

# CRAIG HIGH SCHOOL

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*Home of the Panthers!*

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## May CHS School Board Report

May 27 was our last day with the Class of 2026, with CHS graduation taking place tomorrow night at 7 PM. As board members, I would like to extend an invitation to each of you. Graduation is the ultimate goal of our work and it is a privilege to celebrate this milestone with a group of individuals who have spent the past thirteen years preparing. We are thrilled to present continuing education scholarships during this ceremony and welcome CEMS Principal Christy House as the guest speaker. The CHS graduation ceremony also features performances by our CHS band and choir as well as recognition of staff who will not be returning next year. The CHS Graduation ceremonies will be live-streamed via NFHS.

Congratulations to each of our fifteen graduating seniors: Ashton Bean, Joshua Bennett, Aneela Crookes, Thomas Dowling, Jillian Ebbighausen, Jaxon Fowler, Aiden Goheen, Mason Kuhnert, Tyler Musser, Sabrina Nelson, Abigail Patten, Jacielynn Simpson, Chelsea Thompson, Adam Vickers, and Cheyanne Wiesner.

The CHS staff worked together to draft a Master Schedule for the upcoming school year. Having a new CTE position was helpful, but we still suffer from a lack of flexibility in our schedule. A core teacher with content flexibility (math/social studies or ELA/social studies) would make a significant impact upon scheduling.

Congratulations to Madison Conatser for being selected to participate in the Rural Alaska Honors Institute (RAHI). This is a competitive and fully funded program where selected students spend six-weeks in a fully immersive college experience on the UAF campus. Participants will live on the UAF campus, can earn up to 10 college credits, and will volunteer in the community and explore interior Alaska through outdoor adventures. Congratulations Maddy!

One of the perks of my job is that from time to time, I get to work closely with students. I have always enjoyed helping seniors navigate their final year. This year I spent a lot of time with the class looking at post-high school options. We spoke with advisors, program directors, and people working in the field. I also enjoyed working closely with the class as they developed resumes, scholarship applications, and life plans. I appreciate the trust they placed in me. I am looking forward to seeing what becomes of each of them in the future.

The remaining CHS student body will travel to the Eagle's Nest campground June 3 for our annual field day extravaganza. Students will use kayaks, corn hole, barbecues, spike ball, and more as we let them air off and run the stink off them. Or generate stink - however it works out.

I am offering the 2026/2027 CHS Handbook for your review and approval. It remains largely intact, with an addition of UA Scholar ranking clarification, ReachOut crisis counseling, reduction of credits required for graduation to 23, and the addition of minimum participation numbers for activities.

The CCSD School Board as always supported activities and I want you to know what an impact you have by making activities a funding priority. For the 2025 - 2026 school year, 77% percent of our student body participated in at least one activity! I don't know if there is another school our size that could make that boast!

This year has presented quite a challenge as I juggled the demands of two disparate school programs. I have appreciated the assistance from all staff as they have worked to support me as needed — especially Liz Thomsen for her daily assistance wrangling students, counseling, providing restroom oversight, classroom coverage, flyer design, and a myriad of other tasks large and small. Her support of our students is appreciated by all.

We have a remarkable staff at CHS - each and every person is here because they want the best education for our kids. They want every student to know that they are appreciated and loved. Each person, from our custodian to our food service, to maintenance, to our tech staff, to our admin assistant, to aides, to coaches, to our activities director, to the superintendent, to our teachers — each person gives everything they have every day to every kid who crosses their path. Of course there is conflict, but at the root of each interaction is a deep caring for each student and for each other. At the root of our relationships is love and respect.

That's our secret. It's why visitors consistently tell me that there is a "feeling" at CHS and that our students are different - more respectful, happier, more polite - than those in other schools that they visit. That's why people feel the need to tell me that CHS is a special place unlike anywhere else. Caring is a vital part of CHS culture, it will continue to be the bedrock of our school regardless of staffing.

I was 27 years old when was hired to teach music here 27 years ago. Fully half of my life has been spent in the Craig Schools. I have worked with people who come and go. While I will be replaced (we are all replaceable thankfully) and the school will carry on, I won't be able to replace the piece of my heart given to and taken by Craig Schools. Thank you CCSD for everything.