



# Parent/Student HANDBOOK

**2024-2025**



Cedar Rapids  
Community School District  
*Every Learner. Future Ready.*

## **Introduction**

For the 2024-2025 school year, the handbook can be found online through the CRCSD school websites. Students and parents are encouraged to review the handbook and its contents.

## **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 (including school provided electronic devices), property within the jurisdiction of the school district or school district premises, school-owned or school-operated buses or vehicles and chartered buses. This would also include when learning is provided in a virtual environment. 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.

## **Jurisdictional 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, equal ten days on a cumulative basis, a staffing team will meet to determine whether the IEP is appropriate. Reference:  
School Board Policy 604

# WELCOME TO WEST WILLOW ELEMENTARY!

We are so excited to have you here with us at West Willow, we will continue to build great traditions and memories for our students, staff and families. Our highly qualified staff works cooperatively with students and families towards the goal of developing students who are proficient on their standards and responsible citizens. We place a strong emphasis on teaching basic skills in reading, math and written language. Our staff promotes the development of positive self-concepts by teaching students how to "Join the Pack" by learning Problem Solving, Awareness, Control and Kindness in all areas of the building. This incorporates the ISEL Competencies of Responsible Decision Making, Social Awareness, Self Awareness, Self Management and Relationships Skills.

We will continue to build a safe, supportive environment here at West Willow, however your support is needed. All families are challenged to partner with us on their child's education in today's hectic life pace. We look forward to working with each of you in this exciting new year.

Our West Willow PTA is a strong organization that will offer support to our school and children in countless ways. Please consider getting involved this year if you haven't already. Teachers additionally welcome parent volunteers in our classrooms throughout the year. Please speak with your child's teacher directly or contact our volunteer coordinator if you would like to help out.

Together we can make such a difference. I certainly welcome your questions and input, please feel free to call, email or stop in to talk with me.

Sincerely,

Greg O'Connell, Principal  
319.558.2167  
[goconnell@crschools.us](mailto:goconnell@crschools.us)

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## ABSENCES AND ATTENDANCE

### Attendance Phone 319-558-2167 press 1 for attendance line

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

Reference: School Board Policy 602

**Arriving Late and Leaving Early:** Arriving at school or class after the official start time constitutes tardy. If a student is consistently arriving late or leaving early and it is documented, the information will be considered at the District and County Attorney levels. Time missed from instruction due to tardiness or leaving early will count towards the cumulative hours a student is absent. A student is considered tardy if:

- Elementary School - Enters the school any time between 8:50 and 9:15. Afternoon Pre-K is tardy from entry between 12:50 and 1:15.
- If a student enters the building for the day after these tardy time frames, the school designee will record their entry time into Infinite Campus using the Check In/Check Out feature in which this time will count towards unexcused absences.

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.

When a student's non attendance or tardiness interferes with learning, the building MTSS team may intervene to identify barriers and offer additional support to improve student attendance. The team may communicate with the student and the student's guardians to determine the reason(s) for the excessive absences, ensure the student and guardians are aware of the adverse consequences of poor attendance, and jointly develop a plan for improving the student's school attendance. The team may recommend community resources and/or collaborate with community agencies and organizations to address the needs of the student and family if applicable.

Reference: School Board Policy 602B Attendance District Board Policy

## ANIMALS AT SCHOOL

Permission from the principal must be given before any person may bring an animal to school. When permission is given, pets and other animals must be on a leash or in a cage and must be accompanied by an adult who can leave with the animal as soon as the "sharing" time ends.

For safety and courtesy reasons, everyone is respectfully asked not to bring animals to school when escorting their students to and from school or when attending outdoor school events.

Reference: School Board Policy See board policy 904.

## ARRIVAL

### BUILDING ARRIVAL PROCEDURE

Students should arrive and dismiss from same doors:

Main doors: 3rd grade & 4th grade

Preschool doors: 1st grade & Kindergarten

West doors: 2nd grade & 5th grade

To ensure student safety, all students and drivers are strongly urged to heed the following guidelines:

1. Students must be picked up on the sidewalk side of the school drive. Students are not to walk through or across the school drive at any time except for at the crosswalks by the entrance and exit points. Drivers are required to wait for a chance to pull up to the sidewalk curb, rather than park in the middle of the lane and ask students to walk through traffic.
2. **No car may be left unattended in the driveway, it is to drop your child off and go lane.** If you need to talk with your child's teacher or you are walking your child up to the school, you need to park in the lot or on a side street and walk your child across the parking lot.
3. Students are asked not to cross Atwood Drive in the middle of the block, especially with it being our main entrance. At the end of the day a staff member will be there to help with those walking home that direction.
4. Drivers are asked not to drop-off or pick-up students on the north side of First Avenue. Vehicle traffic is heavy and often moving too fast for pedestrian safety. Because of this dangerous situation, students will be asked not to cross First Avenue before and after school unless accompanied by an adult. We do have a crossing guard at the corner of Broadmore and 1st Avenue.



5. Drivers are asked to obey the “No Parking” striped zones in the school drive between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
6. All drivers may wait for passengers in the No Parking Zone, as long as they do not leave their vehicle. Thank you for supporting these safety requests.
7. There are multiple handicapped parking spots in the front of the building, please obey the law and do not park in these spots unless you have proper signage in or on your car.
8. Our bus lane in the back is for our bus and daycare van students only. Parents are not permitted to use the bus lane for picking up their children.

## **BIKE SAFETY**

Parents are asked to assume responsibility for their student’s bike safety readiness and bike maintenance. All bike riders should wear a helmet.

Riders are expected to follow the bike safety and courtesy rules listed below:

1. Walk bikes at all times anywhere on school grounds.
2. Walking means both feet on the ground, not straddling a bike, not coasting scooter-style.
3. Bicyclists must obey all traffic signs and yield to pedestrians.
4. Bike riders should park, lock, and leave their bike at the rack in front of the main building.

Students must follow the bike safety rules listed above. Consequences for not following these may include loss of bike riding privileges, having the bicycle held at school for a parent to pick up, meeting with the principal and parents to review bike safety expectations, or meeting after school for one or more days to review bike safety lessons with staff or the principal.

Skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, heelies are not permitted on school grounds.

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

- As a part of our District Wellness Policy, students will celebrate their birthdays in a variety of ways. Students are not allowed to bring individual birthday snacks.
- We ask that you do not send balloons or flowers to the school for your child’s birthday. If they are received, they will remain in the main office for students or families to pick up after school.
- It is becoming increasingly difficult with food allergies and some students not able to participate or be in the room during this time. Therefore if you have questions, please contact Mr. O’Connell. Thanks for being respectful of this policy at West Willow.

Reference: School Board Policy 610.A

## **BUILDING USE**

Youth organizations and clubs must make a request for school usage. This can be requested through the district use form and this is located on the district website <https://crschools.us/departments/quick-links/school-facilities-use/>. The requests must be completed and approved prior to the first usage.

Reference: School Board Policy 805

## **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. All transportation questions or concerns should be directed to the transportation office at [319-558-2318](tel:319-558-2318).

Reference: School Board Policy 901, 901A

## CALENDAR

### DISTRICT CALENDARS

The CRCSD District Calendar for K-12 and Preschool can be found on our district [website](#).

### MAKE UP DAYS

When school days are canceled due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, school days may need to be made up. Potential make-up days are indicated on our school calendar. Parents are encouraged to take these potential days into consideration when planning early summer vacations to eliminate any conflict in schedules. Reference: School Board Policy 400.1

### CEDAR RAPIDS SCHOOL BOARD

Regular meetings of the Board of Education are generally held on Mondays during 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 school year, please notify the office of your new address so it can be updated in Infinite Campus. If you move out of your resident school attendance area and wish to remain at your current school, please complete a permit form found on the district website.

### CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Factors such as achievement level, gender, and social maturity are taken into consideration when assigning students to classrooms for the coming year. Every effort is made to form heterogeneous groups that will enable students to work together with the teacher in academics as well as in social pursuits. Students with special needs (learning, behavior, etc.) will be given as much special consideration as possible. The staff, counselor, and principal should be aware of these specific needs due to their contact with the student. Parental input regarding circumstances of which the staff is not aware is appropriate. This input needs to be in writing and submitted to the Principal by the second Friday in May. The principal needs to be an advocate for all children and should assure all an equal opportunity during their elementary years.

Parents may not select their children's teachers, but are free to give input into how their child learns best. Assignments for each school year will be available in August.

### ACCELERATION AND RETENTION PROCESS

Please contact the building administrator regarding further information on the processes used for acceleration and/or retention.

## **CLOTHING/APPEARANCE**

The District believes inappropriate student appearance causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment or presents a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors. Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment. The standards will be those generally acceptable to the community as appropriate in a school setting. The District expects students to be clean and well-groomed and wear clothes in good repair and appropriate for the time, place, and occasion. Clothing or other apparel promoting products illegal for use by minors and clothing displaying content inappropriate for school-aged children, profanity, weapons, or reference to prohibited conduct are not allowed. While the primary responsibility for appearance lies with students and their parents/guardians, appearance disruptive to the education program will not be tolerated. When, in the judgment of a principal, a student's appearance or choice of clothing disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety, the student may be required to make modifications or be subject to disciplinary action. The wearing of gang-related attire or insignia by students is prohibited. (Board Policy 603.1)

### **GYM SHOES**

Children are to wear rubber soled shoes, like tennis shoes, to PE class. Proper footwear will ensure safety and enhance performance. We discourage flip-flop type shoes for PE as well as recess.

Reference: School Board Policy 603.1

## **COMMUNICATING DURING THE DAY**

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 8:10-8:35 AM, during specials, or after school.

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 by 3:00pm at 319-558-2167

All communication between families and students during the school day should be done through school personnel. Texting, emailing, messaging or phone calls during the school day to student devices or personal devices causes a disruption to the learning environment. These communications should be handled through the main office.

## **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 West Willow 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

## **CROSSING GUARD**

A crossing guard is stationed before and after school at the corners of 1st Ave and Broadmore Rd and 1st Avenue and Stoney Point Rd to help students safely cross that intersection. The hours the crossing guard is on duty are from 8:15-8:50 and 3:45-4:15. On Early Dismissal Days the guards are on duty from 2:20-2:45.

## DAYCARE/BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

All CRCSD elementary schools and middle schools will have before and after-school programming through Champions that will begin at 6:30 am and be available until the start of the school day. Champions also provides after school programming until 6:00 pm. The Champions program will also provide wrap-around services at Truman early childhood center. If you have any questions, please contact Champions at 800-246-2154 or at [discoverchampions.com](http://discoverchampions.com)

## DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

### DISMISSAL DURING THE DAY

It is necessary for parents to send a note, send an email, or make a telephone call to the main office requesting for students to be dismissed during the school day.

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 by 3:00pm at 319-558-2167

When a student is to leave school early, he/she is to **check out through the office. Caretakers are asked to come to the office to check-out their student.** Leaving early to attend outside classes or lessons is strongly discouraged.

Students who become ill at school will be dismissed through the office after parents, guardians, or emergency contacts have been contacted and appropriate arrangements are made.

## SCHOOL DELAY OR CLOSURE

When a decision is made to close schools for the day, delay school, or dismiss early because of inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances, announcements will be made on local radio and television stations, district websites and social media platforms. In addition, district parents and staff are notified of delays and cancellations by school phone messenger. It is important that contact information is up-to-date in Infinite Campus and the household member has selected to receive notifications via email, phone, or text message.

See Arrival and follow the drop-off/pick up procedures

Students will exit the building the same door their grade level enters the building.

We will stagger our Specific Dismissal Times:

**Bus/Van Riders & Champions**– 3:45 / 2:15 (early out)

**Car Riders (families in the car rider line)**– 3:50 / 2:20 (early out)

**Walkers**– 3:50 / 2:20 (early out)

## DISTRICT VISION & MISSION

### VISION

Every Learner, Future Ready

### MISSION

Our mission is to ensure all learners experience a rigorous and personalized learning experience so they have a plan, a pathway, and a passion for their future.

### West Willow Mission

Learning, Everybody Everyday Future Ready

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## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

### PERSONAL DEVICES

#### CELL PHONE USAGE & OTHER COMMUNICATION DEVICES (iPads, iPods, Watches, etc.)

Families are expected to contact their child by calling the main office. Student cell phones and personal devices are to be turned off and kept in the student's bag during the school day. Should the cell phone or device ring/sound/alarm during the day and be a distraction, it can be collected and kept in the office or teacher's desk for the student to collect before heading home. We ask that students keep their devices off and not use any of the features until they are off grounds. Recording and photography by students will not be permitted.

If a student wears a watch with texting/calling features, they will be expected to not use the device for communication between home and school during the school day.

Reminder, all of these devices are considered "personal belongings" and the students are responsible for the item. The school is not held responsible for loss or damage..

### SCHOOL ISSUED DEVICES

#### Student Devices

Each student at the elementary school level will have access to a device for the school year. Devices will be kept at school, except in the event of a school shutdown in which all students are required to participate in virtual learning. In that case, devices would be sent home.

The full, detailed Elementary Student Device Agreement can be found at this link.

A summary can be found in this handbook.

#### Student Device Expectations:

- Student devices will be kept at school except in the event of a school shutdown where virtual learning is required or with the appropriate permission from school staff.
- Students will follow classroom expectations around care of devices, storage, and charging.
- Students will treat the device as if it is their own property, avoiding use that is conducive to damage or loss.
- Students will leave their device in its protective case unless given permission.
- Students will not allow anyone else to use their username / password.
- Adhere to CRCSD School's Student Device Use Policy at all times and in all locations. When in doubt about acceptable use, school staff, a teacher-librarian, building technical contact, or building administrator.

#### How to Handle Problems

- Promptly report any problems to the building's help desk representative or by contacting the district technology office by email ([HelpDesk@crschools.us](mailto:HelpDesk@crschools.us)) or by phone, 319-558-2900
- Do not force anything (e.g., connections, popped-off keys, etc.) Seek help instead.
- When in doubt, ask for help

## STUDENT DEVICE USE AND CONDUCT POLICY

The District requires students to learn to use computing devices, data networks, enterprise software systems, electronic mail, the Internet, and telecommunications tools and apply them in the appropriate ways to the performance of tasks associated with their positions and assignments.

Students shall only engage in appropriate, ethical, and legal utilization of the District's technology, network systems, and internet access. Student instruction on digital citizenship standards which includes safe, ethical, and responsible use of the Internet will be defined and taught within core curriculum. Student use of the District's technology, network systems, and internet access shall also comply with all District policies and regulations.

### Discipline

Any student who violates these rules will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the building's student code of conduct. Serious or repeated violations will result in the students' use of technology restricted and or revoked in addition to other possible disciplinary action.

The full student device use and conduct policy can be found at this [link](#).

### Disclaimer

CRCSD does not have control of the information on the Internet or incoming email. CRCSD will provide Internet content filtering both onsite and off. However, no filter is perfect. All filters have vulnerabilities that may be exploited by individuals who are actively and intently dedicated to breaching them.

If student devices are at home, It is strongly recommended that student use of all devices be monitored closely by parents to protect students from accessing inappropriate sites.

Reference: School Board Policy 900.1

## EMERGENCY DRILLS

All schools conduct official emergency safety drills for fire and tornadoes a minimum of four times per school year. In addition, we practice a security school emergency drill twice a school year and two bus evacuation drills each year. These drills are registered with the Cedar Rapids Community School District and the Cedar Rapids Fire Department. If volunteers or visitors are in the building when emergency signals sound, they should respond to the warning by following the group they are with or by responding to special directions from the principal or a staff member. In the event of a building evacuation, staff and students will move to a relocation center identified by the District and local law enforcement. Local radio and television stations will announce when and where parents/guardians may be reunited with their children.

## 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. Parent volunteers are often needed on field trips. 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

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## FOOD SERVICES

We encourage all students to participate in school meals. A nutritious lunch and breakfast is available to all students. School meals offered reflect the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and provide the energy and nutrients necessary to optimize learning.

Breakfast and lunch options are available in all of our schools.. Menus are posted on the District website and available on the Nutrislice App. <https://cr.nutrislice.com/menu>.

The Cedar Rapids community school district has 16 Elementary schools under the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) that allows us to serve breakfast and lunch at no charge daily for the 24 - 25 school year.

The schools are as follows:

Elementary schools: Cleveland, CRA (Cedar River Academy), Erskine, Grant, Grant Wood, Harrison, Hiawatha, Hoover, Johnson, Kenwood, Madison, Nixon, Trailside, Van Buren, West Willow, and Wright.

For the 24-25 school year, the remaining elementary schools will require payment of meals. If you believe your student/students will qualify for a free/reduced meal benefit please fill out an application at [www.cedarrapids.familyportal.cloud](http://www.cedarrapids.familyportal.cloud). For the 24-25 school year the elementary meal prices will be as follows: breakfast \$2.35, lunch \$3.30, extra milks \$.60 and adult lunch \$4.85.

USDA requires families to complete the free/reduced application to receive additional benefits in the school district such as fee waivers, transportation, etc.

School meals include the following components; milk and/or water, fruit, vegetable, grain, and protein. If students choose to bring a meal from home, families are asked to send nutritious food items. Milk is available for purchase. Bringing food from outside restaurants to the school cafeteria is discouraged. Students are not allowed to have soda with any lunch eaten at school. Students are discouraged from sharing their foods or beverages with one another, given concerns about sanitation, allergies and health related issues. We view the cafeteria as an extension of the classroom, and expect students to follow common courtesies in the lunchroom.

Menus may change due to emergencies, late starts, snow days, and manufacturing shortages.

**Dietary Restrictions:** If your student requires special dietary considerations, we need a note from the doctor on file. We ask that you obtain a diet prescription form from Health Services or the Food and Nutrition Department to be completed by your doctor. Completed forms can be returned to the school office as soon as possible to determine if accommodations should be made.

Parents are welcome to join their student(s) for lunch. If a parent plans to eat school lunch, they are asked to notify the office by 9:00 a.m. on the day they will need the meal. Parent meals may be charged to the student account if sufficient funds are in the account. All adults, including parents, are charged the full adult fee.

Reference: School Board Policy 902.1

## HEALTH SERVICES INFORMATION

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 HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

### 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.

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

## INTRAMURALS/AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES/ENRICHMENTS

During the school year we sponsor a number of extracurricular activities. Schedules for these activities will appear in the Smore newsletter or in communication from the specific teacher in charge. If a family chooses for their child(ren) to participate, then it is their responsibility to provide transportation home. All children will continue to follow school expectations, or will be asked to leave the activity.



## LEGAL NOTICES

All notices are available on the district website: <https://crschools.us/students-and-families/parent-notifications/>  
Parent Notifications

Here are the items you can find there:

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

### **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.

## **LIBRARY**

The library supports the curriculum and enriches the children's learning experiences. The Teacher Librarian and Media Secretary assist students and teachers in locating and using the resources of the Library.

Materials are available to students, staff, and parents to be checked out or renewed. There are no fines for overdue materials; however, each child is expected to assume responsibility for returning materials on time.

Concerns with any materials, or any specific book must be made in writing. There is a form available from the librarian to be filled out by the concerned party. A District committee will then reconsider the questioned material.

## **LOCKERS/COAT ROOMS FOR PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Students generally share lockers with another student. Items stored in lockers such as clothing, lunch boxes, school bags, etc. should be permanently marked with the student's first and last name. All personal belongings brought to school are the responsibility of the student.

The school is not responsible for stolen items. Students are discouraged from leaving valuables or personal items in their lockers. We request that students leave toys, balls, electronic devices, and other personal items at home. If it is necessary to bring valuables to school, they should be given to the teacher or 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 articles will be near the cafeteria. Parents and children are urged to check the area for lost articles. Every effort will be made to return lost items to their owner. Proper marking of clothing and other articles is important to returning these items to their owners. Items left after school is out in June are donated.

## **MTSS (Multi-tiered Systems of Support)**

MTSS is a framework of best practices for schools to meet the needs of all students through opportunities to learn and experience success in academics and social-emotional-learning (SEL) skills. This system matches instruction to the needs of students while ensuring access and attainment of student growth and proficiency.

CRCSD aligns school improvement efforts with Iowa's MTSS framework. The following critical components guide the work at our school:

1. High quality and engaging curriculum and instruction for all students.
2. Screening for potential challenges three times per year.
3. Intervention provided for any students who need extra support in academics and/or SEL.
4. Monitor learning to ensure students make progress toward end-of-year expectations.
5. Carefully track what we do and how our efforts impact students.

A multi-tiered system of supports has three layers of support. Tier I, II, and III. Tier I supports are offered to ALL students and include our core curricula for academic and social-emotional learning. Every student receives Tier I support. Tier II supports are offered to students who need more than the core. Those supports come in the form of Check-in/Check-out with a mentor, small group skill building, explicit math and literacy intervention groups. These interventions typically last 4-6 weeks, meet 3-5x/week for 15-20 minutes per day.

Staff will collect data to evaluate the effectiveness of the Tier II interventions. If data indicates an intervention has been ineffective then the intervention will be adjusted or the student may be referred for Tier III support. Tier III supports are individualized for the student and typically last 6-8 weeks and occur 5x/week for 20-30 minutes each day. As with Tier II supports, staff will collect data to evaluate the effectiveness of the Tier III interventions. If a student continues to struggle either academically or behaviorally with Tier III supports, they may be referred for a Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE) by our Grant Wood Area Education consultants.

Parents are a vital part of the MTSS support plan. Student progress data will be shared with parents throughout the process. If your student is struggling academically, emotionally, or behaviorally parents can request additional tiered support. Please communicate your concerns with your child's teacher or contact our school counselor, Thom Scott at 319-558-2167 or our Instructional Coach, Nicole Smith at 319-558-2167

Reference: School Board Policy 604.2a, 604.2

Board Policy 604.2a (MTSS Procedures)

Board Policy 604.2 (MTSS)

## ACADEMICS

### TITLE I FUNDING

Title I funding is provided for a number of our elementary schools. Title I is the largest federally funded supplemental education program. It does not replace what the school does; instead it gives students additional instruction for students that are not meeting grade level expectations in the areas of reading and/or math. School wide assessments are administered to all students and the data is used to determine students that qualify for extra help beyond Core instruction. Reference: School Board Policy 400

## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING SUPPORTS

### PBIS

The goal of PBIS is to create a positive school climate, in which students learn and grow. However, school climate can vary widely from school to school. A number of factors affect school climate, including school location, neighborhood culture, instructional methods, student diversity, and school administration.

Changing the school climate may seem like a daunting task. Employing the PBIS framework can make the task more manageable. The key to an effective PBIS implementation is an "all-in" mentality among teachers and administrators in a school. For PBIS to produce positive change in a school's climate, it needs to be employed schoolwide and with consistency.

School climate has bearing on attendance rates, academic achievement, and graduation rates. Regardless of socioeconomic status, students in a positive school climate are more likely to have higher test scores and greater academic success. In addition, a positive school climate helps students to develop the social and emotional skills they will need to become productive members of society.

In short, positive school climate includes:

- A feeling of safety
- Respect
- Engagement in learning
- Involvement in school life
- Shared vision
- Involvement of teachers, students, and families

We have developed Common Area Expectations for **Playground, Hallway, Bathroom, Lunchroom, Library, Stairway, Bus, Collaboration Space and Assembly**. Posters with these expectations are posted around the building. We will communicate these expectations to families in the weekly Smore newsletter.

Voice Levels: 0- No Talking, 1 Whisper voice, 2 Inside voice and 3 Outside voice

### **CARING SCHOOL COMMUNITY:**

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 to allowing students to grow their SEL skills and can be felt immediately upon entering a classroom or school. Everywhere you look, there is evidence of kindness and respect.

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 of society. It does so by:

- Building caring relationships with and among students
- 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 effective approach.

Caring School Community achieves this through weekly classroom instruction organized around a social emotional focus. Each day begins in Morning Circle where students greet one another and engage in a fun activity that provides practice for that week's focus skill. Each week also includes Community Chats (AK-1) and Classroom Meetings (2-5), regular class discussions that help students learn about each other, solve problems, and become caring, responsible members of the classroom community. Finally, your child will bring home an activity sheet each week to share with you the learning they are doing at school.

### **BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS**

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.

Board Policy 604

District Elementary Behavioral Definitions are used to guide decision making as the result of a behavioral infraction. Our goal is always to teach, restore any harm that may have been done, recognize what students are doing well, and provide opportunities for students to learn and grow.

Reference: School Board Policy 604 and 604.1 Board Policy 604.1

### **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.

#### **BE SMART RESOLUTION- SECURE STORAGE NOTIFICATION**

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;

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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 non-profits to collaborate and increase efforts to inform District parents of their obligations regarding secure storage of firearms in their homes.

## **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

Mr. O'Connell will send out a weekly email with what is happening at West Willow each week and you can see all the great pictures.

## **PTA**

The West Willow Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) works to support the learning needs of West Willow students and promote positive and productive home/school partnerships by fostering active involvement in school programs and practices. In addition to the teaching responsibilities for their own children, parents can support learning at West Willow by serving on PTA committees, participating in PTA meetings and educational programs, and by volunteering in the classrooms or other areas of school where extra adult support is needed. PTA meetings are held at school and the dates will be printed in the Smore newsletter.

West Willow Families:

The West Willow Elementary PTA would like to welcome you to the 2024-2025 school year. We wish to extend a warm greeting with hopes that you had a great summer and are ready to have a fantastic year at West Willow. The PTA has a very strong tradition here at WW. We are an integral part of the school community in three major ways: building the parent/school/community connections, fundraising, and volunteer coordination.

First, PTA is responsible for Family Fun events that occur throughout the year. These events are truly fun for the whole family. The WW community is strengthened by the friendships that grow by being with other WW families and having a good time.

Second, fundraising efforts are essential for a strong school. Funds raised at WW are used to enhance your child's schooling by providing many positive things such as field trips, library books, Kona Ice on special days and so much more. PTA collects Hy-Vee receipts through the year, but the two main fundraisers here at WW, 1.) The "Willow Pride Stride" Walk-a-thon continues to be a great success, so we will be using this again as our primary, BIG fundraiser in the spring. 2.) Fun fair, which will be taking place soon so be on the lookout, and serves as both a Family Fun event and a fundraiser.

Third, the PTA coordinates many volunteer opportunities for parents, helping to build that relationship between the families and the school. The list of volunteer opportunities here at WW is endless: helping at the book fair, donating food for teacher meals during conferences, hanging artwork in the hallway, leading a game at Field Day, helping at a Family Fun Event, such as the Sock Hop or Fun Fair, helping in the classroom, going on field trips, and

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the list goes on. We are always in need of volunteers, whether it be parents, grandparents, or guardians. When you volunteer, not only are you helping WW, you are also setting an example for your children of how to give of your time to help better the school and our community. Statistics show that if you are actively involved in your child's education, your child will be more successful in school. PTA is the perfect place to help you get involved. Please see attached sign-up sheets or feel free to email either PTA president Amy Kuennen at [Akuennen88@hotmail.com](mailto:Akuennen88@hotmail.com) or Erin Woods at [echwood6@gmail.com](mailto:echwood6@gmail.com) to get more information.

Every volunteer is a treasure. Every voice and every idea shared at a PTA meeting is valued. Our PTA can only grow stronger with increased involvement, and we challenge you to become involved at our school in some way. We wish you a successful school year and thank you for your contributions and involvement, and would love to see you at our first PTA meeting being held is to be determined and will be announced soon.

Thanks for your support

2024-2025 PTA Board

## **PARTIES**

### **NON-SCHOOL PARTIES/CELEBRATIONS**

Invitations to non-school sponsored parties or celebrations are to be handled by families outside of the school day. This will help avoid hurt feelings of students not receiving invitations.

### **SCHOOL SPONSORED PARTIES/CELEBRATION**

Three school celebrations will be planned during the school year. The homeroom parents and teachers will inform you if your child is being asked to help with refreshments or serve on a committee. If you want to excuse your child from participation in school celebrations, please send a note to the classroom teacher or school office.

## **PLAYGROUND AND RECESS**

### **PLAYGROUND**

We have established procedures to help provide an environment that is safe to both students and school property. Boundaries have been established and students need permission of a supervising adult to leave the area. Students are encouraged to wear clothing appropriate to the weather. The school provides playground equipment so bringing equipment from home is not allowed. Playground expectations are taught and reviewed by staff throughout the year.

### **RECESS**

Recess is an important part of all elementary students' day. All students are expected to participate in recess activities each day, year round. Appropriate weather attire is expected daily so that students can participate safely in recess. Weather conditions may determine appropriate clothing attire. According to research by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), active kids have:

- stronger muscles and bones
- less risk of becoming overweight
- a lower chance of getting type 2 diabetes
- lower blood pressure and blood cholesterol level
- a better outlook on life
- better sleep

Physical activity also benefits students by:

- increasing their level of physical activity
- improving their memory, attention, and concentration
- helping them stay on-task in the classroom
- reducing disruptive behavior in the classroom
- improving their social and emotional development (e.g., learning how to share and negotiate)

Recess excuses:

Doctor/health care provider notes for school accommodations, including staying in from recess.

- Doctor's notes are considered recommendations and are one source of information when determining school accommodations for students. Doctor's requests need not be implemented automatically.
- The school nurse, in collaboration with the school team and parent/guardian, will review the health care provider recommendation and determine whether the student's health needs can be accommodated in other ways so they may continue to participate in recess activities.

One Day: Written or verbal request from a parent/guardian for acute illness or injury will be honored. The School Nurse may extend based on legitimate medical needs, such as an asthma flare up, sprained ankle etc.

Two or More Days:

- If the student has an acute medical need, like surgery or a broken bone, school nurses will contact the health care provider, or review discharge paperwork, for activity restrictions and length of time for the activity restriction.
- For long term chronic health needs, school nurses will do an individual health assessment, including obtaining additional information from parents and health care providers, to determine the need for accommodations.
- Weather guidelines: Adapted from the Iowa Department of Public Health and The National Weather Service guidelines/recommendations.

West Willow Weather guidelines:



#### Winter Recess:

- When snow is on the ground students are expected to wear snow pants and snow boots to be off the blacktop.
- Students should stay inside if the temperature, including wind chill (or “feels like temp”), is 10 degrees or below. Example, if the actual temp is 20, but with windchill/feels like it is 8 degrees, students stay inside.
- Schools should use the same source for determining temperature to make it consistent and understandable for parents/guardians with children in different buildings. The recommended source is Weather Underground <https://www.wunderground.com/weather/us/ia/cedar-rapids>. On this site you are able to change the location of where the temperature is being measured (at KCRG downtown) to a location closer to your school site.

#### Warm Weather Recess:

- If the heat index (air temperature and humidity) is 100 degrees F or more, students will stay inside. 1/2020

### **PACT (Program for Academic & Creative Talent)**

Mission Statement: The program for academic and creative talent (PACT) enhances and supports the educational program and experiences of high ability students to prepare them to become world class learners and responsible citizens.

PACT resource specialists serve as a primary advocate and resource in the area of gifted education for students and families as well as a liaison among CRCSD, building staff, students, and parents on matters pertaining to the academic and affective needs of gifted learners.

Reference: School Board Policy 400.9

#### **Elementary**

##### **Kindergarten and First Grade**

The kindergarten and first grade program (K-1) is designed to identify and recognize student potential, gather and share data, and collaborate with CRCSD and building staff. The program aims to identify students who possess characteristics and behaviors that indicate a student may be talented in a particular academic area. The program also analyzes student data in order to support learning opportunities for high achieving students, and collaborate and support kindergarten and first grade classroom staff and students to challenge and enrich CRCSD's core curriculum.

##### **Second through Fifth Grade**

PACT provides curriculum enrichment experiences for academically gifted students. Teachers trained in gifted education conduct classroom screenings at the beginning of each semester. Topics are offered on a rotating schedule, allowing students the opportunity to participate in a variety of challenging activities such as science, humanities, mathematics, and language arts.

Elementary students who excel in one or more of the basic curriculum areas, or who demonstrate the potential to do so, will benefit from PACT services. These students need ongoing opportunities to develop their abilities in complex learning environments.

Several subjective and objective criteria are used to identify academically gifted students for PACT. Staff observations of student task commitment, achievement, and creativity are considered. In addition, achievement, and intelligence test scores are reviewed prior to placing students in appropriate activities.

There are no limits on PACT participation. Screenings are conducted each semester. Some students have exceptional talents in all areas; others are talented in specific areas. PACT seeks to address different areas of intellectual strength and to provide children with initial exploratory experiences in gifted education. However, a placement in PACT does not guarantee further placements. Children develop their intellectual strengths in varying stages and at varying speeds during their school careers; the purpose of PACT is to serve students demonstrating the greatest need for extended programming each semester.

To learn more about PACT, contact the PACT teacher at your school or the PACT office at 319-558-2000. As a parent, you can provide valuable insights and information about your child's exceptional abilities.

## **REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Assessments will be provided to parents through conferences and report cards. Two formal student conferences will be scheduled in October and February. Report cards are available using the Infinite Campus portal in February and at the end of the school year. During these conferences parents and students will discuss with the teacher the progress made by the student by reviewing daily work, test scores, teacher observations and comments, as well as sharing the student data and samples of student work. Parents are encouraged to request a conference in addition to the regularly scheduled conferences if they have concerns about their child.

### **Communicating with non-custodial parents**

In the case of parents being separated or divorced, communications are sent to the parent that has physical custody of the child. It is expected that the parents will share information between themselves for the good of the child. To receive mailings the non-custodial parent needs to request this in Infinite Campus. It is our hope that divorced or separated parents can meet together at conference time. Therefore the child can share their progress with both parents at the same time and it doesn't place the time burden on the teacher.

## **SCHOOL COUNSELOR**

The elementary school counselor works with all children in the school. Prevention of problems is a key part of the philosophy in implementing a counseling and guidance program. The counselor works in classrooms on developmental activities and is available to help individual students with concerns in small group or individual settings. Parents of students who work with the counselor on a long-term basis are contacted by the counselor. Parents of drop-in contacts do not necessarily receive this contact from the counselor.

In addition to counseling and skill-building support, the school counselor collaborates with various community agencies. Should families need assistance with basic needs, they can contact Thom Scott who will put them in contact with the appropriate community agencies for support and help.

The counselor is always available through email or phone contact. Our counselor is Thom Scott and can be contacted at 319-558-2167.

## SCHOOL HOURS

K-5

Our school day runs from 8:50 AM to 3:50 PM. Students will observe the following schedule:

- 8:30 Students eating breakfast may enter the building
- 8:40 All students may enter the building
- 8:50 School begins
- 3:50 Students dismissed

PRESCHOOL HOURS Monday-Thursday

- 8:50-11:50 AM Session
- 12:50-3:50 PM Session
- Dates: September 3 - June 2

Students may not play on the school grounds before or after school without parental supervision, since staff supervision is not provided. In the morning, students should wait calmly at their entrance until a staff member admits them to a building.

### Main Doors-

Breakfast, 3rd & 4th grade

### Preschool Doors-

Preschool, Kindergarten & 1st grade

### West Doors-

2nd & 5th grade

### South Doors-

Bus and daycare van riders

Students are expected to go home after school. **Only students directly supervised by an adult guardian are allowed to play on the playground immediately following dismissal.** We would like students to go home and check in after school. They may come back to the school playground at 4:15 PM if they would like.

Reference: School Board Policy 400.1

## SCHOOL TO HOME COMMUNICATIONS

In our efforts to go "green", flyers and hand-outs will be posted in a link found on our district Website.

<https://crschools.us/students-and-families/quick-links/virtual-backpack/> Once here you will select the link for your child's building.

## SCHOOL PICTURES

Each fall all students will have their pictures taken for the cumulative records. The date is published on the school calendar. Families may purchase individual pictures from the company if desired. We will not be doing Spring Pictures.

## SOCIAL MEDIA



## STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (Infinite Campus)

- According to Board policy 606 parents have access to student cum files and records during school hours.
- Families are asked to complete an annual update to the student management system. This system, Infinite Campus, allows the school to have current contact information in the event of an emergency. As changes occur in either phone numbers or emergency contact information, parents should update the system. Parents should alert the person(s) listed as emergency contacts for their student.
- An important part of the annual verification is providing student permissions for field trips, sharing information, and internet usage.
- We will communicate with you when you can go in and verify the information in your child's profile and update incorrect information. This can be accessed all year long to update your child's emergency contact information.

## SUPPLIES AND FEES

### SUPPLIES

A suggested annual school supply list can be found on the district website.

Some supply items may need to be replenished as the year progresses. Individual teachers may request additional items as needed. <https://crschools.us/students-and-families/quick-links/school-supplies/>

### FEES

A book fee of \$30.00 is assessed annually to cover the cost of certain curriculum materials. If you qualify for reduced lunches your material fee will be \$18.00. If you qualify for free lunches, your fee will be waived. To qualify for fee forgiveness/reduction you must have been approved for a free/reduced benefit AND complete Parent Permissions to share that status in Infinite Campus. This fee can be paid in Infinite Campus or can also be given to the school secretary.

### Service Fee on Return Checks

# \$30.00

If your check is returned you authorize us to collect the service fee and re-deposit your check for the face amount and service fee. You also authorize us to collect the service fee by paper check or demand draft. You may be sued for damages of three times the amount of the check, up to a maximum of \$500.00 pursuant to Iowa codes 554.3512 & 554.3513

CRSD Okalona, IA

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## VISITING AND VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM

### VISITATION POLICY

- For security purposes, anyone visiting school between 8:50 am -3:50pm must use the front entrance door. A doorbell will alert the office staff of your arrival and upon recognition and validation they will “buzz” you in. Visitors must report to the office and will be asked to provide a form of identification that will be run through our Raptor Visitor Management System. A name tag will be provided to you. The name tag must be returned upon your departure.
- You are always welcome to see first hand the teaching and learning taking place at school. As a professional courtesy, all parents and visitors must make prior arrangements with teachers and the building principal before a planned visit. Please let the office staff know when you leave the building also. Visiting children must be accompanied by an adult. . We appreciate your understanding and support of these security measures to ensure the welfare of all students and staff.
- Parents often visit to have lunch with their children. We welcome such visits, but ask parents to notify the teacher and office in advance. We encourage parents to eat school lunch or to bring a lunch of their choice. Parents may not bring lunch for any child other than their own. For safety and security parents and visitors are prohibited from taking photos of other children while on school premises.
- RAPTOR SYSTEM
- The Cedar Rapids Community School District utilizes the Raptor Visitor and Volunteer Management System in our schools to strengthen the district’s program of campus safety for students and staff. Upon entering a district building, visitors will be asked to present an ID, which may be scanned or manually entered into the system. We understand that a parent or guardian, for a number of reasons, may not have a US government-issued ID. In this case, the school staff member can ask to see another form of identification and manually enter the person’s name into the Raptor system. The system is designed to check this information against the sex offender registry.
- To learn more about the Raptor visitor and volunteer management system, please visit the Raptor Technologies website ([www.raptortech.com](http://www.raptortech.com)). If you have any questions regarding the secure system, I, please contact your building principal.
- The safety of our students is our highest priority and the Raptor system provides a consistent way to aid in protecting our students and staff from potential harm. Thank you, in advance, for your understanding and support of enhancing school safety protocols in our district.

### VOLUNTEERING

- We encourage ongoing and active volunteer involvement by individuals and groups when it will enhance the educational experience of our students. Examples of volunteers include, but are not limited to: classroom volunteers, field trip volunteers, bus chaperones, mentors, reading buddies, etc. Volunteers will be under the supervision and direction of a school employee. Contact the Volunteer Coordinator if you are interested in volunteering. Please contact the school office at (319) 558-2167.
- The Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCS) recognizes the need to maintain a District Volunteer Services Program to support classroom instruction and co-curricular activities. CRCS appreciates the involvement of volunteers in supporting instructional programs and enriching the learning environment. The district shall make every reasonable effort to provide a safe learning environment for students working with volunteers.
- A Volunteer Application is required annually of all volunteers whose primary role is that of working directly with students or assisting staff on a regular basis; supervising/chaperoning students; or acting as an authority figure. All Volunteer Applications will be checked against the national sex offender database and are subject to a background check. <https://apps.raptortech.com/Apply/MTE5OTplbi1VUw==>
- All applications must be approved prior to volunteering.

Reference: School Board Policy 1002, Board Policy 1002.- Volunteer, Board Policy 1002.2- Visitors



## WELLNESS

Schools play an important role in promoting and maintaining their students' health.

Healthy students are better learners. But schools can't do it alone. Parents are the other crucial half of the equation to provide the healthy start that kids need to thrive in the classroom and in life.

Look for the LiveWellness logo throughout the district for examples of how we help your child stay healthy, strong and ready to learn.

All school districts are required to have a wellness policy. Cedar Rapids Community Schools Wellness Policy can be found on our district website.

Here's what our commitment to wellness looks like:

Our school will:

- Provide health education, including nutrition, in the curriculum
- Provide multiple opportunities for physical activity to meet or exceed the Healthy Kids Act requirements (30 min/day for Elementary Schools, 120 min/week for Middle & High Schools)
- Serve school meals that reflect the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, model appropriate portion sizes and provide a well-balanced meal
- Discontinue using unhealthy foods for fundraisers
- Ensure all food and beverages made available during the school day (including snacks) meet District Nutritional Guidelines
- Require that students are physically active during the majority of time in physical education class
- Discontinue using food/food coupons as rewards or incentives
- Ensure physical activity is not used for or withheld as a punishment

To support wellness in our schools, families will:

- Send food items for classroom celebrations only when requested by school staff
- Follow the District Nutritional Guidelines when providing meals/snacks (unhealthy treats will not be distributed)
- Help plan and support fundraising events that do not involve food

For more information, visit the wellness link: <https://crschools.us/students-and-families/school-meals/wellness/>.

The District Wellness Policy can be found in the District Notifications section of the handbook.

Want to get involved? Join your School Wellness Council or the District Wellness Council.

Reference: School Board Policy 610.1








# HEALTHY SCHOOL SNACKS

Cedar Rapids Community School District



Snacks play a major role in a child's diet and provide a valuable opportunity for nutrition education. Healthy snacks are important to providing good nutrition and supporting lifelong healthy eating habits

<p><b>Fruits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh fruit-whole or sliced</li> <li>• Assorted fruit salads</li> <li>• Dried Fruits</li> <li>• Applesauce</li> <li>• Individual fruit cups (packaged in juice)</li> <li>• 100% Fruit Juice</li> <li>• 100% Frozen Fruit Bars</li> </ul> 	<p><b>Low Fat Dairy/Protein:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• String Cheese or Cheese Cubes</li> <li>• Yogurt</li> <li>• Cottage Cheese</li> <li>• Deli Meat</li> <li>• Sunflower Seeds</li> <li>• Pepita/Pumpkin seeds</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Vegetables:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raw Vegetables Simple kid-friendly examples: Baby Carrots, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Snap Peas, Sliced Peppers, Celery</li> <li>• Dehydrated Vegetables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetable Chips, Chickpeas</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Edamame (Soybeans)</li> </ul> 	<p><b>Whole Grains:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crackers</li> <li>• Low Sodium Pretzels</li> <li>• Pita Chips</li> <li>• Popcorn</li> <li>• Low Fat Granola Bars</li> <li>• Baked Corn Tortilla Chips</li> <li>• Animal Crackers</li> <li>• Graham Crackers</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Snack tips</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snack on fruit and vegetables whenever possible.</li> <li>• Select appropriate portion sizes.</li> <li>• For food safety select sealed and prepackaged snack items.</li> <li>• Combine protein and fiber for a satisfying snack.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Drinks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Low Fat or Fat Free Milk</li> <li>• 100% Fruit/Vegetable Juice</li> </ul> 
<p><b>Dip Ideas:</b> Hummus, Salsa, Bean dip, Honey Mustard, Yogurt based dips</p>	



The provided list is not all inclusive. Reference [CRCSD Nutritional Standards](#) for specific guidance.