

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ENGAGEMENT

Update for March 15, 2021

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

SAFELY WELCOMING MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS BACK TO CLASSROOMS THIS WEEK:

Today Columbus City Schools safely welcomes the first cohorts of middle and high school students back into the classroom, transitioning into a blended learning model that has two days of in-class learning combined with three day of at-home remote learning.

Starting with grades 6, 11, and 12, our middle and high school students are returning to in-person learning in a phased-in plan.:

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.

The school day will look much different for students as many return to buildings for the first time in a year. Students and families will notice hand sanitizer stations at every building entrance. Face masks are mandatory, and bright red and white placards line the walls and hallways, designating social distancing six-feet. The smaller cohorts will minimize the number of students in the hallways between classroom changes. Every building has a six-week or more supply of hand sanitizer, rubber gloves, and personal protective equipment (PPE).

We've already welcomed students in all of our elementary grades, along with students identified with complex needs and those who are part of our Career Technical Education programs.

CCS COTA PASS PARTNERSHIP:

Through an exciting partnership with the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA), Columbus City Schools students in grade 8-12 will be eligible for a free COTA pass.

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 (but the passes are supplemental and don't replace the yellow bus services). The COTA passes will be active through August 25.

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.

SENIOR FEST 2021 - COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS HELP CELEBRATE CCS STUDENTS' JOURNEY TO GRADUATION

Senior Fest 2021 is more than an event. It's set to be a city-wide experience and celebration of our Columbus City Schools Class of 201 seniors as they prepare for graduation.

And the festivities kick off this Wednesday with a Live Senior Fest 2021 Virtual Celebration.

Several community partners and volunteers helping organize, sponsor, and coordinate this Senior Fest celebration, including the City of Columbus, The Ohio State University College of Education, the Columbus Urban League, and I Know I Can.

All these celebratory efforts add to the dedicated work of our high school teachers, counselors, and administrators who've been supporting our seniors at the building level.

The Live Senior Fest 2021 Virtual Celebration - Wednesday, March 17, at 1:00 p.m. - will be a seniors-only event featuring live music, special giveaways, special guests, and in-the-moment voting for the design of a special CCS Senior Fest 2021 t-shirt.

If you work with a senior, make sure they've registered for the Virtual Celebration by visiting <http://bit.ly/SENIORFEST21>.

MORE SENIOR RECOGNITIONS PLANNED THIS SPRING:

Thanks to our community partners, we have additional celebrations and recognitions for our graduating seniors planned over the next couple of months.

All seniors will soon receive a special CCS Class of 2021 yard sign for their homes. Our partners have also arranged for every senior to be able to pick up a "swag bag" filled with exclusive CCS Senior Fest 2021 commemorative items.

On social media, our Senior Fest organizers have several "senior spotlight" shout outs planned to highlight graduating seniors who already have plans after high school - with an offer to college, plans for the military, start to a great career. We're taking senior signing days to a whole new level.

CONNECTING WITH SENIORS' FAMILIES FOR WE CARE WEDNESDAY:

Dozens of volunteers from many of our community partners took to the phone lines last week to encourage our seniors to finish strong... and to offer a bit of assistance to families who might be struggling with other needs.

During our latest We Care Wednesday on March 10, our callers checked and connected with the families of our 12th graders. Roughly 700 families received calls, with our volunteers making sure families were staying connected and providing them with additional information on graduation plans. At the same time, our callers also provided information about the 2-1-1 Help Line run by Lutheran Social Services, a helpful community resource for needs outside of school.

GREAT NEWS ABOUT IN-PERSON GRADUATIONS:

For those seniors and families who had not heard the news already, there was also a lot of excitement around plans to have in-person graduation ceremonies this year. Last month, Superintendent Dr. Dixon announced the graduation dates for the Class of 2021 and plans to hold in-person graduation ceremonies June 2-5.

The location of the graduation ceremonies is still to be determined as our teams consider the health and safety protocols that will be necessary to hold safe in-person ceremonies for our graduates and their families. All the graduation ceremonies will be live streamed as well.

JOIN IN THE SENIOR FEST CELEBRATION

Join Columbus City Schools and help us amplify and magnify our seniors and their accomplishment. Senior Fest 2021 – its more than an event – it’s an ongoing celebration of the Class of 2021. If you’re a community partner who wants to donate or volunteer as part of this celebration, contact the CCS Dept. of Engagement at engage@columbus.k12.oh.us.

SCHOOLS OUT - COLUMBUS REC AND PARKS FOCUSED ON SPRING BREAK ACTIVITIES FOR CCS STUDENTS AND FAMILIES:

Spring Break is fast approaching and many Columbus City Schools families will be looking for something for children to do over the ten-day break from April 2 - 11.

Our partners at Columbus Recreation and Parks have updated their “School’s Out” online listing of activities - many of them at free or reduced costs - to keep young people active and engaged during the time away from school. Children ages 6-12 can sign up for School’s Out at one of the city’s 29 community centers to enjoy arts and crafts, sports clinics, group games, cooking classes, field trips, and much more.

Sign up at www.bit.ly/CRPD-Register.

SEVERAL PARTNERS SHOWCASE SUMMER FUN ACTIVITIES AND CAMPS DURING VIRTUAL SUMMER OPPORTUNITY SESSIONS:

Throughout the month of March, we are dedicating the weekly Tuesday Virtual Family Engagement Sessions to exciting summer opportunities for our Columbus children... everything from summer school, day camps, learning centers, and fun opportunities that will begin once the school year comes to an end.

During these Summer Opportunity Sessions, we’re spotlighting a variety of different community partners and summer programs. You definitely don’t want to miss out. Many of our partners have offered discounts or giveaways during the session.

You can watch previous Summer Opportunity Sessions and connect with our community partners online at <https://sites.google.com/columbus.k12.oh.us/ccs-summer/home>.



ENROLL NOW IN THE CCS SUMMER EXPERIENCE:

Registration is also open for the 2021 CCS Summer Experience, which is available for free all CCS students in grades Pre-K through 12.

This “summer school” is an opportunity for students to accelerate or recover credits. The need for a rich summer experience is critical now more than ever. The District’s focus this summer will be on engagement and empowerment for students and educators. Programs run for six weeks beginning on June 14.

The in-person, daily summer programming is designed with hands-on, relevant, and rigorous experiences, delivered in our schools and at several “mini camp” location with all health and safety protocols in place.

CCS is collaborating with a number of community partners to enhance the 2021 Summer Experience program including COSI, the Franklin Park Conservatory, The Ohio State University, and Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks.

The CCS Summer Experience will focus on fundamental knowledge and skills that include well-rounded content, leadership, reasoning, and social-emotional learning. With a smaller teacher-to-student ratio and following all health and safety protocols, the District’s goal is to provide in-person learning at five high schools, 10 middle schools, and 13 elementary schools.

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

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.