

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ENGAGEMENT

Update for March 8, 2021

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

PARTNERSHIP WITH COTA PROVIDES HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH FREE BUS PASSES FOR SPRING AND SUMMER:

Through an exciting partnership with the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA), Columbus City Schools students in grade 8-12 will be able to ride COTA at no charge.

Last week, the Columbus Board of Education approved \$216,000 of CARES Act funds to purchase 8,000 COTA passes. These passes are supplemental and don't replace the yellow bus services that are provided to students who qualify for transportation to and from school.

Our partners at the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District were also helpful in securing this great benefit. Students can use these bus passes for extracurricular activities, internships, other enrichment experiences such as summer programs, or to get to and from school if they prefer.

The COTA passes will be active through August 25. Students will use a QR code on their cellphone to board the bus or be given a physical bus pass to access COTA services.

During our recent Virtual Family Engagement Session, our COTA partners had these important suggestions for parents to help prepare students who've never ridden COTA before:

- Locate your student's route and transit schedule using the COTA website. You can also use Google Map to find which routes and stops best serve your destination.
- Familiarize yourself with COTA's hours of operation, schedules, and trip times. Start at the end of your travel plans to make sure you will arrive on time, then work backwards to find out when you need to catch the bus at the beginning of your trip.
- Parents should consider taking a test trip with their children, in case there are any unknowns that students might encounter. Parents ride for only \$2 a trip.
- Download the COTA//Connector app and follow the instructions to set up a profile and access your CCS C-Pass.

COTA is providing school-specific maps showing all of the nearby bus stops and routes around each of our high schools and middle schools, along with regional maps showing how to connect with nearby Learning Extension Centers.

Students who are interested in receiving a free COTA pass should contact their school principal for additional information. If there are questions about the CCS C-Pass, students can call 614.228.4125 or 614.591.4148 or email CpassSupport@columbus.k12.oh.us.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS HELP TRANSFORM SUMMER SCHOOL INTO A NEW SUMMER EXPERIENCE FOR CCS STUDENTS

Community partners are helping Columbus City Schools turn “summer school” into an amazing “summer experience” - and now is the time for families to sign up.

Registration is now open for the 2021 CCS Summer Experience, which is available for all students in grades Pre-K through 12. For students who sign up, the summer programming is designed with hands-on, relevant, and rigorous experiences, delivered in-person with all health and safety protocols in place. This also includes smaller teacher-student ratios to allow for students to be able to attend on a daily basis.

And several of our community partners are joining in to help to fuel this summer of excitement and learning, offering “Mini-Camps” that strengthen foundational knowledge and skills and use design challenges to foster critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, creativity and communication.

FRANKLIN PARK CONSERVATORY: K-2 GROWING & GOING

Younger students will engage in several “Mini-Camps” focused on a variety of themes that include a weekly in-person or live virtual experience with our camp partners at the Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Garden.

These “Mini-Camps” and the field trips to Franklin Park’s Children’s Garden will center around themes such as Pollinators & Habitat Hunters, Jurassic Franklin, Park Pirate Palooza, and Nature Detective. There will also be a Franklin Park Conservatory CCS Family Day in August, open to all Columbus City Schools families.

COSI: 3-5 EXPLORING & EXCELLING

Our partners at COSI are helping with the “Mini-Camps” for our intermediate students. When students visit COSI or join in on a live virtual experience from school, they’ll explore exciting themes such as Gadgets to Go, Exploring Ecology, and Gross Science.

COSI and our Summer Experience teachers have also put together interesting “Mini-Camps” based on NASA’s recent Mission to Mars and the popularity of Marvel and DC Comics with a session on Superhero Science

PAST FOUNDATION: 6-8 PROGRAMMING

The PAST Foundation and our partners at The Ohio State University will be working with middle school students on a wide-range of design thinking challenges, aimed at building up skills in math, entrepreneurship, communication, and project management.

Make sense - “PAST” stands for Partnering Anthropology with Science and Technology, and these design challenges will exposure students to 21st Century career paths with hands-on and engaging lessons that can lead to micro-credentials for students. The topics will include Robotics, Fashion, Additive Manufacturing, E-Sports, Cyber Security, Aviation, Medical, and Urban Agriculture & Culinary.

KORDA INSTITUTE: 9-12 SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPACT

Our partners at OSU are also working with the Korda Institute for Teaching to provide a unique high school summer program focused on social justice.

The classwork is designed around solving real community focused problems, using skills across several different disciplines and aligned learning experiences. Students learn to work together, bring together their individual skills to create team projects.

At the same time, our high schools will also offer Credit Recovery options for students who need to make-up some work to stay on track to graduation and provide access to online College Credit Plus opportunities for students who are working ahead.

SUPPORTING EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS AND SUMMER TEACHERS:

Thanks to several of our partners, our summer school team has been able to create a more inclusive and larger program for our students with special needs, with opportunities for elementary, middle, and high school students. These partnerships include LifeTown, Franklin Park Conservatory, and COSI.

Also, our partners at Ohio State are offering additional support and professional development for our teachers in the Summer Experience. In some case, these support will include micro-credentialing for teachers.

JOIN OUR VIRTUAL SUMMER OPPORTUNITY SESSIONS:

More information about the 2021 CCS Summer Experience - including access to registration through the Parent Portal - can be found online at www.ccssoh.us/summer.

Throughout the month of March, we are dedicating the weekly Tuesday Virtual Family Engagement Sessions to other summer opportunities such as day camps, learning centers, and the fun opportunities that will begin once the school year comes to an end.

During each session, we'll spotlight a variety of different summer programs and activities available for our students and families. Signing up for our Virtual Summer Opportunity Sessions at www.ccssoh.us/rsvp.

WATCH PREVIOUS VIRTUAL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS:

In a year full of change, our Virtual Family Engagement Sessions have been a consistent way for us to share information, gather feedback, and engage with our students, families, staff, and community partners.

And for the last couple of months, Dr. Dixon has had the opportunity to hear directly great feedback and messages from families as part of the Thursday Super Sessions.

You can watch previous sessions - including last Tuesday's session on Summer Opportunities and last Thursday's session on our CCS COTA Pass Partnership - at www.ccssoh.us/Page/8212.

REMINDER: MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS HEAD BACK TO CLASSROOMS STARTING NEXT WEEK

Columbus City Schools is ready to safely welcome middle and high school students back into the classroom, transitioning into a blended learning model (two days of in-class learning combined with three day of at-home remote learning).

Beginning on March 15, students in grades 6-12 will return to in-person learning with a phased-in plan. They will begin blended learning in March and continue in this model in the weeks thereafter:

Week of March 15: All students in grades 6, 11, and 12.

- Cohort A will start Monday, March 15. Cohort B will start Thursday, March 18.

Week of March 22: All students in grades 7, 8, 9, and 10.

- Cohort A will start Monday, March 22. Cohort B will start Thursday, March 25.

REOPENED CCS DIGITAL ACADEMY ENROLLMENT:

Families have until this Friday to consider enrolling their students in grades 6-12 in the CCS Digital Academy, a completely remote and self-paced learning option for students.

Families who are interested in the Digital Academy are strongly encouraged to talk with their student's building administrator and/or school counselor. There are limited course offerings at the middle and high school levels of the Digital Academy. A move to the Digital Academy, with approximately nine weeks remaining in the school year, may result in student scheduling, curriculum alignment, or graduation credit issues.

Students in grades 6-12 currently in the Digital Academy can withdraw and return to their home school for blended learning. Enrollment or withdrawal is open until March 11.

VOLUNTEER WITH US FOR WE CARE WEDNESDAY:

For our Columbus City Schools high school seniors, we are down to the final months leading up to graduation. We want to encourage each Senior to finish strong... and we need your help!

Volunteer for our next We Care Wednesday on March 10 as we check and connect with the families of all of our 12th graders. Our high school teachers, counselors, administrators, and community partners have been doing an amazing job of supporting our seniors. With your help, we can add to those efforts by making sure families are staying connected and providing them with support and additional information on graduation plans.

Sign up to volunteer for our We Care Wednesday at <https://forms.gle/MWd5mU5juVrtuEDS8>.

We want to make sure you've got all the information you need to help our families. We've scheduled a WCW Training Session on Monday at 4:00pm. When you sign up to volunteer, we will send you the Zoom link for our training session.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Make sure your school calendar is up to date. Below are a few upcoming days to keep in mind:

- Wednesday, Mar 24: Records Day (No Classes or Distance Learning)
- April 2 - 11: Spring Break

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.