



March 9, 2025, at 5:30 PM - the Board of Education approved this at the meeting

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Cedar Rapids Community School District Announces Strategic Staffing Adjustments for 2026-2027 School Year

Cedar Rapids, IA – The Cedar Rapids Community School District (CRCSD) today shared a comprehensive strategic budget and staffing update for the 2026-27 school year, pending Board approval.

The district’s staffing model is a collaborative framework designed to align campus resources with actual student enrollment and needs while ensuring long-term fiscal responsibility. By working closely with principals and Area Chiefs to review budgets and analyze potential impacts, the district has successfully reduced the projected staff reduction from 33.3 positions (estimated in December 2025) to 19.7 positions as of March 2026. This adjustment minimizes the impact on staff while maintaining the district’s high educational standards and reducing the projected budget gap by \$1.56 million.

“Our focus remains on limiting the impact on students and preserving the programs and opportunities that define the CRCSD experience,” said Superintendent Dr. Tawana Lannin. *“Staffing begins with enrollment calculations, but it moves forward through collaboration with our principals, who understand the lived experiences of students and staff. By keeping resources as close to students as possible and carefully reviewing the impact before any final reductions, we work to protect the academic and extracurricular experiences that help every learner succeed.”*

Key Staffing Highlights:

- **Elementary School Impact:**
 - The district plans for an overall reduction of 12 FTE at the elementary level, with 10 of these positions already accounted for through current resignations and retirements.
 - **Maintaining Class Sizes:** Class size caps will remain unchanged, with adjustments driven solely by fluctuations in student enrollment.
 - **Large Elementary Facilitator:** The district has created a Large Elementary Facilitator position to provide additional support for larger elementary buildings moving forward. Maple Grove, West Willow, Trailside, and Viola Gibson will each receive one of these positions in their building. These buildings will also help to develop a district blueprint for how we support larger buildings moving forward.
 - **Enhanced Specialized Support:** CRCSD is increasing Special Education programming and maintaining Social-Emotional Behavioral Health (SEBH) staffing to ensure consistent support for students and staff.

- **Building Autonomy:** Principals use supplemental "backpack" funds to hire staff tailored to their specific building needs, such as building substitutes, behavior technicians, and engagement specialists.
- **Secondary School Impact:**
 - **Secondary School Impact:** A reduction of 7.7 FTE is proposed for secondary schools, with 4 FTE already identified through resignations and retirements.
 - **Maintaining Class Sizes:** Class size caps will remain unchanged, with adjustments driven solely by fluctuations in student enrollment.
 - **Enhanced Specialized Support:** CRCSD is increasing Special Education programming and maintaining Social-Emotional Behavioral Health (SEBH) staffing to ensure consistent support for students and staff.
 - **Commitment to Electives and Fine Arts:** CRCSD has prioritized maintaining current elective and fine arts offerings. The district committed to creating a new district-level position dedicated specifically to supporting fine arts programs across all our schools.
 - **Building Autonomy:** Principals use supplemental "backpack" funds to hire staff tailored to their specific building needs, such as building substitutes, behavior technicians, and engagement specialists.

"I'm grateful to the building leaders, teachers, parents, and community members who took the time to share their voices. This revision reflects that collective input and our shared ownership of the future we are building for our students while preserving and enhancing the programs that define the CRCSD experience," said Superintendent Dr. Tawana Lannin. *"These changes are about sustainability and realignment, and we are taking proactive steps now to protect the future of our schools and retain our top educators."*

Next Steps in the Staffing Timeline for Teaching Positions

- **March 27:** The district will finalize all decisions regarding teaching staff.
- **March 30-April 3:** HR will contact staff teaching staff who will be placed in the surplus pool to provide details, timelines, and preference forms.
- **April 10:** Schools will send letters to families describing the specific building impacts of these reductions.
- **April-July:** HR and Teachers' Union leadership will meet to identify open positions and place teaching staff from the surplus pool.
- **May:** HR will contact support staff who will be eliminated.
- **May-August:** The district will continue to monitor enrollment fluctuations throughout the summer and make staffing adjustments as needed.

By pairing a consistent, data-driven staffing model with transparent decision-making, we ensure both fiscal responsibility and high-quality instruction. This approach positions CRCSD for long-term stability while guaranteeing an excellent educational experience for every child.

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About Cedar Rapids Community School District

Cedar Rapids Community School District is dedicated to providing a high-quality, equitable education that prepares all students for success. With a commitment to safe and secure learning environments, engaging community partnerships, and fiscal responsibility, CRCSD serves as a pillar of educational excellence in the community.