school level.)

Tardy Policy

Being on time is a necessary life skill we believe should be taught at an early age. Taft's expectation is that students are in their scheduled class when the bell rings. Taft staff regularly teach students how to manage their time so they are able to develop the habits necessary to be on time. Taft also requests that parents encourage their students to learn and follow this expectation by having conversations with them about the importance of getting to class on time and helping them make a personal plan for how to get from class to class within the allotted four minute passing time.

Students who are tardy (late) to school must report to the attendance office and receive an admit slip before heading to their classroom.

If you need to use school time for a doctor's appointment, please call the Attendance Secretary at 558-2243, option 1 or email at ehartman@crschools.us, or send a signed note with your student.

The following measures will be implemented to ensure every student learns this necessary life skill:

Students are allowed 4 unexcused tardies per quarter.

- 4 Tardies: The Attendance Secretary will contact the parents to inform them. We ask that you have a conversation with your student and develop a plan with them to ensure they get to their classes on time.
- 5-9 Tardies: Students will receive lunch detention. Only one detention can be earned per day.
- 9 Tardies: A Taft Administrator will contact parents and determine a plan for the student. Administration will also meet with the student.
- 10 Tardies: A Taft Administrator will contact parents and will also meet with the student.
- 10+ Tardies: Students will receive a 30 minute after school detention for every tardy earned after 10. Only one detention can be earned per day.

Tips to help you plan with your student:

- ★ Students are sent to their lockers in the morning at 7:40. It is important if they do not ride a bus, they arrive prior to 7:40 to allow them time to get to their locker and then get to class.
- ★ Passing time between classes is four minutes. Students are expected to use the restroom, get a drink, and get any needed material from their locker, then be on time to their next class before the bell rings. When planning with your child, it is important they know the best path to get from one class to the next and what materials they will need for each class.
- ★ Writing out a passing time plan for students can help.

- ★ It is strongly recommended that students not ask for bathroom breaks during the first 10 minutes of instruction as much of the most important instruction occurs during this time. Due to this, it is important that your student plan for bathroom breaks during passing time if possible.

Hallway and Bathroom Passes

We strongly believe students should be present for all classroom instruction. In situations where a student needs to be briefly excused to their locker or to the restroom, we will follow these the procedures:

- Students will present their personalized Bathroom and Locker Pass to their teacher (not during the first 10 minutes of class)
- The teacher will initial a space on the pass card and note the day/time
- Students will make a brief visit to the restroom or their locker, then return to class
- Students will limit their locker and bathroom visits to ten per quarter; students will receive a new card each quarter.
- There may be some cases where a student needs more than the ten spaces allotted per quarter, but students can communicate their needs to their teachers/administrators for a temporary adjustment to the pass system.
- *Some students with health protocols may be excluded from these procedures.

Activities

We recognize the extra-curricular program as an integral part of the curriculum. We believe that well-organized, purposeful activities reinforce and enrich the classroom experience; that valuable opportunities for the exercising of democratic principles and for the development of initiative and leadership; and that the development of the whole personality is a result of such participation. Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular programs, including athletics, music, and drama.

Special Activities that meet administrative approval are planned at the school and add enrichment to each student's school life. These are organized by students with staff help.

Athletics

Sports are available to students in grades 7 and 8. All students must have a physical and concussion form on file in the health office before they can participate.

School Delays or Cancellations

In the event of a school delay, all early morning activities will also be canceled.

In the event of a school cancellation, all before and after school activities will also be canceled.

Athletic/Activity Event Spectator Behavior Expectations

- We encourage student support at our athletic events. Guidelines for spectator behavior are necessary so that everyone can enjoy the activity.
- Students will sit in the north bleachers unless purchasing concessions or using the restroom. The south bleachers are reserved for participants only.
- Students are not allowed behind the upper bleachers.
- Students will put trash in appropriate containers.

- Students should arrange for transportation home **before** the games begin. Events are usually completed by 5:15 pm.
- Students who leave the contest area will not be allowed to return.
- Good sportsmanship towards all participants is expected.
- Students violating these guidelines may not attend future events. Students violating these guidelines will sign a behavior contract before earning the right to attend school events again.

Arrival and Departure

Students who arrive early will wait outside until 7:40 am unless eating breakfast (7:20-7:40) or the temperature drops below 32 degrees fahrenheit. The exception will be students who have a signed pass from a teacher and those who are participating in a sports practice or fine arts rehearsal. These students may enter the building and go immediately to their respective areas.

Food and drinks are not allowed in the waiting areas before school.

Students are expected to be in the classroom at 7:50 am sharp.

After School Supervision

Middle school students are dismissed at 2:50. By 3:10 pm all students are expected to be out of the building and off school grounds unless under the direct supervision of a staff member. Students will be allowed to stay inside during inclement weather if waiting for a ride. Parental responsibility begins at 2:50 pm when students are dismissed from school. Please make arrangements for your child after school. After school time is used by our staff to work with students one on one, prepare lessons, coach sports, direct fine arts events and attend committee, building, and district meetings.

RIDERS: If you are bringing and/or picking up a student, please be sure not to interfere with the school bus delivery and pick up in front of school. (Pedestrian and vehicular traffic are heavy before and after school.) Please do not park in the “horseshoe” area from 7:20-7:45 am and from 2:00-3:00 pm.

WALKING: Students walking to and from school are asked to be alert to traffic when crossing streets and to be sure not to impede traffic when forced to walk in streets.

BICYCLES: Bikes must be locked individually in the racks at the front of the building. Students should ride directly to the rack areas observing the one-way driveway posting. No riding is to be done after arrival at school. Students are not permitted to loiter around the bike rack area because of possible damage to bikes. Please park the bikes perpendicular to the rack to maximize the number that can be parked. Bikes should come no closer to the building than the bike rack.

SKATEBOARDS: As soon as students arrive on campus, they are required to:

1. Get off their skateboard (no riding the skateboard on campus)
2. Turn their skateboard into the Main Office. The office will hold the skateboard until the student is leaving campus for the day.

Behavioral Expectations

We believe achieving social, emotional, and behavioral health for all is dependent upon collaboration across school, home, and community. It is important to clearly communicate and teach behavioral expectations to students with a focus on preventing unexpected behavior before it occurs. Positive behavior is taught,

acknowledged, and modeled by school staff. This promotes a safe and predictable learning environment and fosters healthy relationships in the school community.

The Board believes that each student deserves the right to a fair and appropriate education. District students are expected to respect the rights of others, to contribute to a positive learning environment, and to comply with school and District rules and policies.

To the maximum extent appropriate, staff will use proactive and restorative practices to keep students in class, while addressing misconduct that is detrimental to the learning environment and the rights of others. Practices that are restorative in nature, repairing harm to the victim and/or school community caused by misconduct, will be given first consideration over exclusionary discipline such as removal from class, suspension, or expulsion. School administration and staff will work to identify and correct practices that result in inequities in student achievement, discipline, and access to education.

Students are subject to this regulation while on school premises; while using school-provided transportation; while attending or engaging in school-sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficiency, management and welfare of the school.

Students may be disciplined for conduct including, but not limited to, the following:

Level 1:

1. Minor Defiance/Insubordination/Non-Compliance: Student engages in refusal to follow directions or talks back to an adult.
2. Minor Disrespect: Students deliver socially rude or dismissive messages to adults or students.
3. Minor Disruption: Students engage in behavior causing an interruption in a class or activity. Disruption includes sustained loud talk, yelling, or screaming; noise with material; horseplay or roughhousing; and/or sustained out-of-seat behavior.
4. Technology Misuse: Students engage in inappropriate (as defined by school) use of technology.
5. Inappropriate Location/Out of Bounds Area: Student is in an area that is outside of school boundaries (as defined by school).
6. Student Appearance Violation.
7. Lying/Cheating/Plagiarism – Student knowingly provides false information to a staff member and/or deliberately violates academic rules (this may also result in academic penalties at the discretion of and consistent with the policies of the teacher whose subject the offense occurred in).
8. Bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment (minor and not involving threatened or actual physical contact) – see Board Policy 612.
9. Inappropriate Display of Affection: Student engages in inappropriate, consensual, verbal and/or physical gestures/contact, of a sexual nature to another student/adult. This would include inappropriate touching.
10. Minor Property Damage/Vandalism – Students participate in an activity that results in destruction or disfigurement of property of minimal value or where the damage can be repaired at little to no cost.

Level 1 conduct may result in discipline including verbal redirection and/or coaching, peer-to-peer conflict resolution, restorative actions (e.g., student cleaning up mess made by that student), counseling, written reprimand, loss of privileges for one week or less, lunch detention, after-school detention, and other similar actions that are proportionate to the nature of the student's conduct.

Level 2:

1. Threats: Students make threats of violence or other actions toward others without the apparent intent or ability to carry out the threat.
2. Major Defiance/Insubordination/Non-Compliance: Student engages in refusal to follow directions or talks back to an adult to a level that is substantially disruptive to the learning environment and/or the rights of others.
3. Major Disrespect: Students deliver socially rude or dismissive messages to adults or students (including profanity) that is substantially disruptive to the learning environment and/or the rights of others.
4. Physical Aggression Not Resulting in Injury: Student engages in actions involving or imminently threatening physical contact where injury could have, but did not actually, occur.
5. Fighting Not Resulting in Injury: Students are involved in mutual participation in an incident involving physical violence that does not result in injury to any party.
6. Bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment (conduct not involving actual or threatened physical contact): See Board Policy 612.
7. Possession of Combustibles: Student in possession of substances/objects readily capable of causing minor bodily injury and/or property damage (e.g., matches, lighters).
8. Gang Affiliation Activity: Student activities associated with a gang affiliation (gang graffiti, other identifying symbols, language, signs, clothing, colors, etc.).
9. Property Damage/Vandalism: Students participate in an activity that results in destruction or disfigurement of property of moderate value or where the damage cannot be repaired absent some cost/effort.
10. Other disruption to the school environment: Student engages in conduct that significantly disrupts the school and/or classroom environment, causing a loss of learning or other opportunities for other students.
11. Frequent and repeated conduct constituting Level 1 conduct violations that persist following Level 1 discipline and appropriate instruction/support.

Level 2 conduct may result in discipline including any disciplinary action applicable to Level 1 conduct, as well as In-School Suspension up to 3 days per incident, Out-of-School Suspension up to three (3) school days per incident, and removal from activities for up to one week.

Level 3:

1. Threats: Students make threats of violence or other actions toward others with the apparent intent or ability to carry out the threat.
2. Physical Aggression Resulting In Injury – Student engages in actions involving or imminently threatening physical contact where injury occurred.
3. Fighting Resulting in Injury – Students are involved in mutual participation in an incident involving physical violence that results in injury to any party.
4. Bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment (serious conduct and/or involving actual/threatened physical contact not resulting in injury) – see applicable Board Policy.
5. Use/Possession of Alcohol, Tobacco, Nicotine, or Any Illegal or Medically Unauthorized Substance or paraphernalia/accessories or lookalike substances - see applicable Board Policy.
6. Use of Combustibles – Student is/was in possession of and used substances/objects readily capable of causing bodily harm and/or property damage (e.g., matches, lighters).
7. Use/Possession of Weapons Other than Knives and Guns: Student uses and/or is in possession of weapons (real or look alike) or other objects readily capable of causing bodily injury - see applicable Board Policy
8. Theft: Student is involved by being in possession of, having passed on, or being responsible for removing someone else's property.
9. Property Damage/Vandalism: Students participate in an activity that results in destruction or disfigurement of property of significant value or where the damage cannot be repaired absent significant cost/effort.
10. Major disruption to the school environment: Student engages in other conduct that constitutes an extreme disruption to the school and/or classroom environment, and causes a significant loss of learning or other opportunities for other students (e.g., cancelation of activity).

11. Frequent and repeated conduct constituting Level 2 conduct violations that persists following Level 2 discipline and appropriate instruction/support.

Level 3 conduct may result in discipline including any disciplinary action applicable to Level 1 and 2 conduct, as well as Out-of-School Suspension up to 3 days per incident, loss of privileges for more than one week, and removal from activities for more than one week.

Level 4:

1. Physical Aggression Resulting In Substantial Bodily Injury: Student engages in actions involving or imminently threatening physical contact where substantial bodily injury occurred.
2. Fighting Resulting in Substantial Bodily Injury: Students are involved in mutual participation in an incident involving physical violence that results in substantial bodily injury to any party.
3. Use/Possession of Weapons: Student uses and/or is in possession of knives, guns (real or look alike), and/or other objects readily capable of causing substantial bodily injury - see applicable Board Policy.
4. Bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment (severe or pervasive conduct and/or involving physical contact resulting in bodily injury and/or sexual assault) - see applicable Board Policy.
5. Manufacture or Distribution of Alcohol, Tobacco, Nicotine, or Any Illegal or Medically Unauthorized Substance or paraphernalia/accessories or lookalike substances - see applicable Board Policy.
6. Use/Possession of Combustibles: Student is/was in possession of substances/objects readily capable of causing substantial bodily harm and/or property damage (e.g., firecrackers, gasoline, lighter fluid).
7. Arson: Student plans and/or participates in malicious burning of property.
8. Threats of Violence: Student delivers a message through any medium threatening to commit an act of violence on or near District property and/or against members of the District community.

Level 4 conduct may result in discipline including any disciplinary action applicable to Level 1, 2 and 3 behaviors, as well as Out-of-School Suspension for up to 10 school days. Any building administrator recommending suspension for more than 3 school days must immediately refer the matter to their Executive Director and Deputy Superintendent for approval. They will ensure appropriate due process in accordance with Board policy and applicable federal and state law is provided.

An incident may involve multiple types of conduct described above. Where applicable, the consequences for the highest Level of behavior shall apply. For example, an incident involving both threats (Level 2) and physical aggression resulting in injury (Level 3) may result in consequences up to and including all Level 3 consequences.

Consistent with this Regulation, the school's principal/designee may impose disciplinary consequences based on reasonable professional judgment and the facts and circumstances of each situation. Consideration will be given to the age and maturity of the student(s) involved, the impact of the conduct on other students and staff, the severity of the misconduct, and whether the student has engaged in similar or related conduct in the past.

Consideration will also be given to relevant information about a student's disability, including relevant information from any IEP, FBA, BIP, and/or 504 Plan, when determining appropriate disciplinary consequences. Students with disabilities will not be removed from their current educational placement for behaviors related to their disability, except as permitted by law. Where suspension or disciplinary removal of a student with an IEP or 504 Plan results in removal from the student's educational placement for a total of ten (10) cumulative or consecutive school days in one school year, Manifestation Determination must be held no later than the tenth school day of removal.

Progressive discipline should be used to the extent appropriate to ensure severe consequences, such as exclusion from the learning environment, are reserved for serious behaviors disrupting the learning environment or violating the rights of others.

Prior to issuing disciplinary consequences, the building administrator or designee shall conduct an informal investigation of the charges, which shall provide the student with:

1. Oral or written notice of the allegations against the student.
2. The basis in fact for the charges, and
3. The opportunity to respond to those charges.

Reference: School Board Policy 604

Dog Searches

Federal law grants local law enforcement agencies permission to enter schools with trained dogs to search lockers and other areas for illegal substances. The Taft Middle School administration will cooperate with the Cedar Rapids Police Department in conducting unannounced dog searches at our middle school during the school year. Drugs and drug paraphernalia have no place in our school and we will take every legal means to keep drugs out of our school and off our school grounds.

Bus Transportation

Some students are transported by school bus. You will receive information about routes, pick up, drop off times and student conduct. It is the responsibility of the family to provide supervision at bus stops before and after school.

Middle School students who live two miles or more from their school are eligible to ride the school bus. Students are expected to behave in an orderly and courteous manner. Violations will be referred to the Department of Transportation and to the Associate Principal, and the student's bus pass may be revoked. Any questions concerning routes and schedules should be directed to the Department of Transportation for the school district. To achieve the maximum safety on the school buses a device will be installed to aid in the safety of every child on the buses. This device will be an onboard video camera which will be used to monitor student behavior, thereby improving safety for all passengers. The safety of every child on our school buses is a great concern for all of us.

Reference: School Board Policy 901, 901A

Bus Behavior

The following reminders are prominently posted inside the seating area of each school bus.

THANK YOU FOR:

- Listening immediately to the driver and following directions
- Sitting in your seat
- Keeping the noise to a minimum
- Using respectful language
- Your best behavior

REMEMBER THAT:

- You pay for damage
- No tobacco, drugs, or alcohol
- No eating, drinking, spitting, gum
- If you qualify for bus transportation home, you are expected to ride the bus unless you have specific instructions not to do so from your parent/guardian.

One of the bus driver's many responsibilities is to maintain an orderly and safe environment during a student's ride to and from school. Students who are unwilling to comply with the preceding may be issued a bus ticket and may lose their bus riding privileges.

City Bus:

There is a stop for the city bus up the hill from Taft (E Avenue and Lewellen). Consult the Ground Transportation Center for the time schedule. (286-5573).

City buses are allowed to have standing passengers and do not guarantee a seat for each passenger.

The City routes do not have designated stops and do not stop unless passengers are present or the driver is notified to stop by a riding passenger. Bus stops are made at city street intersections or posted bus stop signs.

City buses are not equipped with warning lights or stop arms and cannot stop traffic.

Five Seasons Transportation reserves the right to refuse service to problem passengers or dismiss problem passengers along the route, regardless of the location on the route or the weather conditions.

Cedar Rapids School Board

Regular meetings of the Board of Education are generally held on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month in the BoardRoom at the Educational Leadership and Support Center, 2500 Edgewood Rd. NW. The public is welcome to attend. Meetings are live streamed on YouTube at EngageCR and are also videotaped and uploaded to the district website. More information can be found on the [district website](#).

Reference: School Board Policy 206.2

Change of Address

Please complete the annual verification each year and update your address. If you move during the year, please notify the office of your new address and update it in Infinite Campus. If you move out of your resident school attendance area and wish to remain at your current school, please complete an [In District Permit](#).

If you are moving out of the Taft area, please let us know as soon as possible so that a smooth transfer to your new school can occur. A parent/guardian must call or send a note verifying the move before the student is allowed to "check out" through the Counselor's Office.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

There will be two times a year when you have the opportunity to schedule a time to meet with your child's teachers in person to discuss their progress. As always, feel free to contact your child's teachers throughout the year if you have any concerns.

Communication with Families

Communication is important and we will make every effort to contact families in a timely manner. Teachers will contact parents at home or work during the school day if there is an immediate need to discuss a problem involving their child. Teachers may communicate in writing or electronically at other times. Parent calls to teachers should be made from 7:30 - 7:50 AM or after school is dismissed at 2:50.

Remember that teachers are teaching and if it is an emergency or a change in dismissal plans for your child(ren) please contact the main office.

All communication between families and students during the school day should be done through school

personnel. Texting or phone calls to student devices cause a disruption to the learning environment.

Report Cards

Taft follows a semester calendar for core classes and a quarter calendar for exploratory classes. Report cards are issued two times each year and are mailed home.

If at any time you wish to have a conference with a teacher, you may notify either the teacher (email addresses are in the Parent Handbook) or the Counselor's Office (558-2243, option 4) and a time will be scheduled. End of the year report cards are mailed approximately two weeks after school has ended for the year.

Counseling Services

Through leadership, advocacy and collaboration, the counseling department will use the results of data analysis and reflection to meet the academic, social, emotional and basic needs of ALL students in a sensitive, timely and individualized manner. Counselors are available to help with:

- Personal concerns and problems
- Class schedules
- Coordination of community counseling resources and programs
- Ninth grade registration/career pathways and four-year plan
- Psychological services: Referrals may be made by any of the educational staff or parent/guardian. Parental consent is necessary for consultation, evaluation, and other services of the certified psychologist from Grant Wood Area Education Agency.
- Harassment procedures
- New student enrollment and grade level transitions
- Mental health education
- Peer relationship issues
- Coordination of standardized testing
- Career guidance

We hope all students will get to know their counselor during the year. Counselors are here to help with decisions, plans, or problems. They listen while respecting students' rights to privacy and the right to make their own decision(s). Within the limits of their ability. Counselor assignments are based on the following system:

Mrs. Hinrichs	A-L, all grades
Mrs. Kitterman	M-Z, all grades
Mrs. Pladna	Transition to High School

Crisis Response

Comprehensive plans have been developed and implemented for emergency situations if and when there is a need to move students from our building or if a crisis occurs while students are away from our building. In the event that the school is declared unsafe to re-enter, we will be busing students to a designated reunification center. Parents will be directed to go to that center's location through local media where staff will assist in reuniting students with their parents. No student(s) will be released to an adult other than their parent(s)/guardian without permission. Bus routes will be used to return students to school or to their home whichever is deemed appropriate.

Reference: School Board Policy 613

Dress Code

Student dress is the responsibility of students and their parents/guardians. In some cases, the standard of dress may also be set by course requirements, activities, or other reasons for health and/or safety. Dressing in any manner that presents a health or safety hazard or is a disruption, or could reasonably be expected to cause disruption, to the educational environment in the school will not be accepted. Administrators will enact the required and optional range of responses in situations where a student is not meeting the expectations of the dress code. The goal is to resolve the situation in the moment and prevent it from occurring again.

Following are some general regulations:

- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- Clothing must be free of any writing or symbols that promote drugs, alcohol, sex, profanity, gangs, or any message promoting illegal activity or that is disruptive to the educational environment.
- Other items that are inappropriate or disruptive to the educational environment.

The following items have been determined to be disruptive to the educational process at **Taft** and should **not** be worn:

- Clothing that reveals undergarments
- Bandanas, hats, or any other head coverings (unless for specific religious convictions) between 7:50-2:50
- Hoods should be down between 7:50-2:50
- T-shirts with suggestive or inappropriate messages such as ads for tobacco, liquor, bars, drugs, weapons, or gangs
- Very short skirts or shorts
- Low-cut, halter tops, or extreme crop tops
- Volleyball-style spandex shorts
- Sunglasses
- Slippers
- Costumes
- Large headphones or earbuds should only be worn when needed in the classroom and should only be used for instructional purposes

Other attire may be deemed inappropriate for school if it contributes to the disruption of the educational process at Taft.

Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices

Iowa state law prohibits the use of cell phones during instructional time. Research shows that students are more engaged with learning and their peers when personal electronic devices are removed from the classroom. Taft will continue, as in the past, to restrict the use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices during the school day.

Cell phones and other personal electronic devices should be kept off and in lockers during the school day. They should not be visible in classrooms and common areas.

If a student needs to speak with parents during the school day, the student may ask to use a teacher's classroom phone. If parents or guardians need to speak with their students during the school day, we ask that you contact the attendance secretary at 558-2243, option 1. While this may not be as convenient as texting, Iowa's legal restrictions as well as district policy on the use of personal electronic devices means contacting the school directly is the quickest and most reliable way to send a message to a student.

Technology Violation Discipline Policy--In each semester:

- ❖ If a student's personal electronic device is seen by a teacher in the classroom, the student will surrender the device to the main office staff until the end of the school day, when the device shall be returned to the student.
- ❖ For a second violation of this policy, the student will surrender the device to school officials until the end of the school day and a parent/guardian will be notified. The device can only be returned to the student after the parent/guardian has authorized the return of the device to the student.
- ❖ For a third violation of this policy, the student will surrender the device to school officials for the remainder of the school day, to be returned during normal business hours to the student's verified parent, guardian, or other adult identified in the student information system, perhaps not on the same day of the violation.
- ❖ For a fourth or subsequent violation of this policy, students will face consequences aligned to school district behavioral guidelines. Furthermore, a plan will be implemented for the student to check in their personal electronic device with school officials each day or leave the device at home.

Students should not record or photograph others without permission from staff.

School District Issued Electronic Devices:

CRCSD is a 1-to-1 environment for students and technology. Each student is issued a laptop and is responsible for its safekeeping. Students are also responsible for appropriate use and care of the laptop, per the Technology Use Agreement. Because the device remains the property of Cedar Rapids Community School District, students shall have no expectation of privacy with regards to data, emails, or other communication when using their school-issued device.

Administrators will respond with the required and optional range of responses in situations where students do not meet expectations for the acceptable use of technology. The response will be dependent upon a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the student's age and development, the impact that the situation had on others, the intensity and frequency of the behavior, and other contextual factors.

To maximize learning in the classroom, electronic devices should be brought to school each day and be **fully charged**. If your school issued device is damaged or missing, please report the problem immediately to the building's administration.

Fees

Each year there is a Consumable Materials fee for material use. The fee must be paid if your child is to receive the benefits of these programs. Failure to pay fees may result in this being turned in to the Collections Agency.

Students whose families meet the income guidelines for free and reduced price lunch need to apply each school year by completing the F & R forms in your Infinite Campus Account. The Food and Nutrition department will notify parents of their eligibility. If you qualify, you have the opportunity to waive your student's school fees by completing the release agreements in your Infinite Campus account. [Add money to lunch accounts using this link](#)

Field Trips

Field trips are arranged to supplement and enhance the learning experiences of children. The online registration system includes permissions for students to attend all field trips. Families must complete this permission online in Infinite Campus before any student can go on a trip away from school premises. Based on school board policy, the school will not seek written parent permission for each field trip. Teachers will still notify parents about details each time a field trip is to occur. Volunteers must complete and be approved through the volunteer process. This may take more than one business day, so this should be completed in advance. Transportation on field trips will be by school bus, private vehicle, or city bus.

Reference: School Board Policy 404

Taft teachers plan field trips which support middle school curriculum objectives. Students are expected to go on field trips or complete alternative assignments at school. Students remaining at school will be supervised by a teacher. A student may be held back from trips for behavioral or academic reasons.

Student Health and Well-being

Health Services

All schools have a health office staffed by a health secretary and access to a school nurse to provide health related services to students throughout the school day. Health office staff provide first aid for injuries, administer medication and assess complaints of illness. School nurses manage chronic health conditions, including potentially life threatening health conditions. To contact the school nurse or health secretary at your child's school refer to: <https://crschools.us/students-and-families/student-services/health-services/>

Student Illness or Injury During the School Day

Students are sent to the health office if they are injured or appear ill. Health office staff will attend to the student's complaint. This may include providing first aid, asking the student questions about how he/she feels, taking a temperature, making observations, talking to the teacher, and contacting the school nurse. Students will be sent home for:

- A temperature of 100.4° F. or higher
- Active, illness related vomiting or diarrhea,

The parent/guardian will be called and the student will be sent home. Other symptoms that influence the decision to send the student home include general appearance and functioning in the classroom. After a period of observation a decision will be made to do one of the following:

- Notify the parent/guardian for symptoms of illness or injury of a serious nature as determined by the school nurse and/or health secretary. Not all student visits to the health office will result in

parents/guardians being contacted.

- Allow the student to rest in the health office for a brief period then return to class.

Return to School After Illness

Students are to be fever-free without fever reducing medication before returning to school. During times of high rates of illness, such as during influenza season, the length of time a student must remain home after fever/symptoms of illness may change as recommended by Linn County Public Health.

For more information regarding other health services policies/procedures visit:

<https://crschools.us/students-and-families/parent-notifications/>

Reference: School Board Policy 605.3

Health Information

The school should be informed of students' significant health conditions. This information should be updated in Infinite Campus yearly. The information will be shared with school staff that need to know about your child's condition. If the condition requires special adjustments in the school environment, the school nurse should be contacted. Any changes in student health status during the year should be communicated to the school nurse, Stephaine Nederhoff (558-1074), or health secretary, Rebecca Utterback (558-2243, option 2).

Special Diet Requests

If your child has been determined by a physician to have a medical condition that restricts their diet and requires dietary accommodations, a Diet Prescription Form must be completed by a medical authority and returned to the health office. All meal modifications require a completed and signed Diet Prescription Form on file. The Diet Prescription Form is available on the district website and your school's health office. A soy milk alternative to fluid cow's milk is available to those with a medical condition when prescribed by a medical authority. There will be no additional cost to a modified meal due to a medical condition. Notice of procedural rights are available on the District website and the Office of Learning and Leadership. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Food and Nutrition Department at 319-558-2305.

Social Emotional Behavioral Learning/Character Education

Taft is not only dedicated to building the academic skills of every student but Taft also believes in educating students in their social, emotional, and behavioral growth.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is essential to students' overall academic success. Students learn best when they are able to feel autonomy, belonging, and competence while at school. Creating a caring community is imperative, allowing students to build their SEL skills and it can be felt immediately upon entering the building or a classroom. Everywhere you look, there is evidence of kindness and respect.

Caring School Community

At CRCSD, we use an instructional program called Caring School Community® to help us create an environment where each student feels safe, accepted, encouraged, and happy. The Caring School Community

program is designed to help children become caring, responsible members of their school communities and, ultimately, to grow into humane, principled, and skilled citizens. It does so by:

- Building caring relationships with and among students and staff
- Directly teaching social skills
- Creating calm, orderly learning environments through the use of effective classroom management practices
- Helping students acquire self discipline through a caring and direct approach.

Caring School Community achieves this through weekly classroom instruction centered around a social emotional focus. Each day begins in Advisory where students greet one another and engage in a fun activity which provides practice for that week's focus skill. Each week includes direct instruction around a specific social skill as well as regular class discussions that help students learn about each other, solve problems, and become caring and responsible members of the classroom community. Finally, your teacher may communicate with you each week around the skills being taught and how it can be supported at home.

P.A.R.R.T.

Taft's behavioral expectations for students can be summarized with our PARRT acronym to help guide student behavior and create a positive school culture.

Personal Best - We strive for high quality products and outcomes.

Active Listening - We listen with our eyes, ears, hearts, and undivided attention.

Respect - We show tolerance and regard for people, property, and ideas.

Responsibility - We follow directions and procedures. We are dependable.

Trustworthiness - We are truthful, reliable, and choose to do the right thing.

Items Unrelated to School

Occasionally, students will want to bring items to school that are not related to learning. Please leave these items at home unless given specific permission by a teacher. This may include, but not limited to:

- Non-school related electronics
- Fidgets (unless arranged to use through the office)
- Toys
- Blankets, pillows, & stuffed animals
- Flags or any other item that may distract students from learning

If a student brings any items of this nature, they may be asked to turn it into the office and pick it up at the end of the day or have a parent/guardian arrange to pick it up.

Gum/Candy

Please leave all candy at home unless it is part of a special event such as a Read and Feed. Any food or drink that is brought to school should be in sealed containers and only consumed in the cafeteria. **Food should not be open in lockers.** Students will be allowed to use their own water bottle at school.

Gum is allowed at Taft with some exceptions. Gum is not allowed in the domes (cafeteria, gym, music rooms, and auditorium) from 7:20 am -2:50 pm. Teachers may ask students to not chew gum in their classes or to spit their gum out if it becomes a distraction to others.

Visitors

If parents/guardians wish to visit their child at school, the visit must take place in a non-classroom setting such as the library or lunchroom. We do not allow any minors to visit Taft students at any time during the day unless accompanied by an adult.

Student Breakfast/Lunch

Breakfast is available on a daily basis and costs \$2.45 during the 2025-2026 school year. Breakfast will be served from 7:20-7:40 am.

All lunches are 30 minutes and cost \$3.50 for the 2025-2026 school year. Students may pay for additional lunch items on a daily basis or parents/guardians may add money to their student's accounts using the online accounting system called "[Send Money to School](#)." This is located on the Taft homepage. **Checks for lunch should be made out to Taft Middle School Cafeteria.** Milk may be purchased for .60 cents per carton. Special ala carte selections may be purchased as an alternative to the regular hot lunch.

Free and Reduced Lunch

Students whose parents qualify may apply for free or reduced priced lunch in the counselor's office. Reduced breakfast costs \$0.30 and reduced lunch costs \$0.40. Free breakfast or lunch is no cost.

Delivery of commercial prepared foods by vendors or others is not allowed.

Cafeteria Expectations

Students are expected to pass quietly and walk to and from the cafeteria with the allotted time after being dismissed by their respective teachers. Menus are posted in the cafeteria and in the online announcements on the Taft website. Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner and contribute to a quiet and relaxed atmosphere during lunch. Quiet talking is permitted, but students are expected to respect the rights of others at all times while in the cafeteria area.

Physical Education Guidelines

At Taft we believe every student needs and is entitled to a comprehensive physical education program. Physical education teachers believe that every student should:

- Develop knowledge and demonstrate progress toward improved personal wellness and fitness.
- Develop skills to keep pace with growth and individual needs.
- Develop muscle coordination and body control through locomotor and non-locomotor activities.
- Develop knowledge and skills for leisure time recreational activities.
- Develop a positive self concept so that the individual will function effectively with respect for the mind and body.
- Develop socially acceptable habits and attitudes of cooperation, competition, participation, leadership, and sportsmanship.

We will try to accomplish these goals through the use of outcome based objectives that have been established for 6, 7, and 8th grades in the Cedar Rapids Community School District. Students will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Stays on task without immediate supervision
- Works well with a partner or in groups
- Shows good effort
- Has a positive attitude
- Is accepting of others with less ability
- Shows good sportsmanship
- Listens to and follows directions
- Displays appropriate behavior in locker room
- Remembers to bring gym clothes
- Treats equipment with care

Student Expectations for PE

1. Students will have access to lockers during PE class to place belongings. The locker room will be locked during class to keep items secure. We ask that students transport their PE belongings to and from class using a sling bag (not a backpack). Students should not leave anything in the locker room once they are done with class, and store their PE bag in the hallway locker.
2. Locker Room-To ensure the safety of all, appropriate behavior will be expected at all times. Things like running, wrestling, and towel snapping will not be tolerated. Students will be expected to speak in a normal tone of voice and use appropriate language.
3. Equipment Care- Instruction on the proper use and care of equipment will be given during each class. Students will be responsible for the cost of anything that is broken intentionally.
4. Gym Clothes and Shoes- Students must have different clothes for gym from those which they wear to their other classes. Shorts, t-shirts, sweatshirts, and sweatpants would be considered proper gym attire. Students also must wear tennis shoes. Most hard- soled dress shoes leave marks on the gym floor and will not be accepted.
5. Participation - Students who are not able to participate in PE Class for medical reasons will be assigned to a Study Hall if the time out from PE will be longer than 2 weeks.

Music Department-Course Change Policy

All Taft students are required to take a music course. When students select a course, the expectation is that the student will remain in that course for the entire school year. However, if a concern arises about changing music courses, the following procedure must be followed:

- The parent/guardian will contact the music course teacher to discuss concerning issues and develop possible solutions.
- If the family still has the desire to change, the parent/guardian will outline their concerns in an email or phone call to Mr. Gilchrist.
- After consulting with the music course teacher, Mr. Gilchrist will contact the family to discuss the situation and reach a final decision.
- Students will not be allowed to change music classes part-way through a semester. This is for several reasons:
 - Teachers and students work hard to build a class climate and rapport. Moving students in and out of classes unnecessarily disrupts the classroom climate.
 - Students are preparing towards a group performance or assessment. Moving a student mid-semester is unfair to both the student and the other students in the class.

- Taft supports the idea of responsibility and commitment. Students need to honor the commitments they make.

Students who wish to join an instrumental music class (Band or Orchestra) after 1st semester of 6th grade will need to complete enough lessons on their new instrument to be able to participate in the class. It usually takes at least a quarter, if not a semester, to obtain these skills and experience success. During this time, the student will remain in the current music class.

The intent of this policy is to set an atmosphere for problem-solving directly with the teacher, student, and student's family before the subject of changing courses is addressed.

Fine Arts Performance Attendance

Significant emphasis is placed on attendance and performance of our students at band, orchestra, and vocal music events. Though grades are unaffected by attendance at drama events, grades will reflect absences at Band, Orchestra, and Vocal performances during the day or at programs scheduled in the evening hours. Since the evening performance is the culminating event of the semester, similar to a final exam, the grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Legal Notices

All notices are available on the district website: [https://crschools.us/students-and-families/parent-notifications/Parent Notifications](https://crschools.us/students-and-families/parent-notifications/Parent%20Notifications). Here are the items you can find there:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ● Chapter 102-Child Abuse reporting | ● Student publications |
| ● Section 504 | ● Safe and responsible student use of networked tech resources |
| ● Compulsory Education | ● Student fee waiver |
| ● Truancy | ● Gifts to school personnel |
| ● Conduct on School Premises | ● Reserved time for non-school student activities |
| ● Anti-Bullying/Harassment | ● Video cameras on district properties & transportation |
| ● Sex offender Registry | ● Annual notice regarding student records |
| ● Search and Seizure | ● Release of student directory information |
| ● Illegal items found in school or in Student possession | ● Rights under the protection of pupil rights amendment (PPRA) |
| ● Tobacco Free school environment | ● Open enrollment |
| ● Weapons | ● In district permits |
| ● Chapter 103 Seclusion & Restraint | ● Home school Assistance program |
| ● Building level Due process | ● Asbestos notification |
| ● Suspension | |
| ● Cost of evaluation and treatment | |
| ● Official school publications | |

Level I Investigators

PRIMARY: Jennifer Van Fleet, Executive Director, Student Services-319-558-2575

ALTERNATES: Ana Clymer, Katelynn Johnson, Jeffier Cress-Sliffe, Amanda Umbdenstock, Kimberly Abram, Janessa Carr, Shara Shadle, Dr. Erin Bone, Sadie Winkles

Level II Investigators

If a case is designated as “founded”, it is turned over to a designated Level II Investigator Agency: Cedar Rapids Police Department

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.

Lockers

Each student will be given a locker. 6th Graders will share with one other student. The lockers have combination locks. All personal belongings brought to school are the responsibility of the student. Although theft is seldom a problem, students are discouraged from leaving valuables or personal items in their lockers. We request that students leave electronic devices and other personal items at home. If it is necessary to bring valuables to school, they should be given to the office for safekeeping. Lockers cannot be monitored constantly and if items are missing or damaged, the school district will not be responsible for their replacement.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items are placed in a common area and are gone through regularly. Any items not claimed are donated.

Nicotine Free Environment

The District prohibits the distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use, or being under the influence of beer, wine, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, and/or illegal or medically unauthorized substances, or "look alike" substances that appear to be tobacco, nicotine, beer, wine, alcohol or and/or illegal or medically unauthorized substances by students while on District property or on property within the jurisdiction of the District; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the District.

Students who violate the terms of this regulation may be required to satisfactorily complete a substance abuse evaluation, assistance and/or rehabilitation program approved by the Board. The program may include age-appropriate, developmentally-based drug and alcohol curriculum for students in grades kindergarten through twelve, which address the legal, social, and health consequences of tobacco, drug and alcohol use and which provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use tobacco, drugs or alcohol. Information about drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation and re-entry programs available to students. If such a student fails to satisfactorily complete such a program, the student may be subject to discipline including suspension or expulsion.

Reference School Board Policy 604.10

Plagiarism Policy

We want to ensure all students are career and college ready upon their completion of school. This includes understanding and avoiding plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as using another person's work or artificial intelligence as your own and includes, but is not limited to copying online sources, using another student's Google Drive, copying and pasting another's work, etc.

It is the student's responsibility to avoid plagiarizing others' work. To assist students in producing their own work, teachers will:

- Make the classroom policy known to all students
- Be specific as to whether work is to be cooperative or individual
- Prepare students for assessments
- Provide feedback in a timely manner

Administrators will enact the required and optional range of responses in order to resolve the situation and prevent it from occurring again. The response will be dependent upon a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the student's age and development, the impact that the situation had on others, the intensity and frequency of the behavior, and other contextual factors.

Be SMART - Secure Storage Resolution

The Cedar Rapids Community School District Board of Education passed a resolution to ensure parents know about how secure gun storage can prevent school shootings. In the vast majority of active shooter incidents in K-12 schools, the shooter or shooters were school-age and were current or former students. They also obtained their guns from their home or the homes of relatives. While millions of responsible gun owners follow recommended storage practices, research shows that more than half of gun owners do not store all of their guns securely. Oftentimes, the guns taken from the home and used by school-age shooters were easily accessible or were not stored securely. By taking proactive steps to promote responsible gun ownership and secure firearm storage, schools can prevent school gun violence and help keep school communities safe.

Whereas, Evidence strongly suggests that secure firearm storage is an essential component to any effective strategy to keep schools and students safe;

Whereas, An estimated 4.6 million American children live in households with at least one loaded, unlocked firearm;

Whereas, Every year, roughly 350 children under the age of 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else. That's nearly one unintentional shooting per day, and 70 percent of these incidents take place inside a home;

Whereas, Another 1,200 children and teens die by gun suicide each year, most often using guns belonging to a family member;

Whereas, In incidents of gun violence on school grounds, 75 percent of active shooters were current students or recent graduates;

Whereas, Research shows that secure firearm storage practices are associated with up to an 85 percent reduction in the risk of self-inflicted and unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens;

Whereas, The U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center recommends the importance of appropriate storage of firearms because 76 percent of school shooters used firearms acquired from the homes of parents or close relatives;

Whereas, Across the country, lawmakers, community members, and local leaders are working together to implement public awareness campaigns, such as the Be SMART program, which is endorsed by the National PTA and which encourages secure gun storage practices and highlights the public safety risks of unsecured guns;

Whereas, School districts across the country have begun to proactively send materials home to parents and guardians informing them of applicable firearm storage laws and firearm secure storage best practices;

Whereas, Keeping students, teachers and staff safe from the threat of gun violence should be the responsibility of all adult stakeholders at each of our school sites;

Therefore, the Board and the Superintendent will continue to work with local law enforcement agencies, health agencies, and nonprofits to collaborate and increase efforts to inform District parents of their obligations regarding secure storage of firearms in their homes.

Kingston Stadium

We enjoy and encourage middle school age students to attend high school football games at Kingston Stadium; however, these are the guidelines for your information:

- Sophomore games begin at 5:00 p.m., with varsity contests beginning at 7:15 p.m.
- Admission is \$7.00 for adults, \$5.00 for all students, and \$5.00 for senior citizens (62 and over) Most games conclude by 9:30 p.m. Since the Cedar Rapids Community School district cannot provide supervision of students after the game, parents should plan on picking up their students by 9:30 p.m.
- **All School Rules Apply.** Disruptive behavior may result in school suspension and/or banning from future games held at Kingston Stadium. Students are expected to follow the directions of the Stadium hosts and uniformed officers on duty.
- During the games, students are to be seated in the bleachers.
- Students **ARE NOT** to congregate/loiter in the mezzanine, concessions, walkways, restrooms or areas of the Stadium.
- During the playing of the National Anthem, appropriate behavior is expected.
- Students are **NOT PERMITTED** to roam from one side of the Stadium to the other-enter through the gates on the side you wish to sit. The designated home team always sits on the west side (press Box Side) of the Stadium.
- Students that leave the Stadium **MAY NOT** return the same night (once you're out-you're out!)

At many of our games, middle school administrators supervise their students, however any additional adult volunteer supervision would be greatly appreciated. If you are interested in volunteering, please call 558-1192.

All students can be a positive role model for others through their actions and by censuring those around them whose behavior is unbecoming. Parents/guardians, please speak with your students about appropriate behavior at all school events, or **BETTER YET**, join us at Kingston and enjoy the Bands, the Cheerleaders, the Pom Poms, and exciting High School Football!

Traffic Flow (separate sheet)

Healthy School Snacks (separate sheet)