



The Knight Times

North Cedar Community School District

Superintendent's Message

Count Day: What it means to North Cedar



October 2024 Issue

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October 1, 2024 marks a pivotal day for North Cedar and all Iowa public schools. It's Count Day, the official tally of enrolled students across the state. Today, we diligently count every student as mandated, and by October 15, we'll certify our enrollment with the Iowa Department of Education.

Why is this date so crucial? Because Iowa public school funding hinges on a per-pupil formula. Put simply, our budget for the upcoming 2025-2026 school year depends on the enrollment figure we certify this fall. Last October, our served enrollment stood at 549.10. This figure includes students within our district boundaries, those enrolled through open enrollment or tuition, and dual-enrolled homeschool students.

As we take this year's count, we're setting the served enrollment number that will shape our budget for the next school year. When our board approves the 2025-2026 budget, Iowa Code requires us to multiply our enrollment by \$7,864—the Iowa per-pupil district cost set annually by the Legislature.

Superintendents and school boards statewide closely monitor enrollment trends because they directly impact budget forecasts. Over the past two decades, most Iowa districts have seen declining enrollments — reducing the total number of districts from 374 in 2000 to 327 today, a 12.6% decrease.

North Cedar has also experienced enrollment declines over the last five years, with our projected decrease of 27 students this year due to a graduating class of 59 in 2024. Despite this, our class sizes across grade levels now range from 30 to 40 students, reflecting a more stable and efficient use of resources moving forward.

October 1 isn't just a counting day; it's a cornerstone in our budgeting and planning process. Our official served enrollment figure this year will drive approximately \$4.3 million in funding for the 2025-2026 school year. The North Cedar CSD Board of Education, along with our Director of Business Services, Kelly Stillwagon, and myself, are dedicated to responsible stewardship of taxpayer funds, including open and transparent communication.

If you have questions about school finance or our annual budgeting process at North Cedar, please reach out. I'm always available to discuss Iowa school finance and our commitment to serving our community effectively.

Message from Principal Horman

Miss Soria's PreK



Miss Fuller's Sixth Grade

Sixth grade has had a fantastic start to the year. We just finished our first class novel "Freak the Mighty" and have been reviewing decimals in math. We have been busy with a couple service projects around the building. Each Friday, volunteers empty the classroom trash cans to help keep our building clean and looking nice. In addition, they've been busy counting and sorting supplies that have been donated.



Mrs. Rolwes's Fifth Grade

Fifth grade's first Book Challenge Ceremony. Every month they have a ceremony to introduce the books the students read. Then each student receives a book charm for every book they read that month. So far, the class has read 40 books this year!

Fifth grade earned a class party by receiving 15 purple tickets for their positive behavior.



Mrs. Jensen's PreK



Mrs. Havill's Second Grade

Welcome to the new year in second grade! We are busy practicing the routines and expectations for being a second grader. In reading, we have been learning about finding the main idea and details of a passage. In math, we are reviewing addition and subtraction strategies so we can move on to using those strategies with bigger numbers. In science, we are learning about living things by answering questions such as, "Why do kangaroos carry their babies in pouches?" In social studies, we are learning how big our world is and how many places we are a part of. We have had fun giving high-fives to our football players, watching Big Boy No. 4014 travel through Cedar County on the "Heartland of America" tour, and working hard on earning a purple ticket party!



...Continued on page 5

Message from Principal Carlson

We are now a little under a month into the school year and students and staff are settled into their classes at this point. The seventh grade students have settled in very nicely to the building. We have started the initial process of rolling out Xello, which is our new career and college placement program. Our goal with this program is to utilize all of the opportunities the system provides to help students have a better understanding of what they would like to do with their lives in their journeys after graduation. Xello also helps us meet state requirements of the DCAP/ICAP that we have for career and college readiness. It also offers grade specific lessons for students as well. All students are working with this platform during our "Knight Time" every Wednesday this school year. Many students have already used this platform to then help them look into different job shadowing opportunities that are also available through the school.

Academics

MAP Testing was September 24-26 at the building this year. This is a test that helps us monitor year long progression from students. We will begin to assess data and see our areas of strength and focus areas of improvement to use during this school year. We have a very busy week coming up the week of October 7-11 as we have Homecoming week, and parent-teacher conferences all scheduled for that week. We have parent-teacher conferences Tuesday and Thursday of that week, and we will be sending out more information to parents this week. Parents-- please check your emails for information regarding signing up for PT Connect. Please contact the high school office if you have any questions regarding parent-teacher conferences.

Activities

Fall activities are all underway. The cheerleaders have already run an assembly for the whole school and did a fantastic job on the first Friday of the school year. They will lead another during the Thursday of Homecoming week. We will have many activities scheduled for Homecoming week, and students are already excited and preparing for some of them. The dance team has begun practices. The JH and HS cross country students have participated in a couple of meets and had their home meet on September 30. The JH and HS football teams have all played games at this time. The JH and HS Volleyball teams have also begun playing games and tournaments at this time as well. The Homecoming dance for students this year is Saturday, October 12. The fall is an extremely busy time for many students at our building. It is great to see so many students involved in different extracurricular activities at our school this fall.

As always,

LET'S GO KNIGHTS!

Tanner Carlson

7-12 Principal



Homecoming Court

Back row (l to r): Brayden Balichek, Jordan King, Tyler Driver, Logan Crock and Conner Jensen

Front row (l to r): Jayden Peek, Madelyn Choate, Delaney Tresslar, Chloe Sulzner, Mollie Ries

Mrs. Frost's seventh and eighth grade classes mixed various substances to investigate the difference between physical and chemical changes and properties in their lab.



September Board Meeting Highlights

Each month the North Cedar School Board shares a few highlights of our monthly board meetings. These takeaways are messages that the board collectively feels are important for the public to know. Here are the highlights from the September 16, 2024 regular meeting:

North Cedar is excited to introduce Xello, a new career planning platform for our secondary students. Xello is an award-winning program, backed by academic research and scientifically validated, designed to place students at the heart of their planning journey. With Xello, students can document their progress as they develop self-awareness, explore post-secondary options, create actionable plans, and continuously reassess their goals as they gain new knowledge, skills, and experiences.

North Cedar is thrilled to announce a new pilot program with Grant Wood AEA, designed to enhance our communication efforts. Here are a few key improvements this partnership will bring to our communication strategies:

- We'll hold weekly meetings and use email or phone for quick updates. Grant Wood AEA will guide us through this process, ensuring smooth communication.
- Sharing important updates, events, and deadlines with Grant Wood AEA early will help ensure aligned messaging, content preparation, and timely distribution.
- Social media management, website maintenance, branding, and hiring support are some of the services that will help maintain a cohesive and professional public presence.
- Your feedback—whether from parents, teachers, or students, and whether positive or negative—helps us stay aligned with your goals and make necessary adjustments.
- Occasionally having a staff member on-site can help capture real-time stories. When Grant Wood AEA isn't present, they will provide best practices for photos and videos and can assist with remote editing.
- By defining specific goals and objectives, we can ensure our communication strategies are aligned and effective in promoting a unified message.

We look forward to the opportunities this pilot program will bring to strengthen our communications and engagement!

To view the full agenda and attachments of North Cedar School Board meetings, click the Online Board App button at <https://www.north-cedar.org/board-of-education/>. Meeting minutes are also posted online following each meeting.

Mrs. Anderson's Fourth Grade

Mrs. Anderson's class is off to a fun start! We have enjoyed recess with our friends. Students especially enjoy the morning STEM bins! They love the opportunity to build and create while starting the morning in a calm, fun environment. Students are also working really hard to master routines and expectations in their new classroom. We are so excited to see how much our brains grow this year!



Mrs. Weber's First Grade

We have had a great start to first grade! The first graders enjoyed reading the story walk outside from the Mechanicsville Public Library. We learned all about apples in science and got to taste test red, yellow and green apples.



Mrs. Petersen's Kindergarten

Kindergarten's Purple Ticket Party at the splash pad in Lowden!



Miss Shindelar's Band

The fifth grade band students have been working hard to learn the basics of their instruments. We are learning our first five notes to get ready for the first concert in October!

The sixth grade band students are preparing songs for their concert. We have been learning a lot about different time signatures and the form of a piece of music.



Mrs. Jackson's Third Grade

We are off to a great start! School is moving along quickly and we are learning lots and having fun! In reading we are discussing main idea and supporting details. We also read and learned about biographies, which include Rosa Parks and George Washington. In math we have finished two topics already and have been introduced to rounding to the nearest ten and hundreds.

Ms. Teresa visited us from the Iowa Extension Office and we learned about the many different species of apples. We read a book, watched a video, took a short quiz, and ate Honeycrisp apples!

We also went on three story walks! Thank you to Meredith at the Mechanicsville Public Library for making these super fun activities for us! We appreciate you! We also celebrated three September birthdays in our room.

Fall is here and we are excited for the cooler weather at recess!



North Cedar Lunch & Activities Calendar October 2024

Calendar is subject to change.

Tues., Oct. 1:
Lunch: Pork Chop or Salisbury Steak
4:00 p.m. JH Volleyball vs Prince of Peace
5:15 p.m. HS Volleyball vs Prince of Peace

Wed., Oct. 2:
Lunch: Cavatelli Pasta
Elementary School Pictures

Thurs., Oct. 3:
Lunch: Popcorn Chicken
8:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Flu Shots for Students & Staff
4:00 p.m. JH Volleyball vs Easton Valley
4:30 p.m. JH Football vs Starmont
5:15 p.m. HS Volleyball vs Easton Valley

Fri., Oct. 4:
Lunch: Hamburgers

Mon., Oct. 7: Lunch: Pizza

Tues., Oct. 8:
Lunch: Chicken Fajitas
Early Dismissal 1:25pm
1:00 - 8:00 p.m. Parent/Teacher Conferences
4:00 p.m. JH Volleyball vs Lisbon HS
5:15 p.m. HS Volleyball vs Lisbon HS

Wed., Oct. 9:
Lunch: Elem.: Meatball Sub or Hot Ham & Cheese; Jr/Sr High: Chicken Patty

Thurs., Oct. 10:
Lunch: Elem.: Chicken Patty; Jr/Sr High: Grill Out Early
Dismissal 1:25 p.m.
1:00 - 8:00 p.m. Parent/Teacher Conferences
4:00 p.m. JH Volleyball vs Calamus Wheatland
4:30 p.m. JH Football vs East Buchanan
5:15 p.m. HS Volleyball vs Calamus Wheatland

Fri., Oct. 11:
No School
7:00 p.m. V Football Homecoming Game vs Postville

Sat., Oct. 12:
7:30 - 10:30 p.m. Homecoming Dance

Mon., Oct. 14:
No School—PD Day

Tues., Oct. 15:
Lunch: Orange Chicken
4:00 p.m. HS Cross Country @ Edgewood-Colesburg HS

Wed., Oct. 16:
Lunch: Beef Nachos
Picture Retakes @ Jr/Sr High

Thurs., Oct. 17:
Lunch: Chicken Drumsticks
4:00 p.m. HS Volleyball Conference Tournament
4:30 p.m. JH Football @ North Linn HS

Sat., Oct. 19:
Lunch: Mac & Cheese Bites & Little Smokies
10:00 a.m. HS Volleyball Conference Tournament

Mon., Oct. 21:
Lunch: BBQ Rib or Pulled Chicken
4:30 p.m. JH Football vs Alburnett
6:00 p.m. School Board Meeting @ Stanwood

Tues., Oct. 22:
Lunch: Chicken Nuggets
7:00 p.m. HS Choir Concert @ Jr/Sr High Gym

Wed., Oct. 23:
Lunch: Homemade Lasagna

Thurs., Oct. 24:
Lunch: Beef & Cheese Enchiladas

Fri., Oct. 25:
Lunch: Breaded Chicken Breast

Mon., Oct. 28:
Lunch: Chicken Strips

Tues., Oct. 29:
Lunch: Crispito
Tri-Rivers HS Honor Choir @ TBA
Wartburg Trumpet Festival @ Wartburg College, Waverly 7:00 p.m. 5-6 Band and Choir Concert @ Jr/Sr High

Wed., Oct. 30:
Lunch: Roasted Chicken Wings

Thurs., Oct. 31:
Lunch: Cheddarwurst or Hot Dog

MAP Testing

First-Sixth Grade - Week of October 14

MAP stands for Measures of Academic Progress. It's a computerized test that measures a student's knowledge of math, reading, and language usage.

TIPS FOR TESTING





NAVIGATE & EDUCATE



QUESTIONS? CONTACT: MS. EMILY SCHOOL RESOURCE
NAVIGATOR(ESMITH@NORTH-CEDARSTU.ORG)



Available Food

- 1st Friday of the Month** - 3:30-4:30pm Mobile Food Pantry Drive Thru at First United Methodist Church, 607 Lynn St, Tipton
- Tuesdays** - 3:45-5:15pm @ 300 Cedar St. Bennet
- 2nd & 4th Saturday of the Month** - 10:00a-12:00p Food Pantry @ Zion UCC, 402 Main St, Lowden
- 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the Month** - 3:30-5:30pm Food Pantry @ First UCC, 600 Mulberry St, Tipton
- 2nd & 4th Saturdays of the Month** - 11:00am-11:45am Shared Blessings Free Meal @ First United Methodist Church, 607 Lynn St, Tipton
- 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the Month** - 6:00-7:00pm Bring Photo ID, UMC, 307 E First St, Mechanicsville
- 3rd Tuesday of the Month** - 3:30-4:30pm Mobile Food Pantry @ West Branch Fire Dept, 105 S 2nd St, West Branch
- 3rd Saturday of the Month** - 9:00-10:00am Food Pantry Drive Thru at Foursquare Church, 1100 N Hwy 38, Tipton
- Every Wednesday** - 5:30-6:30pm Food Pantry @ St. John's UCC, 320 9th Ave, Clarence
- 1st & 3rd Saturdays of the Month** - 10:00am-1:00pm
- 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the Month** - 3:00-7:00pm, Hein Manor bottom level 807 3rd St. Durant
- Every Monday** - 5pm-6pm Food Pantry @ St. Paul's UCC, 315 North Main St. Wheatland
- 2nd & 4th Saturdays of the Month** - 9:30-10:30am @ St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 102 W. Church St. Oxford Jct.
- Every Friday** - 8:30-10am @ United Presbyterian Church 401 Main St. Lost Nation




The My Life, My Quit Program is for young people ages 12-17 who want help to quit all forms of tobacco, including vaping. My Life, My Quit Coaches help youth:

- Develop a quit plan
- Cope with stress
- Learn about nicotine
- Get ongoing support

Youth can **TEXT/CALL**
855.891.9989
or **CHAT ONLINE**
with a Coach

My Life, My Quit is always free and confidential
www.mylifemyquit.com

Funtoberfest



OCTOBER 13TH @ 11AM - 3PM

Location Floral Hall – Cedar County Fairgrounds - FREE EVENT!

Kid- Friendly Activities, Free Giveaways, Food Trucks, Face Painting, Bounce Houses, Train Ride, Magic Show, Balloon Artist, Goulash Cookoff, Dog Halloween Contest, Animal Petting Zoo, Horse Rides and more! Music from David Zollo and the Body Electric Band



The mission of North Cedar Community School District, in partnership with its community and staff, is to ensure a safe and caring environment for each student, providing the essential knowledge, values, skills, and attitudes to create lifelong learners who are responsible, contributing, and productive citizens in a changing and increasingly diverse world.

Everything we do at NCCSD is for our students, and we encourage them all to take part in the enrichment and extracurricular opportunities for which they are eligible.

- Athletics for junior high school and senior high school students
- Fine arts activities for grades 5 through 12
- Extracurricular clubs and organizations for junior high and senior high school students
- Counseling services for all grades

An active, supportive community strengthens NCCSD. Parents and patrons who elect to get involved and support our students and their activities aid the district.

- Athletics Boosters bolster our student athletes and the athletics programs
- Encore Club supports our fine arts programs
- Knights Community Organization fosters the relationships between parent, student, staff, and community
- North Cedar Education Foundation provides financial support to help broaden the district's education opportunities

Postal Customer

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