

Welcome Back to School!

I hope you had a restful and productive summer.

Below is some important information for the start of the school year:

1. Thursday the 23rd of August is our first day! We will begin at 7:50 in Homeroom. Students will receive their schedules and a school picture photo card to be used on Monday, Aug 27th when they get their photos taken. It is highly advised that you look to get to Kennedy early on day one to avoid being late.
 - a. Students are reminded that if they must cross a street to get to school that they use crosswalks to do so. PLEASE do not run across 42nd Street.
 - b. The first day of school is an Early Dismissal Day, with classes ending at 1:30.
 - c. Friday the 24th is also an Early Dismissal Day. Classes end at 1:30 as well.
2. School pictures will be taken on Monday, Aug 27th. During their Language Arts class, all students will get their pictures taken for the Yearbook, their IDs and PowerSchool. HR Photography should have sent information home regarding how to purchase photos. If you did not receive any information, please call HR Imaging at 815-433-869.
3. The 2018 Kennedy Student/Parent Handbook will be available online near the start of school. A hard copy will be provided to each student on Monday, Aug. 27 in Advisory Homeroom. Some important things to note:
 - a. Our Focus: Rather than highlighting the school, the new handbook highlights what it takes to be successful at Kennedy. We focus on five areas:
 - i. Academics First
 - ii. Future Focused
 - iii. Commit to Community
 - iv. Kind and Caring
 - v. Engage In Your School
 - b. Attendance Policy: Although there is not a substantial change to our policy from previous years, we have provided the policy to provide clarity to parents. Please review the policy on page 3 of the handbook. We had tremendous attendance issues last year, both in terms of unexcused and excused absences. Parents, please make all effort to schedule student appointments for after school and work with us to ensure your child(ren) is/are in school every day. Please [review these statistics](#) about the impact of missing school. As our attendance rate continues to fall, we have seen a direct connection to a dip in our AP and Iowa Assessment scores which we would argue indicates students are not learning as well when absenteeism is higher.
 - c. Electronic Devices Policy: The policy on page 10 is not significantly different from our past policy, but does include consequences for violation. Essentially, students are expected to keep use of electronic devices to passing time and lunchroom and avoid use of these devices during learning time. If a teacher wants to allow students to use their devices during class time for learning purposes they may do so.
4. All Bell Schedules can be found on the [Kennedy website](#). We will be using the SMART Time/Advisory Homeroom schedule most days. Fridays are always Early Dismissal Schedules. We will run Advisory Homeroom during the "SMART Time" slot (9:34 to 10:04) until September 11, where we will start SMART Time officially. Our first Pep Assembly is Thursday, Aug 30.

5. **Open House will be Monday, August 27.** This year, Open House will be much earlier to allow parents to meet teachers and learn about opportunities at the start of school. As we did last year, we will have a variety of outside agencies, trades organizations, and colleges present in the building during Open House to assist parents and students in the College and Career preparation process. We will also offer a variety of seminars during Open House for parents to attend. You will be able to visit teachers at your leisure rather than on a bell schedule. Presentations will begin and booths will open at 5:30 PM. Teachers will be available from 6 PM to 8 PM.
6. **All-School Fundraising Gala.** A group of committed parents and community members are planning an amazing Gala for the school in March of 2019. More details are to come!
7. **Don't forget to Join the Kennedy PTSA this year.** This is a great way to support our academic programs at Kennedy and helping provide much needed voice for Kennedy and all of CRCSD's needs to the state level. We also need more parents to take on leadership roles in the PTSA. Please email me if you wish to become a PTSA Leader.
You can join online here: <http://kenn.cr.k12.ia.us/our-school/pta/>
8. Also please consider donating your time and talent to our various academic, athletic, and artistic programs. We are reaching out this year because every team (Show Choir, Debate, Sports, etc.) needs parents to make their programs work. Please contact your child's coach to find out how you can help.
9. Please be sure to keep up with your child's attendance and grades. The best way to do this is with **the PowerSchool Mobile App**. You can find instructions for installing the app on your Android or iPhone here: <http://kenn.cr.k12.ia.us/resources/>. Click on the link to the left.
10. Please know that we, [the Kennedy Administration](#), and the [Kennedy Support Staff Team](#) are here for you and your child. Please be sure to reach out when you have questions, needs, or just are looking for an opinion. Teenagers are complicated. No one knows the right answer all of the time. Let's work together to make this year our very best yet!

See everyone soon!

Jason