

Cedar Rapids Community Schools

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District Develops Placement Process for Students Impacted by Floods

The Cedar Rapids Community School District has begun the process of placing flood-impacted students for the 2008-09 school year. The Office of Learning and Leadership expects to begin contacting families with specific placement information at the end of the week.



The District collected data from schools and families to identify the most current residential location for the estimated 1,834 students displaced by the flood disaster.

This number includes students from each of the 33 District schools. Taylor Elementary School, located at 720 7th Avenue SW, was seriously damaged in June when three feet of flood water rose on the first floor. The school will not be open for the 2008-09 school year.

The two-phase student placement process will begin first with those who live in the neighborhood of Taylor Elementary School but were not displaced by the flood. These students will be placed in schools adjacent to the Taylor neighborhood.

When identifying schools, the District will consider class sizes, space availability, programming needs, and middle school attendance areas. The District is making every effort to keep family members together in the same elementary school.

"We'll do everything we can to ensure that students are in the best educational environment possible," explained Jay Marino, Associate Superintendent. "Keeping families together is a priority."

The second phase of the placement process will identify school locations for any student that is homeless. According to the McKinney-Vento Act, a student is defined as homeless if he/she is living in a shelter, motel, vehicle, campground, FEMA trailer, in an abandoned building, doubled-up with friends or relatives, or on the street. The law provides that these students may attend the school in the neighborhood in which they reside or may request transportation to the school they last attended (when considered feasible by the District).

The District continues to confirm the location of some of students which is critical to forming a transportation plan that supports all students.

Once locations are confirmed for these students, the District will establish centralized transportation "pick up points" for busing. These will be located no further than ¾ mile of where students are staying. From the centrally located pick up points, students will be transported to various schools.

"To ensure efficiency and safety, a systems approach to transportation will be implemented," Marino noted. "We want to minimize the amount of time that students spend on a bus and ensure they arrive safely at school."

Students living outside the District should follow the usual Open Enrollment process for placement.

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