

The Columbus Gifted Academy

Active Learners. Innovative Thinkers. Compassionate Leaders.



Scholar-Parent Handbook
2020-2021



COLUMBUS
CITY SCHOOLS

VISION STATEMENT

- A world-class model of public education that prepares members of our communities to reach their full potential.

MISSION STATEMENT

- Each student is highly-educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community.

DISTRICT GOALS

- Columbus City School has established District-wide goals that are focused on three key principles:
 1. Each student reaches the student's full potential; to continue education, serve in the military, go to college, start a business, and enter the workforce as a lifelong learner.
 2. The District creates safe, student-centered, innovative learning environments and recruits, develops, and retains world-class talent.
 3. The District is accountable to our communities and customers; confidence in the District is maintained through strategic, responsible and transparent leadership.

Columbus Gifted Academy Purpose:

To engage, enrich, and empower gifted learners through unique, rigorous, self-directed educational experiences in a collaborative learning environment that supports the whole child within and beyond the classroom.

Staff Name	Position
Nicole Robinson	3 rd Grade
Traci Palmore	3 rd Grade
Ginny Loudin	3 rd Grade
Christina Vermillion	3 rd Grade
Lisa Liedtke/Tiffany Tripp	4 th Grade
Rebekah Chonjo-Boateng	4 th Grade
Julie Crosby	4 th Grade
Edna Marshall	4 th Grade
Stephanie Stegall	5 th Grade
Kelly Aitken	5 th Grade
John Pettibone	5 th Grade
Deborah Ferrell	5 th Grade
Sherry Daniel	6 th , 7 th , 8 th Interdisciplinary Studies
Carolyn Willis	6 th Grade English Language Arts
Kira Dolley	6 th Grade Social Studies
Amy Genter	6 th Grade Math
Elise Bodnyk	6 th Grade Science
Kurt McKibben	7 th Grade Math
Michael Eicher	7 th Grade Science
Andrew Cashin	7 th Grade Social Studies
Dyren Billups-Adams	7 th Grade English Language Arts/OCCMAS
Matt Hall	8 th Grade Science
Laurel Murphy	8 th Grade English Language Arts
Rebecca Shaffer	8 th Grade Social Studies
Anastasia Stuntz	8 th Grade Math
Anne Bowen	Intervention Specialist
Amanda McClelland	Counselor
Yolanda Plair	Counselor
Mildred Poindexter	Psychologist
Michelle Alder	Middle School Art
John Vance	Elementary School Art
Christopher Ross	Instrumental Music
Scott Douglas	Instrumental Music
Phillip Adams	Elementary School Vocal Music
Allison Boyer	Elementary School Vocal Music
Sam Scillia	Middle School Physical Education
Krista Jacob	Elementary School Physical Education
Scott Secrest	Occupational Therapist
Heather Schriver	Physical Therapist
Erin Lacey	Speech

Megan McGonigle	Librarian
Sarah Bartczak	Nurse
Jason Jennings	Day Custodian
Locia Bell	Night Custodian
Michael Latham	Food Service Manager
Paulette Maye	Food Service Cook
Carol Jane	Food Service Worker
Diana Nehrkorn	Treasurer
Maureen Athey	Secretary
Amanda Reidenbaugh	Columbus Gifted Academy Director
Charlotte Bell	Assistant Principal

Administrative Team



Amanda Reidenbaugh, Director



Charlotte Bell, Assistant Principal

Office Staff



Ms. Athey



Sarah Bartczak, Nurse

Student Support Staff



Megan Marshall, Social Worker



Annie Bowen, Intervention Specialist

Not Pictured: Yolanda Plair, Amanda McClelland

3rd Grade Team



Nicole Robinson



Ginny Loudon



Traci Palmore



Christine Vermilion

4th Grade Team



Lisa Liedtke



Tiffany Tripp



Rebekah Chonjo-Boateng.



Julie Crosby



Edna Marshall

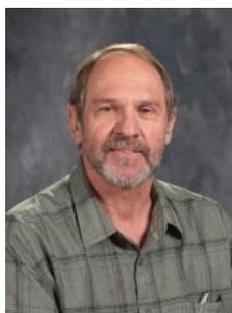
5th Grade Team



Stephanie Stegall



Kelly Aitken



Mike Pettibone

Not pictured: Deborah Ferrell

6th Grade Team



Carolyn Willis, ELA



Kira Dolley, Social Studies.



Amy Genter, Math



Elise Bodnyk, Science

7th Grade Team



Andrew Cashin, Social Studies.



Dyren Billups-Adams ELA/OCCMAS

Not Pictured: Kurt McKibben, Ronda Uresti-Forman

8th Grade Team



Matt Hall, Science



Laurel Murphy, ELA



Rebecca Shaffer, Social Studies



Anastasia Stuntz, Math

Library



Megan McGonigle

Unified Arts



Michelle Alder, MS Visual Art



John Vance, ES Visual Art



Christopher Ross, MS Instrumental Music



Scott Douglas, ES Instrumental Music

Not Pictured: Colby Roseberry, Allison Boyer, Phillip Adams

Physical Education



Sam Scillia, MS Physical Education

Not Pictured: Krista Jacobs

Habits of a Scholar

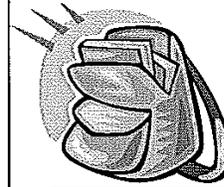
Thirst for Knowledge



Scholars know there is always more to learn.

Preparation

Scholars are prepared and ready with all the necessary tools for the job.



Ponder

Scholars take time to think about what they are learning.



Multiple Perspectives

Scholars look at the world from many different viewpoints.



Goal Setting



Scholars set long-term and short-term goals in life.

Risk Taking

Scholars take intellectual risks and think outside the box.



Excellence

Scholars take pride in their work and seek excellence.



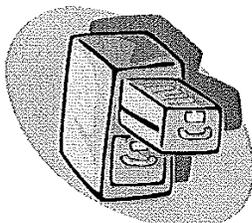
Intellectual Curiosity

Scholars are curious about learning, willing to ask questions and seek answers.



Save Ideas

Scholars organize their learning and save ideas.



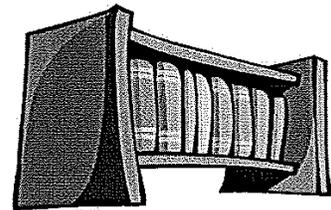
Perseverance

Scholars don't give up. They keep going, even when the work is hard.



Varied Resources

Scholars use varied resources when learning.



Scholar Responsibilities

The Columbus Gifted Academy is a self-contained program dedicated to leading, teaching and loving gifted learners. Building on the history of the ECLIPSE program, it includes a collection of self-contained, gifted classrooms for students identified as gifted in Grades 3-8. The program offers scholars the opportunity to participate in accelerated curricular opportunities throughout the school day.

Our scholars have certain responsibilities, both as citizens and as members of the Columbus Gifted Academy Phoenix Community. These responsibilities must be met at all school functions whether the scholar is in the school building or traveling to and from school via transportation provided by the school system. In order to guarantee student and parent rights, each person will assume responsibility for his or her own behavior, and refrain from infringing upon the rights of others. All scholars are expected to:

- be engaged as active participants in the learning process. Scholars should attend school on time each day;
- have respect for themselves and conduct themselves in ways that will bring respect to their families, their school, and to the community;
- have respect for the authority school personnel are given by law to ensure that learning proceeds in an orderly, safe environment;
- have respect for adults, peers and the rights and personal property of others;
- not bring materials or objects prohibited by law or school policy to school or school activities;
- dress appropriately for school. The school will regulate dress and grooming in the interest of health, safety and effective instruction. Improper dress will be defined on an individual basis according to the Columbus City Schools dress code;
- follow school policies for positive behavior, as well as learn the rewards and consequences of their actions.

Anti-Harassment Policy

On April 7, 1998, the Board of Education adopted a policy that in accordance with federal and state laws and district policy, the Columbus City School district will not tolerate harassment against any scholar or staff member on the basis of gender, race, national origin, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation. Harassment shall be defined as slurs, jokes, intimidation, or any verbal or physical attack directed at an individual's gender, race, national origin, religion, age, disability or sexual orientation.

The Phoenix Five

The Columbus Gifted Academy learning community is a robust, respectful learning environment. To that end, the following are expectations for student behavior:

CGA Scholars are:

Safe

Kind

Respectful

Responsible

Ready to Learn (at all times!)

Types of Infractions:

1. Self (e.g. harmful behavior, fighting, truancy, use of threatening language or profanity, cheating)
2. Peers (e.g. threats to others, disruption of the learning environment, coercion, verbal and/or physical assaults to others)
3. Adults (e.g. disrespect, insubordination, verbal or physical assaults)
4. Property (e.g. theft, breakage)

Interventions will be designed to promote a positive adherence to these principles. Parent involvement will be highly solicited.

Possible:

1. Redirection
2. Development of a Student Behavior Plan
3. Conference with Parents, Scholar, and Teacher
4. Removal of a Privilege (such as bus ridership or recess)
5. Removal from Room for Specified Time
6. School Suspension
7. Expulsion

Working together as a team (scholar, family, teacher, and director) behavior issues will be handled according to the following factors:

1. Age of the child
2. Mitigating circumstances
3. Previous behavior
4. Attitude

The Columbus City Schools' Guide to Student Success prescribes the rules and regulations for management, discipline, suspension and expulsion of scholars. These rules are intended to promote a positive atmosphere within the school that is conducive to learning and ensures the protection of students' rights. This will be provided to you during the first week of school. Additional copies may be requested from the main office.

Problem-Solving Process

In the event you perceive a problem with the school and/or services and/or school environment being provided, please follow this process:

1. Act early, before the problem becomes a major one.
2. Communicate directly with the person involved (teacher, support staff, director).
3. Put your thoughts down in writing if you can. Be as specific as you can.
4. Suggest possible solutions to the problem.
5. Write down the possible solutions suggested by school staff.
6. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of potential solutions with school personnel.
7. Collectively decide upon the best course of action.
8. Set a specific time to evaluate the suggested problem resolutions.
9. If the problem is not resolved, repeat process or contact Amanda Reidenbaugh, Director.

PLEASE – Act Early

Be Specific

Be Honest

Be Patient

We can work out anything, if we work **together!**

Daily Start Time

The school day will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 3:30 p.m. Breakfast will be served from 8:30 a.m. until 8:55 a.m. Scholars are not permitted to arrive before 8:30 a.m. As staff is not yet on duty, we are unable to provide supervision prior to that time, and we do not have a latchkey program. We will begin dismissing scholars from the cafeteria at 8:55 a.m. Classes will begin on time each day at 9:00 a.m.

Arrival and Dismissal

Scholar Drop Off and Dismissal (see map on back)

- Buses will enter the neighborhood from 5th Ave. by turning SOUTH on Dennison Avenue. Buses will drop off scholars along W. Greenwood Avenue and exit EAST on Denison Avenue turning South at Access Way toward 4th Avenue. Buses will exit the neighborhood via 4th Avenue.
- Cars will enter the neighborhood via W. 4th Ave. then turn SOUTH on Apollo Place. Parents will drop off and pick up scholars at the front of the school along Apollo Place, then continue traveling SOUTH on Apollo Place to exit the neighborhood via 3rd Avenue.
- During the school day (9:30-3), please use the front entrance on W. 4th Avenue

Please consider:

- Whenever possible, utilize CCS bus transportation or neighborhood carpools to reduce the number of cars in the area.
- Residents may be trying to leave or return to their homes. Please make room as possible for them to do so.
- When dropping off or picking up, please do so quickly to keep the flow of traffic moving through the neighborhood.
- If you need to enter the building with your child, please park in a designated space.
- Please do not drive on W. Greenwood Ave. This will create a traffic jam with the buses.

For the safety of all children, the drop-off process must be continuous – Stop, Drop, and Go. There will no available parking on school grounds during the morning.

Families picking up scholars during the school day are to use the school's front entrance on W. 4th Avenue. Since we are focused on instruction, early sign out of scholars is discouraged and is not to occur after 3:00 p.m. In the case that early sign out becomes necessary, please provide notice to both your child's teacher and the main office with a note in advance.

Scholars walking to/from school will enter the building at the cafeteria doors on Dennison Avenue and proceed directly to breakfast.

*There is to be absolutely NO parking at Thompson Recreation Center/Hunter Pool for any reason. This includes school events.

School Attendance

The Board of Education has established the following policy: Schools shall keep record of every excused and unexcused absence of each scholar. Schools shall notify parents and guardians of the expectation that the parent or guardian **MUST** report the scholar's absence to the school at 365-6961 for each day a child is absent or tardy. In the event that such a report is not made, school officials shall notify the parent/guardian of the absence. If no report of absence and no written excuse is received, the absence shall be deemed unexcused.

Chronic and habitual truancy may result in court intervention. Additionally, a student who has unexcused absenteeism in excess of 10% of the required school seat time may fail a grade or course.

The following are acceptable excuses for scholar absence:

1. Personal illness or quarantine
2. Illness or death of an immediate household member
3. Emergencies or any other occurrences or situations which, in the judgment of the director, may necessitate an absence from school as a last resort
4. Religious Holidays
5. Superintendent's Designation

At Columbus Gifted Academy, a parent or doctor note is required each time a scholar has been absent from school. The note should include the date(s) of absence, the reason for the absence, and the parent's signature. If your child is to stay at home for any reason, we ask that you notify the office by calling 365-6961. If we do not receive a note or a phone call, your child's absence will not be excused.

House Bill 410 – Truancy Law Revisions

This bill changes the definition of 'habitual truant' to any student who is absent without legitimate excuse for 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in one school month or 72 or more hours in one school year. It also requires notification to the student's parent/guardian of the student's absences (both excused and unexcused) once they reach 38 or more hours in one school month or 65 or more hours in one school year. Students that meet these criteria must be assigned to an attendance intervention team within ten days. The

attendance team must meet within 14 school days and must develop an intervention plan to reduce or eliminate future absences, as well as connect the scholar and family to appropriate outside agencies and resources. A complaint may be filed with the juvenile court no later than 61 days after the development of the plan, if the student fails to participate or make satisfactory progress.

The Ohio General Assembly and Department of Education are emphasizing the importance that missing any school is a loss of instruction. Furthermore, the State is starting to monitor our chronic absenteeism rate, which does not differentiate between excused, unexcused, and parent authorized absences. Please make attendance a priority and schedule appointments and family vacations on non-attendance days or before or after the school day. It is critical scholars are on time every day and stay for the entire day of learning.

Emergencies

Families are encouraged to log in to the Infinite Campus Parent Portal to update their residential and emergency contact information each year. You will receive your Parent Portal Activation Code during the first days of school. Please be sure all residential and emergency contact information is accurate in the Infinite Campus system. Please update this information if it should change during the school year. Incorrect telephone numbers can delay life-saving treatment. Parents or guardians will be contacted when any emergency treatment is provided. In addition, scholars will not be permitted to attend off campus visits/field trips without emergency information on file.

Please make arrangements for friends or relatives to provide transportation if you are unable to come to school in the event of an emergency. List their names and contact information in the emergency information section of Infinite Campus. Children will only be released to those individuals listed as emergency contacts. If anyone who is not specified on the emergency card will be picking up your child, you must notify the office. Please ask those picking up your child to carry a photo I.D. The office reserves the right to request photo identification.

School staff have been trained and will administer common first aid: ice, Band-Aids, and compresses may be applied. No medication will be administered unless specified by a physician.

Fire, Tornado and Safe School Drills

Fire, tornado, and safe school drills are conducted on a regular basis to ensure safety in all situations. Since safety is our primary concern, scholars must pay strict attention to the instructions and follow exact directions. Safe school drills are conducted to prepare children in the event an intruder would enter the school building.

Emergency Closing

On occasion, the school will be closed on days other than those indicated on the school calendar. Weather conditions such as extreme heat, flooding, ice, and snow may necessitate closing schools. Additionally, in the event of a building emergency, such as a gas, electric, heating, or water malfunction, the school may need to be closed.

All school-closing decisions involving the entire school district are made by central office administration. Notices are publicized on major radio and television stations. On inclement weather days, please watch the news for specific information. Closings are also listed on the following websites:

www.ccsok.us

www.wbns10tv.com

www.nbc4i.com

www.wsyx6.com

School closing decisions involving building safety will also be made by district administrators. If school has not started, notices will be publicized by the radio and television media. If the building is closed during the school day, attempts will be made to contact parents or other designees. Contact information for parents and other designees should be regularly updated. **Every family should have an emergency plan for school closings.**

Requests for Documentation

Documents and forms that are to be completed by school personnel require 24 hours' notice. Thank you in advance for your patience and consideration.

Food Service Program

Columbus Gifted Academy has a breakfast and hot lunch program. All CCS scholars are eligible to take advantage of the **FREE** breakfast and lunch program.

***Parents/Guardians – Due to increase of student allergies in CCS, no foods or snacks are to be taken to classrooms (including the cafeteria) without clearance through school nurse or director. In addition, parents are asked not to bring or send in treats for their child’s birthday or other personal occasions. Scholars marking these occasions may receive a card from the office, as well as the opportunity to select a book from the Birthday Bookshelf.**

Also, please advise your scholar not to share his/her packed lunches with other scholars. Thank you.

School Bell Schedule – 2018-19

8:30 AM	Breakfast Begins
9:00 AM	Students Dismissed to Class
9:05 AM	ALL CLASSES BEGIN
11:30 AM	Lunch Session
12:15 PM	Lunch Session
3:30 PM	School Dismissal

Guidelines For Visitation

Parents are welcome to visit Columbus Gifted Academy and their scholar’s classroom(s) to observe our school’s instructional program. In order to preserve the optimum learning atmosphere, we ask that all visitors to the school follow these guidelines:

1. If you would like to visit a classroom, please schedule an appointment with your child’s teacher for the date, time, and purpose of your visit **at least 24 hours in advance**, so that we may accommodate your specific needs.
2. **FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY REASONS, EVEN IF WE KNOW YOU, WE ARE REQUIRED BY COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS TO HAVE YOU REPORT TO THE OFFICE, SIGN IN USING THE LOBBYGUARD SYSTEM AND OBTAIN A VISITOR’S PASS BEFORE GOING TO THE CLASSROOM.** The office will notify the classroom teacher of your visit.
3. Report directly to your designated location. Do not disrupt instruction by roaming the hallways, and leave immediately once visitation has ended.
4. Please do not bring other children with you for classroom visitations.

5. To protect privacy of visitors, students and staff, cell phones/tablets are not to be used in the presence of scholars.
6. If you anticipate needing to talk with other staff, please contact them to arrange a time to do so during your visit or during another time.

Following these simple guidelines will ensure a positive visit for you, your child, his/her classmates, and school staff. Thank you for your cooperation.

Disruption on or Near School Property

ORDINANCE NO. 1316-19

"2327.015 - Disorderly conduct, interference with school activities:

No person shall go upon any school property within the City of Columbus and make or do any offensive act, utterance, gesture, or display which tends to disrupt or interfere with educational classes or social and athletic activities then in progress."

"23127.16 - Distributing printed matter near schools:

No person shall sell or offer for sale, or give or offer to give or attempt in any manner to distribute any pamphlets, circulars or other printed matter which is directed at inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to incite and produce such action, at any entrance or exit to any school house, school athletic field or within 100 feet of any school property."

Campus Safety

Families and scholars are encouraged to use heightened awareness at all times while on school grounds. Please travel with a buddy and stay alert. If you see something, say something. Please alert school personnel of anything that concerns you or contact 1-844-SAFEROH (723-3764).

Health Services

Columbus Gifted Academy has the services of a registered nurse at least two days per week. Duties include checking immunization records to be sure all children are in compliance with state law. She/he is happy to talk with you regarding any health concerns that may affect your child's performance. Please call the school office for an appointment. When your child is at school, the school nurse will be responsible for monitoring his/her health condition. Students

will have routine health screenings at school. Health referrals, such as vision or dental, will be sent home as needed.

Scholars may be permitted to use prescribed medication and over-the-counter drugs (for example, Advil, cough medication, etc.) only when the following have been received:

1. A physician's verification of the necessity for the medication to be taken during school hours and identification of the medication, dosage, and the time interval it is to be taken.
2. A prescribed medication authorization form completed and signed by the parent or guardian.

Use of Drugs and Alcohol

Scholars are not permitted to use drugs, alcohol or tobacco in any form (with the exception of prescribed medication with appropriate physician's verification on file) in school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-controlled vehicles. No smoking is permitted on school property at any time.

Illness at School

When a child becomes ill at school, the school secretary, nurse, or principal will contact the parent or other emergency contact person(s). **It is expected that the family's designee will come to school to take the scholar home as soon as possible.** Arrangements should be made by each family to anticipate this situation.

Scholars may be determined ill if they exhibit:

- Vomiting
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
- Ear Infections
- Diarrhea
- Head Lice
- Fever of 100 or More
- Excessive Sleepiness
- Severe Headache
- Communicable Skin Disease
- Others at the Nurse's or Director's Discretion

PLEASE NOTE: If a child is sent home for any of these symptoms, he/she should not return to school until at least 24 hours after the fever has completely cleared without medication, or 24 to 48 hours after treatment, as directed by your physician.

Children displaying illness at school will be isolated in the office with adult supervision until a parent or the family's designee picks up the child. If a child is mildly ill, but not running a fever or exhibiting the symptoms listed above, he/she will be allowed to remain in class until he/she feels too ill to participate. In the event a scholar feels too ill to participate, a parent will be contacted.

We want every scholar engaged and learning every day, but not if he/she is too sick. In fairness to peers and staff, please keep your scholar home if he/she is ill.

The criterion for readmission of a child after a serious illness includes written permission of the doctor or permission of the school nurse and/or director. The decision of the school nurse and/or director will be based upon the scholar's condition at the time of readmission, as well as the reason for the absence.

Immunizations

According to Ohio law, all children entering the Columbus City Schools should be appropriately immunized. Parents are required to submit official documentation of immunization to the school prior to the beginning of classes. A fourteen day (14) grace period will be allowed for the completion of immunizations not current at the start of the school year. Children are not allowed to attend school if they are not immunized.

All children from outside the United States are required to have a tuberculin skin test prior to enrollment.

Playground Rules

We will not attempt to list every rule, however here are some basic guidelines that will promote a safe, enjoyable atmosphere for everyone:

- Once scholars come to school, they are not leave school grounds without the permission of a parent or the director, unless in the event of a scheduled field trip or other activity.
- Scholars must stay in designated playground areas (inside of fence, out of stairwells).
- Fighting, throwing snowballs, and stone-throwing are not permitted.
- Jumping on other children, lifting others in any way, wrestling, tripping, and other rough play is prohibited.

- Walk in mulched areas. Use caution.
- Be a good sport. Play games according to CGA Rules.
- Keep your hands to yourself. Do not bother others.
- Share equipment and return it to the proper areas at the close of recess.
- Accept positive direction from the entire staff. We are here to help you, watch you grow, and have fun learning.
- Freeze at first whistle. Walk to line or door at second whistle.
- Respect the rules and regulations necessary for the orderly operation of the school.
- Respect school property, as well as the property and rights of others, at all times.
- Do not use obscene or abusive language at any time. This includes name-calling.
- All toys should be left at home, unless requested by the classroom teacher.
- NO WEAPONS – Any object which can be used to intimidate or injure another individual is considered a weapon.

Our foremost concern at Columbus Gifted Academy is **the safety of our scholars.**

Bus Rules

The bus driver is responsible for the management and safety of scholars and is responsible for enforcing rules. Any disruptive or disorderly scholar shall be reported to the director. The director will be responsible for notifying parents and explaining to them that continued disruptive or disorderly conduct will result in removal from the school bus.

Bus rules include:

- Remain in assigned seat; changing from seat to seat while the bus is in motion is prohibited.
- Scholars must ride their assigned bus.
- A respectful level of conversation must be maintained. Excessive noise is prohibited.
- At railroad crossings and other danger points, quiet must be maintained.
- A scholar's extension of any part(s) of his/her body through the window is prohibited.
- When exiting the school bus, scholars must observe rules for crossing streets.
- Throwing objects or spitting from bus windows is prohibited.
- Scholars will refrain from eating, drinking, or littering on the school bus.
- Scholars are to follow directions given by the bus driver at all times.
- Animals, pets or glass containers may not be transported on the bus.
- Parents will assume all responsibility for any damage or marking on the bus by the scholar.

- Scholars will speak kindly and respectfully at all times; profanity is prohibited.
- Scholars should arrive on time at designated stops; school buses will not wait for tardy scholars.

Contact the CCS Transportation Department at 365-5074 for questions about bus routes and late buses.

Child Abuse and Neglect

The law of the State of Ohio *requires* that school personnel who suspect a child is the victim of abuse or neglect report that suspicion to the county children’s services board for investigation.

Our staff has been trained in recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect and is aware of those guidelines set forth by the Columbus City Schools. We will follow the procedures for reporting to children’s services boards promptly and completely when such action is necessary.

Counselor

Our school counselor is available to work with classrooms, with individual scholars, and with teachers and parents to help scholars become successful learners and leaders. If you would like to speak with the school counselor, please contact her via email or the main office.

Personal Dress

Parents should ensure that children are appropriately dressed for the professional learning environment. The school has the right to regulate dress and grooming in the interest of health, safety, and effective instruction. Improper dress will be defined on an individual basis according to the Columbus City Schools’ dress code.

The Columbus Gifted Academy does not have a uniform, though we do follow the Columbus City Schools’ dress code. You can access this information in the CCS Guide to Student Success. Children should be dressed appropriately for the season of the year and specific daily weather conditions. Rubber-soled shoes are the safest and will be needed for physical education classes. *No sandals, please!* Scholars will have outdoor recess unless weather conditions or temperatures are so severe (**below 22 degrees Fahrenheit with wind chill**) as to be unsafe. During cold weather, scholars should wear:

Warm Coats	Gloves	Sweaters
Pants or Tights	Hats	Boots

Your scholar may become upset if he/she is not allowed to go outside because of inappropriate clothing, so please be attentive to weather conditions.

For safety reasons, scholars are required to wear athletic shoes during physical education classes.

Personal Property at School

Scholars should not bring toys, radios, headphones, electronics, skateboards or scooters to school. Oftentimes, these items interrupt the learning process. If the items are lost, the school is not responsible for personal items brought from home. Exceptions are in the case of a sharing activity or when the teacher gives specific approval for bringing personal items to school. The possession and/or use of cellular phones, pagers, or other electronic devices for receiving and/or transmitting messages on any school properties/vehicles or while attending a school-sponsored activity on or off school property is prohibited. This also applies to “look-alike” devices, such as toy guns or knives.

Lost and Found

ALL ARTICLES WORN OR CARRIED BY SCHOLARS (COATS, HATS, MITTENS, SWEATERS, LUNCHBOXES, AND SO ON) SHOULD BE MARKED WITH THE CHILD’S NAME.

There is no guarantee items will be recovered when lost. A lost and found area is located in the cafeteria.

Lockers

Each scholar will be assigned a locker and will be responsible for the safe care and maintenance of the locker. Scholars are to provide their own locks. Number/word combination locks are strongly recommended. A copy of the combination/key will be recorded and kept on file with the child’s homeroom teacher. Lockers are the property of the school and can be searched at any time. If the child’s combination/key is not shared with the teacher, the lock will be cut off and removed from the locker.

Care of Books and Supplies

Scholars are urged to take care of textbooks and supplies and to carry them in book bags, plastic bags or sacks when it is rainy or snowy. A fee is assessed for all lost or damaged books. For additional information on care of school-issued laptops, please consult the CGA Chromebook Policy.

Physical Education

As a safety factor, all scholars should have tennis shoes for activities in the gymnasium. All tennis shoes should be labeled with the scholar's name.

Homework

Homework is an extension of the learning experience. It should help scholars learn to accept responsibility, organize time, and establish independent study habits. Each grade-level team and teacher will individually notify you in writing of his/her homework policy.

Off-Campus Visits

An important part of The Columbus Gifted Academy philosophy of learning requires that scholars be given the opportunity to apply the skills they are learning to real-life situations. Students often learn better by experiencing real events instead of discussing abstract concepts. Consequently, we take the scholars into the community to see, hear, feel, taste, and smell a variety of activities. These trips are carefully planned by your scholar's teacher(s) to accomplish specific learning objectives. The trips receive prior approval by the director and school district. If there are costs associated with an experiential learning trip, they should be paid for by the family. Please contact us if the cost of an experiential learning trip is a burden to your family.

School Communication

Teachers send class newsletters or other bulletins to communicate specific academic instruction and activities in the classroom.

Monthly PTO communications will inform you of PTO activities and opportunities for volunteering at upcoming events. Their website: www.columbusgiftedacademy.com has timely information about these activities.

The school sponsors both a website and a Twitter page, as well as weekly phone dialers. Transcripts of phone dialers, as well as other important flyers and information, are posted to Peachjar.

Conferences to discuss/review scholar progress are held in November and February of the academic year. Report cards are sent home four times per year. Interim reports are also sent home to communicate student performance.

Parents are encouraged to call, email, or schedule an appointment at any time to discuss concerns.

The Parent-Teacher Organization

The Columbus Gifted Academy is fortunate to have a very active, invested parent association. The PTO raises money for school purchases and conducts meetings to provide opportunities for enhancing the CGA program. Your participation is encouraged at regularly scheduled meetings and PTO-sponsored events.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are a vital component of the learning process at Columbus Gifted Academy. Volunteers are visible in classrooms and in the school's hallways. Volunteers are welcome. We have many daily situations where a special skill, individual attention, or just another pair of hands would be greatly appreciated. These might include:

- Sharing a special talent with scholars;
- Assisting with the supervision of activities and experiential learning trips;
- Making materials for instructional projects.



Joint Statement of Support

Columbus Gifted Academy Administrative Team

and

Columbus Gifted Academy Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

The primary goal of our relationship is to collaboratively and equitably foster an environment that embodies the purpose of Columbus Gifted Academy:

to engage, enrich, and empower gifted learners through unique, rigorous, self-directed educational experiences in a collaborative learning environment that supports the whole child within and beyond the classroom

and the Columbus Gifted Academy Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO):

to enhance and support the educational experience at CGA, to develop a closer connection between CGA and home by encouraging parent involvement to improve the environment at CGA through volunteer and financial support.

We are committed to ensuring scholars have access to high-quality, culturally-responsive gifted instruction.

Equipping our families to ensure they have what they need to provide a dedicated workspace for scholars and support at-home learning.

Our commitment will be fostered through

- Maintaining transparent communication between CGA Leadership, Staff, and CGA PTO
 - Proactively planning and problem-solving in ways beneficial to our scholars
- Ensuring the safety of our scholars, staff, and parents both virtually and in the building setting through adhering to CCS district policies