CROW - APPLEGATE - LORANE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Crow Graduates: Thinkers, Communicators, and Leaders!

September 2026 Superintendent's Update

Dear Crow-Applegate-Lorane School Community,

We are three weeks into the 2026-27 school year, and it's off to a strong start. Staff and students have settled into routines, classrooms are humming, and I want to take a moment to share what we're focused on this year, why it matters, and a few ways families can stay connected.

Our Portrait of a Graduate: Thinkers, Communicators, Leaders

Every student who graduates from Crow should leave us as a thinker, a communicator, and a leader. These aren't just words on a wall — they show up in classrooms and activities across the district every day. A few examples:

Thinkers

- In elementary classrooms, students are working through hands-on math problems with more than one path to the answer and being asked to explain *why* their approach works.
- In middle school science, students design their own experiments rather than following a fixed set of steps, then defend their conclusions using evidence.
- In high school, students in project-based courses are tackling open-ended, real-world problems with no single "right" answer.

Communicators

- Younger students practice sharing their thinking out loud in small groups and during class discussions.
- Middle schoolers present projects to their peers and take questions.
- High schoolers write, revise, and defend their work — students show those skills while articulating a position and responding to challenges in real time.

Leaders

- Elementary students take on classroom jobs and work to earn “self-manager” badges.
- Middle schoolers lead activities in clubs and student government.
- High schoolers coach younger athletes, mentor incoming students, and take on officer roles in FFA, student leadership, and other extracurriculars — leadership that shows up on the field, on stage, and in the community, not just in the classroom.

Why Every Day Matters

With our four-day school week, CAL has 151 school days this year. That's 151 chances for a student to be in the room for that one explanation that makes math click, that one discussion that builds a friendship, that one rehearsal that pulls a performance together. Every one of those days counts.

Under Oregon law, an absence can only be excused by school officials for illness, a medical appointment, or an emergency. We know life happens, and we work with families through those situations — but a discretionary day away from school is still an unexcused absence, and it comes out of a smaller pool of instructional days than most students in the state. We ask for your partnership in protecting every one of our 151 school days. Every day matters.

Making Every Minute Count Inside Our Buildings

Attendance is only half of the equation — what happens once students are here matters just as much. This year, CAL staff are intentionally:

- Structuring engaging learning environments where students are active participants, not passive listeners
- Limiting screen time so more of the school day is spent in direct interaction — with material, with peers, and with teachers
- Leaning into productive struggle — giving students problems that are hard enough to require real effort, because we know that's where genuine learning happens

Staying Connected with CAL

Strong communication between schools and families is an important part of student success. This year, we are introducing **Rooms**, our new communication system, to help families stay informed about school and classroom updates. Rooms will provide another way for teachers and schools to share information and for families to stay connected to what is happening at CAL.

For families of students in grades 6–12, **StudentVue and ParentVue** are also important tools for staying connected with teachers. ParentVue allows families to view student information, including grades and assignments, while StudentVue gives students access to their own academic information. We encourage families to check these systems regularly and reach out to teachers when questions arise. We want communication to be a partnership, and we appreciate families staying engaged in their students' learning.

Upcoming Community Events

One of the things that makes CAL special is the way our schools bring families and community members together. We hope you'll join us for a couple of upcoming events:

- **Homecoming** Football Game — Friday, September 25, at 7:00 p.m. Come out to support our students, our athletes, and our Crow Booster Club at the concession stand. Enjoy an evening of school spirit and community connection.
- **Harvest Festival** — Thursday, October 29, at 5:30 p.m. at Applegate Elementary School. This is always a wonderful opportunity for families to gather, have fun, and celebrate our school community. Hosted by our newly-formed CAL PTO.

None of this works without students in the building and families partnering from home. Thank you for working with us. We are grateful to be part of this community, and we look forward to a wonderful 2026-27 school year together.

With gratitude,

Heidi Brown
Superintendent, Crow-Applegate-Lorane School District