

September 2007 FYI

Para Postings – All unfilled para positions must be posted per contract.

Harris Poll - There was a lengthy discussion about the District's Harris Poll event and results. It was determined that meetings of the District Workload Task Force will resume this school year.

Safe and Sanitary School Environment – The event that resulted in early dismissal at Kennedy High School was due to a water leak repair. The District thought in good faith the repair would not take longer than 30 minutes. When the repair led to a chain of events causing the District to not be able to predict when utilities would be available at Kennedy the students were sent home.

School Evacuations – Following the recent evacuation of Washington High School procedures and safety precautions are being thoroughly reviewed.

Participation in Para Inservice Classes – The funding for paras to attend Para Inservice Meetings on early dismissal days does not come from individual building budgets. This money is bargained between the District and CROTA each year and placed in the District budget to cover the contracted 180 student contact work days.

Principals may deny a request by a para to attend an inservice meeting based on the fact there is training or work in their building the administrator wants them to participate in. They may also deny a request to attend if the class being offered does not apply to the para's assignment.

If a para is required by their principal/supervisor to work on a full Teacher Inservice day or any hours beyond their regular day and the para agrees to work those hours, their pay must then come from the building controlled budget.

Unpaid Leave for Teachers and/or Paras – Other than the contractual provisions for General Leave of Absence addressed in the contract, unpaid leave of absence is not a contractual or policy-based benefit for teachers or paras and does not have to be granted by the District. The District's reporting system may have contributed to confusion regarding the availability of unpaid leave for some employees. The current system of approving non-reimbursed leave is being reviewed by the Resolution Team. For the benefit of our students school employees must plan to be at work during their contracted days with the District.

Doctor Appointment/Personal Illness – Using your personal illness leave for doctor appointments is permissible. It is expected employees will try as hard as possible to schedule appointments outside of their contracted work day.

October 2007

Use of Sick Leave as a Result of Job Injury – If a school employee, in the course of employment, suffers a personal injury causing temporary total disability, or a permanent partial, or total disability resulting from an episode of student violence toward that employee, for which worker's compensation is payable the employee is entitled to 100% of his/her pay. The District may not charge the absence against any type of leave or benefits the employee has accumulated. This is true for 1 year from the date of injury or the period for which the employee is disabled and incapable of working, whichever period is shorter.

If a school employee suffers an injury in the course of employment that is not a result of student violence, but still prevents them from working, they are charged applicable accumulated leave. If their leave is exhausted the Cedar Rapids District carries disability insurance for which the employee may qualify to receive.

New Intensive Assistance Language – The new state language/law for evaluation says remediation must be offered under Iowa Standard 8 to a teacher, unless the violation crosses illegal or unethical lines. The manner in which the remediation takes place must be bargained into each District contract. Cedar Rapids

already has the language in place for the for the Iowa Teaching Standards 1 through 7, Standard 8 now becomes a part of this language, i.e. Article XI – Support Procedures.

Link to Leave Usage Online – For the benefit of employees the Cedar Rapids Schools Intranet contains links to **“Leave Procedures”** and **“Emergency Leave Usage Guidelines”**. To access these articles go to the **Intranet**, click on **H.R.** and from the pull down menu choose **Resolution Team**. You will find the aforementioned links and a link to past Resolution Team FYIs.

Course Pre-Approval Issue – A different method of reviewing and approving course credit for both advances in pay and recertification is being sought. The objective is to make the turn around faster and more comprehensive.

Legal Opinion on Evaluation – Employees in the same bargaining units shall not be responsible for completing an evaluation of another employee in that unit but may provide input to the evaluator.

Personal Cell Phone Usage by Employees – All employees are instructed not to use their cell phones for personal calls while working, with the exception of prep time. Personal calls may be received or made during the employee’s, lunch and before or after school. All phones must be kept on silent or vibrate if turned on.

Personal Cell Phone Usage by Employees – All employees are instructed not to use their cell phones for personal calls while working, with the exception of prep time *and breaks for the paraeducators*. Personal calls may be received or made during the employee’s, lunch and before or after school. All phones must be kept on silent or vibrate if turned on.

There is not a District policy for student cell phone usage; however it is in discussion at District policy meetings and level meetings. Presently each school has instituted a policy or policies that best fit their situation.

Use of Sick Leave as a Result of Job Injury – If a school employee, in the course of employment, suffers a personal injury causing temporary total disability, or a permanent partial, or total disability resulting from an episode of student violence toward that employee, for which worker’s compensation is payable the employee is entitled to 100% of his/her pay. The District may not charge the absence against any type of leave or benefits the employee has accumulated. ***The employee must contact the Benefits Office so they are aware of the injury resulting from student violence. An absence form is necessary and the Benefits Department will inform the employee how to complete it.*** This is true for 1 year from the date of injury or the period for which the employee is disabled and incapable of working, whichever period is shorter. If a school employee suffers an injury in the course of employment that is not a result of student violence, but still prevents them from working, they are charged applicable accumulated *sick leave*. If their *sick leave* is exhausted, ***then the employee will receive the worker’s compensation check until they are able to return to work. Employees who exhaust all of their personal illness leave as a result of injury or illness should contact the Resolution Team and explore all the potential options available.***

This policy includes incidents of broken skin where the employee must have medical attention. Students with special needs may not be disciplined for an act brought on by their disability; however the act is still considered violent and subject to the provisions described in the preceding paragraph. In these cases, the employee should seek and receive appropriate medical care and treatment and the District may not charge the absence against any type of leave or benefits the employee has accumulated.

Posting of District Committees – All District committee assignments involving extra salary or stipend compensation must be posted.

Note – Thanks to comments from staff some FYIs were revisited. Bold, italic print indicates additional information.

Resolution Team discussion involves gathering information and working toward solutions. Generally, the Resolution Team will not get involved with an issue until the parties involved have tried to directly handle matters. Wide ranges of information, topics, and requests come before the Resolution Team. It is safe to say, that any issue or concern that is distracting you from doing your best work with students, is a good topic for Resolution Team.

Resolution Team minutes, including informative FYIs, are regularly distributed to CREA and CROTA members through their building representatives. They are also sent to all principals and other District administrators. If you would like to know more about Resolution Team or have an issue that you want discussed, please contact any of the team members for assistance.

November 2007

Emergency leave Usage – Emergency leave cannot be a pre-planned leave, except where permission to use it has been given by the Resolution Team. There is a document on the Intranet under **H.R.**, click on **Resolution Team** and **Emergency Leave Usage Guidelines** to find it.

Teaching Standard 8 Remediation Change – STANDARD 8 reads:

Fulfills professional responsibilities established by the school district.

Criteria:

- a. Adheres to board policies, district procedures, and contractual obligations.
- b. Demonstrates professional and ethical conduct as defined by state law and individual district policy.
- c. Contributes to efforts to achieve district and building goals.
- d. Demonstrates an understanding of and respect for all learners and staff.
- e. Collaborates with students, families, colleagues, and communities to enhance student learning.

In the past standard 8 was not remediable under the Iowa Code; however the statute was amended to now include all criterions under Standard 8 as part of remediation. In the code section #284.3 it refers to the 8 Standards as letters “a” through “h”, “h” being Standard 8.

A further change in the remediation process now makes Intensive Assistance subject to grievance. It is the 3rd stage of our bargained remediation program.

To reach support documents for teachers/nurses and new to the profession teachers you may go to the District Intranet, click on **Forms**, then **evaluation**. Scroll down to **Support Procedures**, then new **Teacher Support Procedures** (blue card) and **Career Teacher Support Procedures** (yellow card). If you scroll down further you will also find **Associate Support Procedures**.

December 2007

Medication Dispensing – School personnel cannot dispense any type of oral medication including herbs, vitamins, home remedies, etc., without written permission from a parent/guardian along with a note from a physician approving the medication regardless of whether it is in over the counter or prescription form. There are a few topical medications which can be dispensed to students without the above written permission.

The approved medications are A & D Ointment, Betadine, Calamine Lotion, and Vaseline.

Internet Usage – This is a reminder that any information you include on an interactive internet site such as My Space, Face Book, U-Tube, or any personal Blog is out there for potential viewing by anyone with Internet access. While we have freedom of speech public employees are cautioned about posting information or comments appearing unprofessional, critical of your employer or supervisor, and inappropriately depicting our students. It can be cause for discipline, up to and including termination.

Professional Development Proposals – Applications from schools for use of their designated Teacher Quality monies may be submitted as late as the final Teacher Quality Committee meeting in May. The committee is planning regular monthly meetings to review the proposals and will publish the meeting dates as soon as they are available. The monies must be spent by the end of August 2008 or the funds will roll back to the District and be redistributed in the general pot to each school for the next year. In other words schools may not hold over funds to add to the next year's allocation.

School Parking Lots – In weather such as what we have experience in December the District's crews have first taken care of building access before clearing parking lots. Within the first 48 hours they are required to sand/salt the lots and in most cases have been able to do it sooner. There are always obstacles and it may be impossible to get to each school before cars arrive.

Student Classroom/Team Assignments – Some schools choose to announce student assignments for the following school year or semester. There is not an obligation by the District or the school to make these announcements. Often times there are so many changes in teachers, teams, and student populations it is impossible to concretely make assignments until the start of school.

Substitute Teacher Availability - If a teacher or para is ill and has made the proper call to the SEMS system requesting a substitute the administration cannot require them to come to work in the event a substitute cannot be found. Other arrangements must be made by the building to cover the duties.

Late Starts and Leave Requirements for Paras and Teachers – All staff are required to report to work at the regular time. (Within reason - a little late due to personal safety is acceptable.)

Teachers/Paraeducators

- If weather conditions and personal safety prevent the employee from arriving at their regular time, but they are able to arrive before the students they will not be required to request leave.
- If staff arrives after the students they must notify the school they will be late and they may use emergency leave in 1 hour increments.
- Both of these examples must be due to extenuating circumstances and cannot be continual happenings.

January 2008

Medication Administration Revised– All medication shall be supplied to the school in the original container, properly labeled, and shall be administered only by the school nurse or other personnel who have successfully completed a medication administration course conducted by a registered nurse or licensed pharmacist. Students who have demonstrated competence in administering their own medications may self-administer with approval of their parent/guardian and the school nurse.

School personnel cannot administer any type of oral or topical medication including herbs, vitamins, home remedies, etc., without written permission from a parent/guardian along with a note from a physician approving over-the-counter medication. A prescription medication must be in the original bottle and be accompanied by the written parent permission; the label on the bottle serves as the doctor's permission. There are a few topical medications which can be administered to students without the above written permission. The approved medications are A & D Ointment, Betadine, Calamine Lotion, and Vaseline.

Comp-Time and Snow Days – February 28th is a designated Staff Progress Reporting Day/Potential Snow Makeup Day as well as being comp-time for some secondary staff. It has now become a snow make-up day with all students and staff in session. The staff comp-time was December 11th the first of the 2 snow days in December when school was cancelled and no staff or students were required to be present.

June 2nd was designated as a Staff Progress Reporting Day/Potential Snow Makeup Day and afternoon graduation comp time in the high schools, it will now become the make-up day for December 12th. Staff Progress Reporting Day/Afternoon High School Graduation Comp-time will be June 3rd.

Staffing Timelines for Teachers –

- Letter to HR by Feb.1 for retirement if employee qualifies for incentive (20 years of employment with the Cedar Rapids District and at least 55 years of age).
- Letter to HR by March 1 to request a Leave of Absence for the following school year.
- If presently on a leave the employee must contact the District by Feb.15th to inform them of their intention to return or resign their position with the District.

Until the District is able to determine the status of the employee positions for the following school year openings cannot be determined and postings cannot be made.

Early Dismissal Inservice – Current Contract Policy

A. Paras don't work at all on all day staff learning days (the only exception is with the expressed permission of the person "paying the tab"...e.g. Special Services, Individual building principals, Executive Directors).

B. On early release inservice days, Paras:

1. may choose to leave, if they have permission from their principal to do so.

2. May stay if they choose to stay and work or take part in the inservice (no permission necessary)...whoever pays their wages pays for this time (e.g. if they are a special ed para, then special ed pays this...if the building pays the wages, then the building pays for inservice time).

3. If the principal requires them to stay for the remainder of their work day, they must stay (not an option to go home if the principal requires them to stay).

Inclement Weather/ Emergency Late Start/Early Dismissal –Current Contract Policy

A. For late start due to weather or other emergency.... teachers/nurses/paras are to report to work at their regular time unless this puts the employee in harm's way (e.g. road isn't yet clear...if one lives within walking distance or on a cleared road, this rationale is not valid)...have a "Plan B" in place for situations like children still at home.

Paras are paid for their complete day if they are able to arrive before the students. If unable to get to school before the students teachers/nurses/paras can use emergency leave for the time missed between student arrival and teacher/nurse/para arrival.

B. For early dismissal due to weather or other emergency... In the event of an early release emergency district/school closing, teachers /nurses/paras in the affected buildings shall be free to leave as soon as responsibilities for students have been completed, as determined by the principal/site administrator. Teachers/nurses/paras are paid for the full day and will not be required to use emergency or personal leave in order to be compensated during early release time.

New SEMS System – Soon there will be a new SEMS operating system in place. The system will free up more phone lines at one time. Presently some calls are not getting through causing some positions to go unfilled or have a longer than acceptable delay in contacting substitutes.

Driving Students - Student Transportation by Staff – Staff members should not transport students unless directed to do so by their administrator (typically the building principal...for paras, this should be an administrator, not a teacher with whom he/she works). If the principal is not available the designated person in charge has the authority to issue the direction.

Job descriptions should specifically indicate the staff member may be asked to transport students as part of the essential functions of his/her job. District liability insurance covers the time staff members are directed to transport students.

With any insurance you are only covered if you are found to not be negligent in respect to the incident.

Any staff member whose job description or normal work functions do not require the transportation of students may decline an administrative request to provide such service.

“Regulation code 901.7 in the Board Policy;

All employees may transport students in private vehicles if the need to transport is within the scope of the employee's employment or duties. In the event of an accident, the employee is covered by the District's liability insurance as provided in the Code of Iowa. When the school employee is driving a private vehicle for purposes such as a field trip, the employee is provided primary liability coverage under the District's auto liability insurance provided the employee is acting within the scope of his/her delegated authority. This coverage does not extend to damage to the employee's vehicle or loss of personal property of the employee driver. This means that District insurance covers: 1) bodily injury to others; 2) damage to personal property of others. Damage to employee driver's vehicle is covered by the employee's insurance. Bodily injury to the employee is covered under the District's Workers' Compensation insurance.”

Staff members should be extremely **cautious** about transporting students in their personal vehicles, but if a staff member takes it upon themselves to use their personal vehicle they should first check with their insurance carrier.

February 2008

FYI

Compensation for Feb. 7th – *School cancellation was first communicated at 8:22 am after most employees were already in the buildings.*

1. Certified Staff – will be reimbursed comp. time on the final Certified Staff Workday. They will be allowed to leave when their professional duties have been completed.
2. Para's – all para's who went to their worksite on Feb. 7th will be paid for 1 hour if their actual work time was less than 1 hour and 2 hours if their actual work time was more than 1 hour. It will be the para's responsibility to accurately determine and record the additional time on the next time sheet.
3. Contemporary Workshop Participants – part of the District's requirements for CRCSD employee participation is that they use one of their personal days for attending one of the Contemporary Leadership classes. For those that attended class on Feb. 7th, a non-workday, those employees will now not have to use a personal day. Those that have already used a personal day for Contemporary Leadership will have their personal day restored.

Make-up Days – School calendars were published with designated potential make-up days being June 2 through 6th. Employees are forewarned these days could become student contact time and should not plan any activities making them unavailable to be at school during this time.

Personal Leave -The contract reads , “Personal leave shall not be granted during the first (10) or last ten (10) employee working days in any school year, or on a day immediately preceding or following a school holiday or vacation period.” The date to last use personal leave changes proportionately to the last working day.

Early Dismissal/Sick Leave - If an employee is out of school ill on an early dismissal day, (emergency, inclement weather, in-service) they are charged personal illness leave for the full day.

March 2008

FYI

Non-Probationary Teacher/Nurse Evaluation Procedures – Teachers/Nurses are oriented to the evaluation **IPDP** procedures at the beginning of the year. They each write an **Individual Personal Development Plan** and have their meeting with their evaluator in the first 45 days of the contracted school year. They are formally evaluated the third year.

Year One of the Evaluation Cycle - Teachers/Nurses meet once in the fall with their evaluator to go over their **IPDP**. It is possible no other meeting will be necessary.

Year Two of the Evaluation Cycle – Teachers/Nurses meet once in the fall with their evaluator to talk about how the **IPDP** went last year and how they are going to approach it for the current year. It is possible no other meeting will be necessary.

Year Three of the Evaluation Cycle - The formal evaluation consists of:

- 1 Fall **IPDP** meeting (within the 45 days)
- 1 Pre-observation conference

1 Observation by the licensed evaluator

1 Post observation conference

1 End of the year conference. At this time the formal evaluation is signed and the **IPDP** for the following year may be established.

While an **IPDP** goal can be part of a group goal, observations of teacher/nurses should be made individually and during a student instructional time. Any sharing of personal data and information must be done privately.

Para Evaluation Procedures – The names of paras to be evaluated this year was not sent to buildings in the contracted timeline therefore the following procedure was adopted for this year;

1. If the evaluation process for this year is just beginning, stop, *unless the paras being evaluated had been oriented to the process and forms to be used in the evaluation within the first 45 contracted days of the current school year.*
2. If observations have been completed and the para accepts the evaluation without the beginning of the year orientation, the following language must be added to the bottom of the evaluation (or to a separate page) and the para must sign the evaluation and the waiver language.
“I agree to waive the mandatory contractual timeline for evaluation orientation for 2007-08.”
3. If the evaluation process has been completed and submitted to Human Resources, without the contractual orientation being done, the evaluator must go back to the associate with a separate sheet containing the waiver language above and ask them to sign it. If they sign it, submit it to Human Resources and the completed evaluation will stand. If they do not, please inform HR and the evaluation will be returned to be completed again next year.

Para Surplusing – Based on a waiver agreement between the District and CROTA, A two-year pilot program for para staffing is being implemented this spring. It is hoped it will alleviate some of the stress associated with placement. Teacher Associates should watch for additional details of the pilot project in the CREA newsletter.

Staffing – Staffing for next year is close to completion. Postings will soon be on the District web site.

Testing for Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens - It is in the best interest of an employee who is exposed, such as a bite from a student, to be tested for possible medical conditions. The student is a minor and cannot be forced to undergo testing, nor can they parents or legal guardians of our students be forced to release personal medical information even when they do submit the student to testing.

Compensation for Unused Personal Day – During April payroll will include a card in all teacher/nurse paychecks/stubs. It will ask the employee to choose a by-out for the second personal day if they have one saved and are not still planning to use it. At the same time the card will ask if they are choosing a lump sum pay-out of their salary in June. Remember a personal day cannot be used in the last 10 employee working days or on a day immediately preceding or following a holiday.

April/May 2008

FYI

Confidentiality of District Email Accounts - The following message appears just prior to signing on to your school profile: “*This computer is the property of the Cedar Rapids Community School District and is not to be used for unauthorized access or improper purposes, including copyright infringement. It may be remotely monitored or accessed to assist users, to install, upgrade software, to insure appropriate use, or for general support purposes.*”

Please guard your account password, do not give it to anyone else, do not have it written where someone could find it, and do not use a password easily guessed by anyone. *In some cases you may know* if your account has been accessed without your knowledge. In most cases someone who does not have your password can only access your account if they have the password changed. Technology can change a password with correct authorization, but they cannot restore the old password. Therefore, the next time you tried to log onto your account you would be denied. The District does have the right to look at the documents on your school computer, including your email and this can be done in technology without your knowledge.

Personal Days and Buy Out – Under the new teacher/nurse contract there will not be any buy out for unused personal days beginning with the 2008-2009 school year. This is your last year to ask for a buy out. The time is given to you at the substitute rate of \$13.50 per hour. If you have accumulated a partial day you may ask for the partial day and save your full day, or ask for a full day buy out and carry over a partial day, or carry over everything you currently have accumulated in personal leave. **Since the green cards have already been returned to payroll you must contact Connie Brown by email (cbrown@cr.k12.ia.us) to make any changes by Friday, May 23rd.** Under the new agreement if a teacher currently has 2 personal days they may carry them both over to the 2008-2009 school year, **this will automatically happen unless you have requested a pay out of one of the days.** Each year following you will be given one more personal day and the days may accumulate to five (5).

June 7th & 9th - The February Resolution Team minutes read:

4. *Certified Staff – will be reimbursed comp. time on the final Certified Staff Workday. They will be allowed to leave when their professional duties have been completed.*

A further interpretation of this is - June 7th or 9th is a contract day you may leave after your professional duties are completed with the approval of your administrator. The buildings will all be open on both days during reasonable hours. An employee cannot expect to have building access late into the evening.

If a building requires a check off of some type to insure the employee has completed their professional duties and the administrator cannot be present on the 7th or 9th, there needs to be an arrangement made before the 7th to cover this requirement.

Reporting of Non-reimbursed Absences – Next school year all approved and non-approved unpaid absences will be reported to the District Resolution Team for the purposes of data collection. There will be more information on the process at the beginning of the school year.

May 2008

FYI

Contracts – Human Resources has received the new negotiated salary information and certified contracts are currently being prepared to send to Grant Wood AEA for printing. It is possible they will not be completed in time to reach you at your work site. Please be sure to leave behind an accurate summer mailing address with the District.

Web Master Schedule C Positions – The 2008-2009 teacher contract with the District provides for a web master schedule C position in each elementary, middle, and high school. The positions will all be posted on the District web page. Many buildings already have someone doing a web page for them and they may be the correct choice to be given the schedule C and continue the job, however each candidate must still apply and go through the process.

Counselor and Media Extended Contract Days – The contract allows for each high school **counselor** to use 20 days per year outside of the normal 191. Each middle school **counselor** has 10 days and each elementary **counselor** has 5 days.

If there are 3 **counselors** in a high school building they have 60 days (3 counselors x 20 days) to use. If there are facilitators in the building who work in the counseling office doing some of the same work, the building may allocate some of those total days to the facilitators helping with the work, but may not add more days unless using building funds.

Middle school formula = # of **counselors** x 10 days.

Elementary school formula = # of **counselors** x 5 days.

The contract also allows for each building to have 5 days of service beyond the 191 for their **media** teacher at all levels. If a **media** teacher has 2 buildings they are allocated 5 days for each building.

The allocations for both counselors and media run July to July, so if only a portion of the building's days were used prior to pre-service, 2007 all that remain are still available to be used after June 9th, 2008 and before July 1, 2008.

A short-term contract is not required. Teachers working will complete a time sheet.