



COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ENGAGEMENT DISTRICT UPDATE TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Update for August 14, 2020

PURPOSE: To provide an update on COVID-19 response efforts in Columbus City Schools related to our Community Partners and learn about additional supports within our community.

Email the CCS Department of Engagement at Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us.

ACADEMIC DAY IN THE LIFE PRESENTATION:

At Tuesday's board meeting, our Academic Services team presented samples of a "day in the life" of CCS students attending virtual classes this fall. The team showed examples of what remote learning could look like for elementary, middle, and high school students. This included scheduled classes throughout the traditional school day as well as "brain breaks" built in. They also showed how we will track student attendance during remote learning.

Our Academic Services team has been working diligently to ensure our remote learning experiences are the best they can possibly be for our students. It is important to note that these examples are for students who are attending through the remote learning option and not the self-paced CCS Digital Academy.

Students in the Digital Academy will largely set their own pace of instruction with guidance from District educators.

To learn more and watch the presentation, visit:

Elementary School - <https://youtu.be/USkrdDRNot8?t=2140>

Middle School - <https://youtu.be/USkrdDRNot8?t=2585>

High School - <https://youtu.be/USkrdDRNot8?t=2878>

Student Attendance Tracking - <https://youtu.be/USkrdDRNot8?t=3425>

PREPARATIONS FOR THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR:

While we are starting the year with all virtual classes, we cannot wait to welcome our students and staff back into our school buildings whenever public health conditions allow it. Our Operations team has been busy preparing our buildings, so we are ready when that day comes.

These preparations include setting up socially-distanced classrooms, installing protective barriers where needed, placing signage and directions, and securing personal protective equipment (PPE) for each facility -- not to mention ongoing daily cleaning and sanitizing.

Our Technology staff has been hard at work with setting up the new Chromebook computers we were able to purchase with CARES Act funds from the City of Columbus. We expect to have all 20,000 devices ready to distribute by the start of the school year. We have received all 20,000 devices into our warehouse.

We are also partnering with CEA -- our teachers union -- on a joint survey to help us plan for what resources our teachers need to be successful teaching in a virtual environment.

Families should expect to hear from their school principal with back-to-school information beginning the week of August 17. Principals will have school-specific information on when, where, and how to pick-up Chromebooks, instructional materials, and other necessary items to start the year.

ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

On Thursday, August 12, we announced that we will suspend all in-person interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities in order to help lower the spread of COVID-19 in our community. This suspension will go into effect on Friday, August 14. This will allow athletic teams to close out their preseason activities and collect any equipment needed.

Our high school athletic teams have been permitted to participate in limited summer training and workouts since July 1. Those activities will be suspended from occurring beginning Friday, August 14. We will continue to evaluate athletics and extracurriculars as we monitor the state's Public Health Advisory Alert System and more importantly local guidance from Columbus Public Health officials.

Obviously, this decision was a difficult one because we know how important athletics and extracurricular activities are to our students and our schools. However, our top priority has continued to be the health and safety of our students, their families, our staff, and the Columbus community. We must make our decisions about the fall with that in mind.

The spread of COVID-19 in our district boundaries continues to grow, and our local health officials have advised us against moving forward with in-person sports and activities. As we have with all other decisions, we will heed the guidance of the medical professionals who are acting in the best interest of our community. If we get additional guidance that recommends allowing in-person activities, we will reevaluate this suspension.

LEARNING EXTENSION CENTERS:

An idea that grew out of our Reopening Task Force for Community Partners will soon become a reality. With the closure of school buildings this Fall, students need a well-equipped and safe environment in which to engage in their school day. Our Faith-Based and Community Partners are stepping-up and coming together to assist our families by offering Learning Extension Centers (LEC). An LEC is a computer lab using physical space provided by community partners who have internet connectivity. Internet connection, meals, and consistent interactions with dedicated LEC staff and volunteers will be meeting mental, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of Columbus students.



Organizations wanting to sign-up to be a Learning Extension Center (LEC) visit For Columbus Students website: www.forcolumbusstudents.com. Look for LEC resources to sign-up. Or email Gerald Murphy at geraldmurphy@columbusdreamcenter.org.

Organizations wanting to support Learning Extension Centers by partnering, volunteering, or donating, please email CCS at: engage@columbus.k12.oh.us

VIRTUAL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SESSION:

Hundreds of Columbus City Schools families - and many of our staff and community partners - continue to join us for our weekly Virtual Family Engagement Sessions, hearing updates on our reopening plans and learning about support for students and families as we enter our fully virtual start to the school year.

The “F.A.C.E. 2 Face” (Family And Community Engagement) live online sessions are hosted every Tuesday and Thursday (6:00 - 7:00 p.m.) by the Dept. of Engagement and expert staff who share information and insights on specific topics as well as try to answer parent questions.

This week’s session focused on Chromebook Basics and provided parents with step-by-step directions for logging-in to the computer, the Parent Portal, and platforms.

RE-WATCH ANY OF OUR VIRTUAL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

Though everyone is invited, we know that not every family is able to participate in our Virtual Family Engagement Sessions each Tuesday and Thursday night. That’s why every session is recorded and posted to our website.

If you know families who would benefit from the information shared in our previous sessions - or if you want to sign-up for future Virtual Family Engagement Sessions - visit the “Reopening” Section of our District website at www.ccsok.us/reopening.

COLUMBUS ADULT & COMMUNITY EDUCATION OFFERS FREE ENGLISH CLASSES

Columbus City Schools Aspire program offers FREE English classes to anyone over 18 years old. Our classes are leveled by student ability, and a full range of classes, from beginner to advanced, are offered. Class times are flexible and are offered mornings, afternoons, evenings and weekends. Books are provided at no cost. Due to COVID, all of our classes are currently online. We will also provide free training on how to best work in an online environment. In person classes will be offered when we can safely do so. For more information, please email tharry2373@columbus.k12.oh.us or text/call Tim Harry at 614-579-5575.

FREE COSI SCIENCE APP POWERED BY WIFI ON COTA BUSES:

Columbus City Schools is partnering with COSI and COTA on a series of special lunchtime events at several of our Grab-and-Go Food sites, providing students with the opportunity to download a free COSI science app by using the free Wi-Fi available on a special COTA bus.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays leading up to the start of school, COSI will deliver its Wi-Fi enabled “COSI Connects” mobile unit and COTA will provide an amplified Wi-Fi-enabled transit vehicle to create a large free hotspot location around one of our schools.

Students and families will have the ability to download the new free “COSI Connects” app and download STEM content to their mobile devices for offline use later at home.

Each event will also feature an exciting COSI science demonstration and coincides with the Columbus City Schools breakfast and lunch distribution program. Students will receive free meals and a science lesson in a matter of minutes.

These lunchtime events are from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Here are the upcoming locations:

- Woodward Park Middle School - August 18 and 20
- Buckeye Middle School - August 25 and 27
- Columbus Africentric Early College - September 1 and 3

The goal is for students to take these STEM lessons home and prepare for the upcoming school year, which will begin for the first time in a virtual learning environment.

SPOTLIGHT: HELPING EMPLOYERS NAVIGATE SCHOOL & WORK DURING COVID-19

As employers and working parents navigate how to ensure parents can provide the support they need to their kids, while also fulfilling their job duties, the Columbus Women’s Commission is hosting a Zoom session on Thursday, August 20 from 3:00-4:00 p.m. for local employers. This session will bring companies together to share ideas, strategies, and creative policies. You will hear from local businesses that are exploring how to support their employees, brainstorm with each other to navigate challenges, and find support from your peers who are likely having many of the same conversations. Click on the link below to RSVP.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScdYEKXxmjqTtv6kMOfbcN3KJBR8M5sUx8LPHJmlvgGxG6w/viewform?usp=sf_link

SHARE YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION UPDATES:

Please share this Community Update with the families and stakeholders you serve.



It's important we communicate as much as possible to as many people as possible - in as many languages as possible - about the steps being taken in Columbus City Schools to support students and families.

Our work is far from over, and we want to honor your continued commitment.
Please share your updates with us at Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us.