

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

## COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ENGAGEMENT

Update for January 19, 2021

Email the CCS Department of Engagement at [engage@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:engage@columbus.k12.oh.us)

### **COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERS ADD TO DISTRICT PROTOCOLS FOR WELCOMING STUDENTS BACK TO CLASSROOM:**

Columbus City Schools is ready to move forward with safely transitioning some students and staff back into the classroom for blended learning, beginning on February 1.

During last week's Virtual Family Engagement Super Session with Superintendent Dr. Talisa Dixon, two of our top health partners during this nearly year-long COVID-19 pandemic - Columbus Public Health and Nationwide Children's Hospital - shared their insights on how the District's health protocols will keep students and staff safe.

You can watch the Virtual Family Engagement Super Session at [www.ccsok.us/Page/8212](http://www.ccsok.us/Page/8212).

### **MULTI-LAYER HEALTH PROTOCOL STARTS WITH SCHOOL NURSES:**

The Health, Family, and Community Services team includes 112 licensed school nurses who are experts in communicable diseases and public health. They work closely with our public health partners at the state and local levels, with school nurses having direct connections to our partners at Columbus Public Health.

COVID-19 is a top priority. Each CCS building is assigned a school nurse who is responsible for tracking and monitoring symptoms, possible exposures, and positive cases.

Our District's health protocols offer several layers of protection, beginning with the work of our school nurses and the Health, Family and Community Services Office. They collaborate with Columbus Public Health on a regular basis to implement health and safety measures.

As students return to the classroom, our first layer of in-person protection is our mask requirement. All staff and students must wear masks when on the bus or in a school building.

Our nurses understand that masks may not be medically possible for all students and have set up a mask exemption policy. They also recognize that students may need occasional "mask breaks" and will need to remove them to eat during lunch and breakfast.

So our second layer of protection after masks is hand washing. Students and staff will wash their hands and sanitize many times during the school day. Bottles of hand sanitizer are available throughout the buildings and in all classrooms.



Another added layer is self-care. We encourage our CCS families to use proper respiratory etiquette: coughing and sneezing into your elbow and then sanitize after.

The next layer is social distancing. Safety guidelines require six feet of distance be maintained in our school buildings, classrooms, and hallways. To help our younger students understand, there are signs, posters, and reminders on doors, walls, and floors. The school nurse will be proactively educating and reminding people to remain six feet apart.

For additional protection, all classroom furniture has been configured to adhere to the recommended social distancing guidelines.

Then, one more layer, plexiglass shields have been added to most student and teacher desks.

### **PROTOCOL IN PLACE WHEN SOMEONE SEEMS SICK AT SCHOOL:**

The school nurses have designated a health separation room in each building for any adult or student who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms and cannot immediately leave the building. The person will be required to wear their mask at all times while in the health separation room.

The parent or guardian will be notified to pick up their child immediately. CCS requests the sick student be picked up within 30 minutes. If the parent or guardian is unable to pick up the student immediately, CCS asks that the parent arrange for a back-up so the child can be picked up within 30 minutes. Students with COVID-19 symptoms cannot ride home on the bus.

The school will notify, in writing, parents/guardians of students within the same classroom, bus ride, or school activity that there is a student with a positive COVID-19 test and will notify parents of the whole building through the Parent Portal messenger, parent email, text message, and phone call.

You can read more details about the District's Health Protocols at [www.ccsok.us/Page/9037](http://www.ccsok.us/Page/9037).

### **PARTNERS AT COLUMBUS PUBLIC HEALTH ANSWER FAMILY QUESTIONS ABOUT COVID VACCINE:**

From the start of the pandemic, Columbus City Schools has worked closely with the Ohio Department of Public Health and Columbus Public Health, with regular conversations with Columbus Public Health Commissioner Dr. Mysheika Roberts.

Recently, Dr. Roberts has been holding virtual meetings to talk with community about the COVID-19 vaccine. Columbus Public Health continues to distribute the vaccine to protect health and help restore some normalcy in our community and lives. Columbus Public Health is following state guidelines to distribute the vaccine strategically and equitably in our community.

As more vaccine becomes available, the general public will be able to get vaccinated as well.

You can hear Dr. Roberts share information about the vaccine, dispel myths, and answer some frequently asked questions at: <https://youtu.be/hhJuYbH3rQY>.

## **NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ANSWERS QUESTIONS ON VACCINATIONS FOR STUDENTS:**

With the initial distribution phase of COVID-19 vaccines now occurring in Columbus, many parents are asking when their children can be vaccinated. Our partners at Nationwide Children's Hospital tell us the answer is: hopefully soon, but not yet.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has begun reviewing and authorizing vaccine options for adults as they receive requests for authorizations. Vaccine trials are now enrolling younger adolescents, though approval for use in those younger than 16 is likely still many months away.

Those 16 years and older without a medical condition qualifying for the next phase of vaccine distributions will be offered vaccination at a later time according to the distribution instructions of state health officials.

As vaccine production continues to ramp up, and additional vaccines are authorized, more supplies will become available and more people will be able to be vaccinated.

The experts at Nationwide Children's Hospital have an online blog they've shared with CCS families, featuring the most current pediatric health care information pediatric physicians and specialists who have seen it all. Many of them are parents, too.

Check out the Nationwide Children's Hospital blog at <https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens>

## **COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP WORKSHOPS UNDERWAY WITH MILLIONS OF DOLLARS AVAILABLE FOR CCS CLASS OF 2021**

Going to college can be expensive, but our partners at I Know I Can are helping Columbus City Schools' college-bound seniors get every dollar available to make college affordable.

There are many different financial resources to help students afford college. They can be based on need, academics, or other qualifications.

During our Tuesday Virtual Family Engagement Session, the I Know I Can team joined local scholarship providers to launch our District's annual College Scholarship Workshops. Here are some of the offerings that our graduates in the Class of 2021 are eligible for:

- Start with **Free FAFSA Help**. In order to be eligible for many of these scholars and for financial aid, families must first complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Talk to your school counselor or an IKIC Advisor for more help. I Know I Can offers FREE workshops to help families complete the FAFSA.
- **Save Smart** is a college savings incentive program. Participants in the program have a matched savings account that can earn as much as \$4 for every \$1 saved.

- **I Know I Can Founders' Scholarship** is available to eligible Columbus City Schools seniors enrolling in a full-time, 4-year baccalaureate program at an accredited college. Worth up to \$10,000 and can be renewed for up to 4 years.
- **I Know I Can Dream Big Scholarship** is available to eligible Columbus City Schools seniors enrolling in a full-time, 4-year baccalaureate program at an accredited college, with an unmet need of at least \$3,500. Worth \$3,500.
- **I Know I Can Grant** is available to eligible Columbus City Schools high school seniors or Columbus City Schools graduates currently enrolled in college. Worth up to \$1,200.
- **Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority** offers 19 scholarships for seniors through the Achieving Standards of Excellence Foundation.
- **Kenneth L. Howard Scholarship** through Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity offers scholarships ranging from \$500 - \$2,500.
- **Janice Castle Trailblazer Scholarship** sponsored by Zeta Phi Beta Sorority provides scholarships ranging from \$1,000 - \$2,000.
- **United Negro College Fund** has a variety of scholarships, programs, internships and fellowships.

Our partners at the Columbus Foundation are also helping college-bound seniors find valuable scholarships. The online general scholarship application allows students to apply to more than 90 different scholarships.

Families and students who need help should connect with their I Know I Can advisor or school counselor. More tips can be found on the Resources for CCS High School Students and Families website for great tips <https://sites.google.com/columbus.k12.oh.us/resources-studentsfamilies/home>.

### **NEW MY BROTHER'S KEEPER "WE RISE" SCHOLARSHIP:**

Our partners at the Columbus Department of Neighborhoods are launching the My Brother's Keeper WE RISE scholarship in partnership with local company HOMAGE. The competitive scholarship will help young men of color who participated in My Brother's Keeper programming attend college.

To launch the scholarship fund, HOMAGE will be selling limited edition "We Rise Together" tee shirts during Black History Month. Shirts will go on sale January 15, 2021 and a portion of net proceeds will be used to seed the scholarship fund.

The application for the WE RISE scholarship and more information about the program can be found at [www.MBKVillage.org](http://www.MBKVillage.org).

## **PERSONALIZED BOOK LISTS FROM PARTNERS AT CML**

Columbus City Schools students and staff - and readers of all ages across our city - can get customized book lists created just for them, based on the books they like to read.

Our partners at the Columbus Metropolitan Library have launched a new service called “My Next Read” which offers suggestions on books to read, individualized to the reader’s likes and interest.

An online survey asks a series of questions, starting with the types of book readers often read and the names of books they’ve read recently. An individualized book list is then sent directly to the readers within 2-3 days.

You need a library card to try My Next Read. Then go to [www.columbuslibrary.org/next-read](http://www.columbuslibrary.org/next-read).

## **SPOTLIGHT: TRAVEL FREE WITH SMART COLUMBUS PIVOT APP**

Finding the quickest and cheapest way to get around Columbus - including low-cost and no-cost transit options - is getting easier, with help from our partners at Smart Columbus.

The new Pivot app makes it easy to find the best way to get around using local transit options like COTA bus, ride-hail, bikes, scooters, and even your own bike or car. Pivot is an intuitive and intelligent trip planning app, with all of our city’s transit options in one place, making it easier than ever to plan and pay.

Through the app, you choose the service provider that works best for you to plan and book your trips. You can bus, scooter, bike, walk, carpool or hail a ride. You can even mix and match services in one trip.

Many local residents rely on bus service to commute to work, school and essential resources. Pivot includes bus tracking services to help navigate bus service from COTA, identifying the bus routes that are closest, tracking the bus’s progress in real time, and booking trips and transfers as needed.

Pivot is also a primary feature of the Smart Mobility Hubs, which are located at 6 locations along Cleveland Avenue and the Easton area. Learn more about Smart Columbus’ Pivot app at [www.pivotcolumbus.com](http://www.pivotcolumbus.com).

## **SHARE YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION UPDATES:**

**Please share this Engagement Update with the families and stakeholders you serve.** During this historic school year, 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 our students and engage our families.

**Please share your updates with us at [Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us).**