

EVERY STUDENT. EVERY DAY.

CEDAR FALLS

COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2025-2026

Policy Updates: Personal Devices and Attendance

Dear Cedar Falls Community School Families,

Welcome back to the 2025-2026 school year in the Cedar Falls Community School District. We are excited to partner with you to make this a year of learning, connection, and joy for every student. In this letter, we share information regarding two updates that help students stay focused and successful: Personal Devices Policy (Bd. Policy link) and Attendance practices. Thank you for your continued partnership.

Looking forward to another great year!

Personal Electronic Devices: What to Know

Starting this year, the Cedar Falls Community School District will have **personal electronic device-free instructional time** in every school. This means students must keep personal devices off and put away during classes, study halls, and intervention periods. Personal Electronic Devices may include smartphones, tablets, laptops, smartwatches, headphones, and other devices that can send or receive messages, calls, or data.

- Students may not use personal electronic devices during instructional time, including study halls and intervention periods. Devices should be off or silenced, put away, and not visible.
- Smartwatches may be worn as timepieces. Communication features must be off, and notifications should be silenced. If a watch is used to send or receive messages, it will be treated like a phone.
- Connected earphones, earbuds, and other personal electronic devices are not permitted during instructional time.
- If your child has a documented need in an IEP, 504 plan, or health plan, we will follow that plan.

- If you need to reach your child during the day, please get in touch with the school office.

Teachers and staff will remind students of these expectations and follow building procedures if a device is used during instructional time. For a first offense, the confiscated device will be returned to the student at the end of the day; for additional offenses, a parent or guardian will need to pick up the device. Our goal is to keep students present, engaged, and ready to learn.

Thank you for your partnership and for reviewing these expectations with your student. We appreciate your support in making this a great year for all students.

Attendance Procedure Reminders

A goal of the Cedar Falls Community School District is to support students and families with regular school attendance. Please let the school know as soon as possible with any planned or unplanned absences by calling or emailing the main office.

Our attendance procedures align with new Iowa law (Senate File 2435) and are designed to keep students present, engaged, and ready to learn. Students who miss greater than 10% of the school year (18 days) are considered to be “Chronically Absent,” and students who miss greater than 20% of the school year will be considered “*Truant*” (36 days). Please know that when students get close to these marks, the school will reach out in an effort to support student attendance.

Attendance codes will fall into three categories if students are not physically in class: Absent-exempt (excused), Absent-non-exempt (unexcused), and present (student participating in school activity). Below are some common examples that would fall into each category:

Present:

- Student is at school or participating in a school activity
- Participation in school activities (fine arts, athletics, robotics, class trips, etc.)
- Attending college courses or CTE placement
- College visits (per guidelines)
- In-school suspension, detention, etc.

Absent, Exempt (Excused):

- Medical excusal (note from medical professional, health plan, planned medical treatments)
- Excusal by court
- Attending religious services or receiving religious instruction
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 affects attendance
- Military-related absence

Absent, Non-Exempt (Unexcused):

- Sick, parent confirmed, no medical excusal
- Watching athletic competitions, show choir, or other school activities, not participating
- Absent, parent excused, no reason given
- Family vacation or “out of town”
- Car trouble
- Arrived at school, then classes were skipped
- Out-of-school suspension
- Non-school-related activities (gymnastics, hockey, community theater, etc.)

Best Regards,

Eric Rosburg
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