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The Wisconsin Rapids Public School District Office is pictured on Aug. 13, 2020, in Wisconsin Rapids. SAMANTHA MADAR/USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

New school year begins next week in Wisconsin Rapids

Erik Pfantz
Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune
USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

Students and their families are preparing for the 2025-26 school year, which is set to begin in about a week. We know purchasing school supplies, coordinating transportation plans and establishing schedules are crucial to those preparations.

Parents and guardians of students are encouraged to use the Parent-Square app for updates, communication with teachers and other parents, and other information, Christine Wefel, executive assistant to the superintendent, said to a Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune reporter.

Here are a few things parents, families and community members should know as the Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools approaches its first days of class.

When is the first day of class in the Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools?

Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools students have their first day of school on Sept. 2.

What time does the school day start and end?

Start and end times vary by grade level. The district is continuing a “Late Start Monday” schedule, which will have students beginning classes 30 to 45 minutes later on Mondays, depending on what school they attend. Staff will spend Monday mornings in “Professional Learning Communities,” which will work on curriculum, analyze data and improve teaching practices throughout the year.

On most days, most elementary school students begin their days at 8:30 a.m. and end at 3:30 p.m. The middle school begins at 7:25 a.m. and

end at 2:40 p.m. Lincoln High School students begin at 7:30 a.m. and end their days at 2:53 p.m.

On Mondays, most elementary schools start at 9:30 a.m., the middle school starts at 7:55 a.m. and Lincoln High School starts at 8:10 a.m.

When are orientation days and open house times?

Elementary schools are holding open house events on Aug. 27. Check the school district Facebook page for times for each building. Middle school students had orientation and kickoff events the week of Aug. 18 and a Meet the Teacher Night Aug. 27. Sixth-grade students at WRAMS are required to attend a “Where Everyone Belongs” peer mentoring program between 10:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. Aug. 27.

Lincoln High School students may pick up their schedules between 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. Aug. 26.

Where can I find school supply lists?

School supply lists are on the district website and are available at local retail stores.

When will elementary school students meet their teachers?

Elementary school students will meet their teachers at open house events Aug. 27. Students and their families may log in to the Skyward Family Access system to see who their teacher is prior to the event.

When will we find out busing information?

Families received information about busing in the third week of August. They can log onto the Skyward Family Access system to learn routing information including bus number,

pick-up times and drop-off times.

Was there any new construction at any of the schools?

Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools students will have a few more recreational opportunities following summer construction work. New playgrounds at Grove, Howe and Washington Elementary schools and the THINK Academy were either completed or will be completed in upcoming weeks as part of an upgrade project partially funded by a \$3.75 million grant from the Legacy Foundation of Central Wisconsin. Nine tennis courts at Lincoln High School were also repaired and repainted with five courts also lined for pickleball.

An Outdoor Play Learning Activity Center at Woodside Elementary School will also see the addition of an outdoor classroom space for the 2025-26 school year. The site already hosts an inclusive playground and will get an outdoor whiteboard for the upcoming school year donated by the Noon Hour Rotarians.

When are breaks and the last day of school?

Students will enjoy about 22 days off throughout the school year, depending on which school they attend. Some of the most significant breaks include Thanksgiving break, Nov. 26-28; winter break, Dec. 24-Jan. 2; and spring break, March 16-20. The last day of school is scheduled for June 4.

To view the complete 2025-2026 Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools calendar, click here.

Erik Pfantz covers local government and education in central Wisconsin for USA TODAY NETWORK - Wisconsin and values his background as a rural Wisconsinite. Contact him at epfantz@gannett.com.

Driving barefoot is legal in state

Alisa M. Schafer
Manitowoc Herald Times Reporter
USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

MANITOWOC – Running barefoot through the sand at the beach or in lush grass at the park is a favorite summer passtime of many, and sometimes putting shoes back on to drive is the last thing they want to do.

Luckily, driving without shoes on is completely legal in Wisconsin, according to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Wisconsin DOT maintains a FAQ page on its website dedicated to answering questions people may have about rules of the road, what to do when they are stopped by law enforcement and how to find details of a past citation.

Here are some other questions answered on the Wisconsin DOT’s FAQ page:

- Do state patrol officers have a quota for issuing citations? No.
- Are radar detectors legal? Yes, except for commercial motor vehicles.
- Is it legal to operate a vehicle with a cast on? Yes.
- Do I have to register my handgun in Wisconsin? No.
- Do you have to wear a seat belt in the back seat of a vehicle? Yes.

Have a question about local laws?
Send it to Alisa M. Schafer at aschaffer@gannett.com and she’ll track down the answer for a future article.

Human screwworm case found in U.S.

Cassandra Garrison, Tom Polansek and Leah Douglas
REUTERS

A human case of flesh-eating screwworm was detected in the United States related to the latest outbreak in Central America, but the chance of people contracting the parasite in the country remains low, according to officials.

The patient had recently returned to Maryland after traveling to El Salvador, Andrew G. Nixon, a spokesperson for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, told Reuters in an email.

The larva of the New World screwworm flies feed on living tissue, mainly affecting animals and livestock. But humans can also become infested by the larva, according to the CDC.

On Aug. 4, the Maryland Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed the parasite as a New World

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