

Dear Kennedy Families,

I want to welcome you to the 2023-2024 school year. We are honored that you have chosen Kennedy High School for your child's education and we promise to provide all of our students with many opportunities for success as they approach the next phase of their lives. Our first day of school is August 23, 2023 and it is an early dismissal day. Be sure to visit the Kennedy website Back to School Page (<http://kennedy.crschools.us>) for all of the up to date information you need! Class schedules will be accessible to students on Infinite Campus beginning August 16 at 12 pm. Schedule changes will be accepted via the official Schedule Change form here: <https://tinyurl.com/S1KHSScheduleChange23-24>. No schedule changes will be accepted via email.

We are welcoming a lot of new staff members this coming school year. We have two new Associate Principals this year: **Shawn Thomsen** will be moving from Facilitator into the Associate Principal/Activities Director role and **Sarah Remerowski** is joining the Kennedy admin team as an Associate Principal after serving in that role at Roosevelt Middle School for over 15 years. Sarah and Shawn both have long-time connections with Kennedy and I am very excited that they have agreed to be part of this team. Also joining our admin team, replacing Mr. Thomsen as Facilitator, is **Mike LeMieux**. Mike has been Facilitator at Polk Alternative Learning Center for a decade and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience into the role.

With a lot of retirements this year, Kennedy has new people in a number of key roles. Welcome to **Whitney Jungjohann** as our Head Custodian, **Jason Long** as our Technology Facilitator, and **Kelly Schmidt** as our Cafeteria Manager. We are in great hands with them leading their areas of the building. As well, we have great new instructional and support staff members, many of whom are Kennedy alum, including **Marcus Colbert** as Freshman Specialist, **Emily Vest**, **Madison Parker** and **Jennifer Crumly** in Math, **Hannah Crowell** and **Jessica Steinke Wilcox** in Science, **Kris Loschen** and **Kathy Klein** in Special Education, **Joe Mnayer** for Orchestra, **Kirsten Swain** for our English Language Learner program, **Jessica Rose** in Family and Consumer Science, **Hamza Omar** to teach Chinese Language, **Erin Gauvin** in Art and **Tasha Spratt** in English-Language Arts! You might recognize a lot of these names as many of them have previously worked at or were parents of students here at Kennedy, and several are alumni themselves.

Even though there is change in personnel, the vision of Kennedy High School remains firm: Every Learner. Future Ready. Our mission is to create a welcoming learning environment for all students that affords them the most opportunities to succeed. Our community is always looking for new ways to bring our school mission to life. We want Kennedy to be the model for all schools when it comes to inclusivity and kindness towards all. To that end we ask our students to think about who they are and want to be, notably in relation to others and the community that

Our Mission:

To cultivate the personal and academic growth of our Kennedy community by ensuring a safe and inclusive learning environment that moves us courageously forward.

supports them. We want our students to #beUNcommon and work toward developing themselves into future-ready leaders. We are excited to report that our efforts in creating a more inclusive and welcoming environment are showing signs of progress with Kennedy now significantly ahead of state and national averages on the student Sense of Belonging and Conditions for Learning survey results. Our latest Sense of Belonging survey data places us in the 90th percentile nationally among high schools, which is a sizable jump from two years ago.

As well, Kennedy continues to lead the region and state in so many academic areas. Our AP participation and scores continue to place us on the Belin-Blank AP Index, while a record number of students took AP, Kirkwood, and Project Lead the Way Courses. Kennedy was again recognized as the top high school, public and private, for Linn County by Niche.com for 2023. We challenge every student to utilize the opportunities that the Block Schedule affords by taking additional elective courses, especially those that can earn college credit.

Of notable improvements completed this summer, the largest project is our locker room remodels. Our locker rooms were very much needing this refresh and now will be able to accommodate multiple teams and sporting events at the same time. We are grateful for the opportunity to make these remodels with the funds provided through SAVE and PPEL.

As we push hard for academic success for all students, I want to remind parents and students of the extraordinary importance of two things: **on-time attendance to school and class** and **completion of homework** on a regular basis. Students who miss classes unexcused and miss assignments, quizzes and tests will not be allowed to make those items up. As well, repeated tardiness and absences will result in increasing additional consequences for students, including detentions before and after school and on Saturday mornings. Homework completion is also an expectation that needs to be taken seriously as it can significantly help students learn content. Students will be expected to complete assignments on time for full credit or lose credit for late and missing assignments. Please reiterate this to your child and parents please make every effort for on-time attendance every day.

Finally, our **Kennedy Community Open House** will be Monday, August 28 from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. All of our teachers will be in their classrooms for open meet and greet, plus we will have dozens of colleges, trade schools, and community organizations on hand for you to learn from. We will also have a free dinner for all families courtesy of the Cougar Corner Food Pantry! Mark your calendar now!

I cannot wait to get back to school but I do also hope you all enjoy the rest of your summer!

Sincerely,



Jason Kline
Principal