

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ENGAGEMENT

Update for December 14, 2020

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

WE CARE WEDNESDAY - DISTRICT'S AMBITIOUS PLAN TO DIRECTLY CALL ALL CCS FAMILIES TO 'CHECK AND CONNCT':

In Columbus City Schools, we want every student and family to know that they are valued and that we care... on Wednesdays and every day of the week.

During this time of remote learning and closed school buildings, our teachers and staff have found creative ways to connect with students during online classes or with parents through virtual community meetings. Despite all these amazing efforts, we know that the absence of one-on-one direct connections can often leave our young people and families feeling isolated and disengaged, especially as we enter our Winter Break and close out the 2020 calendar year.

Several of our schools stay connected to students and have done their own direct outreach to families. Now, we hope to transform those amazing school-based efforts into a fuller district-wide approach to "check and connect" with all of our families. That's why we are undertaking an ambitious plan to directly connect with every one of our students' families on one evening.

OUR FIRST WE CARE WEDNESDAY - DECEMBER 16:

We are dedicating Wednesday, December 16, as "We Care Wednesday" and planning to call EVERY student household in our district. These "Check & Connect" calls to our roughly 30,000 homes will allow us to hear directly from our families, check on their well-being, answer questions, and connect them with community resources and supports if needed.

CCS families should receive a call on Wednesday between the hours of 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. We're hoping all families will take a moment to chat with the CCS staff person or community partner who calls. The callers won't ask for personal information; families should feel free to share their experiences and the challenges they may be facing to stay engaged and connected.

PARTNERING WITH LSS 211 CENTRAL OHIO:

We're working with our partners at Lutheran Social Services and the 2-1-1 community resource hotline to help connect families who need essential supports - such as food, shelter, or utility assistance - to local organizations who can help, as well as those who offer access to other services such as free health care, transportation, and holiday help.

Families who need assistance of any kind - or if our callers are unable to reach them during our We Care Wednesday calls on December 16 - should call 2-1-1 (or 614-221-2255) to be connected with help. You can also go online to <https://lssnetworkofhope.org/211centralohio>. There's also an Emergency Food hotline at 614-341-2282 (call) or 614-702-7772 (text).



Call **2-1-1** to get help today

LSS 211 Central Ohio is a vital service that connects people to essential resources like **FOOD, CLOTHING AND SHELTER**. Additionally, we can also help connect people to resources beyond the essential ones that effect daily life. *These include:*

- UTILITY PAYMENT ASSISTANCE
- MINOR HOME REPAIR PROGRAMS
- MATERIAL ASSISTANCE
- TRANSPORTATION EXPENSE ASSISTANCE
- EMERGENCY SHELTER CLEARINGHOUSE

To view a full list of resources, visit issnetworkofhope.org/211centralohio.

how to access

CALL:
Dial **2-1-1** or **614-221-2255**

VISIT US AT:
[Issnetworkofhope.org/211centralohio](https://issnetworkofhope.org/211centralohio)

DOWNLOAD APP:
211 Central Ohio
(iPhone/Android)

EMERGENCY FOOD:
Call: 614-341-2282
Text: 614-702-7772
Chat: [Issnetworkofhope.org/211centralohio](https://issnetworkofhope.org/211centralohio)

CAP 4 KIDS WEBSITE ALSO OFFERS LISTS OF ASSISTS:

The Children's Advocacy Project for Columbus (CAP 4 KIDS) is designed to help bridge the gap between the many quality social service agencies in the community and the families who need their help the most.

On the group's website - found at <https://cap4kids.org/columbus> - families can links to many community agencies that exist to improve the lives of children and families, with reliable, up-to-date information about resources in the Columbus area for children and families.

CAP 4 KIDS is managed by our partners at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

QUICK LISTS OF HOLIDAY HELP:

The Human Service Chamber of Franklin County represents more than 100 health and human services nonprofits in the Columbus Region. Many of the organization within the Chamber are offering help this holiday season.

Families in the Columbus area who need assistance - as well as those who want to share their generosity and help other this holiday season - are encouraged to check out the listing online at <https://humanservicechamber.org/holiday-drives-2020>.

CITY OF COLUMBUS 3-1-1 OFFERS HELP WITH CITY SERVICES:

The City of Columbus Service Center also provides a way to submit requests for non-emergency city services and assistance (include help with bill payment). You can dial 3-1-1 or (614) 645-3111 Monday through Friday from 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m. or email 311@columbus.gov.

LEARNING EXTENSION CENTERS DURING WINTER BREAK:

Many of our community partners who are hosting Learning Extension Centers (LECs) - safe, adult-supervised, welcoming spaces where students have free access to internet, learning devices, and school supplies to assist them in their daily remote learning routine - will continue to offer support during the upcoming Winter Break.

Availability will vary from site to site, so it's important for families to take time this week, before Winter Break begins next week, to check with the LEC operator. Some LECs have also made changes to their hours or number of seats available for students in response to the City's stay-at-home health order.

INTERACTIVE LOCATOR MAP NOW AVAILABLE:

To make it easy for families to find the LEC closest to home, we have an interactive locator map at www.ccsosoh.us/LearningExtensionCenters. In addition to using home address, the map can filter LECs by neighborhood, grade levels served, and the days and hours of operation. The map also includes COTA bus routes for families who may need transportation assistance.

STUDENTS MAKING MUSIC AT HOME WITH JAZZ ARTS GROUP:

During our recent Virtual Family Engagement Session, our music partners at the Columbus Jazz Arts Group shared free opportunities for young musicians to connect with education programs, join jam sessions, and receive free or discounted concert tickets.

Registration is now open for the Spring 2021 Columbus Youth Jazz Program, with plans for a full semester of virtual sessions. Instrumentalists and vocalists will take part in lessons, view and interact with professional artists during live performances, participate in masterclasses, and learn to play tunes every jazz musician needs to know.

Beginning with an informal audition on January 3rd, participants in the Youth Jazz Program will meet every Sunday through the spring semester virtually on Zoom. The Youth Jazz Program is geared toward musicians in grades 7-12. Each student receives a guidebook, virtual materials, playlists and more. No matter experience level, the program is designed to keep young artists playing and developing.

New for the Spring semester, participants will receive complimentary access to JAG TV, Jazz Arts Group's "virtual stage" for its 2021 performances, including PBJ & Jazz, Jazz at the Lincoln, and Jazz at the Southern.

Typically, this 18-week semester of the Columbus Youth Jazz program would be \$125 per participant, but the Jazz Arts Group is generously offering the program as "Pay What You Can" and giving all Columbus students an opportunity to play music together, regardless of their financial situation.

More information on the Columbus Jazz Youth Program is at www.jazzartsgroup.org/youthjazz.

SPECIAL \$5 PBJ & JAZZ CONCERT FOR COLUMBUS FAMILIES:

The Jazz Arts Groups wants to help families get into the holiday spirit with music inspired by Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Frank Sinatra & Billie Holiday. Leading a quintet of trailblazing women in jazz from around Ohio, vocalist Rachel Azbell will showcase several holiday favorites in a special PBJ & Jazz concert this Saturday, December 19, starting at 11:00 a.m.

PBJ & Jazz concerts are 45-minute long interactive concerts designed to introduce jazz and American music to young children and their families. Featuring some of Columbus' finest musicians and ensembles, PBJ & Jazz concerts are a great introduction to live music for the youngest audience member.

All PBJ & Jazz concerts can be viewed live online at JAG TV. The cost is \$5. Get your tickets at www.jazzartsgroup.org/event/pbj-jazz-rachel-azbell-quintet.

DEADLINE EXTENDED TO ENROLL IN CCS DIGITAL ACADEMY:

The deadline to enroll in the new CCS Digital Academy has been extended for families who are interested in switching to the self-paced, totally-virtual option. The registration period for transitioning to the remote program - or to remain in the CCS Digital Academy for the second semester - now runs through December 14.

The enrollment form can be accessed through the parent portal. Families can also use the parent portal to switch from the Digital Academy back to the remote learning model at their child's home school.

Registering for the CCS Digital Academy is for a full second semester commitment, running from January 20 through June 3. Remember, the CCS Digital Academy is self-paced, student-led, with teacher supervision and flexibility, for students in Kindergarten through 12th Grade. The CCS Digital Academy is staffed by certified CCS teachers and led by CCS administrators.

CLINTONVILLE GO PUBLIC OFFERS TEACHER GRANTS

Our community partners at Clintonville Go Public are offering teachers in the Whetstone pathway grants of up to \$500 to support distance learning initiatives.

Applicants must be teachers, administrators, staff, or PTA/PTSO officers at a Whetstone Pathway school: Clinton Elementary, Colerain Elementary, Como Elementary, Hubbard Elementary, Indian Springs Elementary, Salem Elementary, Weinland Park Elementary, Dominion Middle School, and Whetstone High School.

Requests should be for items that are not otherwise available through district, school or PTA/PTSO funding. There is a \$500 cap for grant requests.

Questions can be sent to clintonvillegopublic@gmail.com. The application deadline is December 31. To apply, visit <https://forms.gle/mQD6BmzqFVpQIAwo6>.



READY FOR WINTER BREAK:

It's our final week of school before the start of the Winter Break. There are no classes in from December 21 through January 1. Students return to class on January 4.

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.