



COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ENGAGEMENT DISTRICT UPDATE TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Update for July 17, 2020

PURPOSE: To provide an update on COVID-19 response efforts in Columbus City Schools related to our Community Partners and learn about additional supports within our community.

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

HUNDREDS JOIN VIRTUAL FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS TO LEARN ABOUT REOPENING PLANS AND HEALTH GUIDELINES:

Hundreds of family members, community partners, and District staff are logging in each week to take advantage of the information being shared during Columbus City Schools' new Virtual Family Engagement Sessions.

These live online sessions hosted on Zoom every Tuesday and Thursday night - appropriately named "F.A.C.E. 2 Face" (Family And Community Engagement) - are aimed at creating an on-going conversation to help answer questions families have about the safe reopening of schools. This week's sessions focused on our current reopening plans on Student Health Services (see below) and Social Emotional Supports.

Members of the Department of Engagement and expert District staff are sharing information and insights on specific topics each session, as well as trying to answer as many questions as possible during the hour. Still, we remind parents that many of the details and final reopening plans are under development and subject to change as new health guidelines come out.

The District is committed to hosting these regular Virtual Family Engagement sessions each week leading up to the start of the school year and into the fall semester to keep families informed and engaged. Below are the planned topics for the next several weeks:

- Tuesday, July 21, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. - help with using Parent Portal
 - Thursday, July 23, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. - focus on Special Education/Special Needs
 - Tuesday, July 28, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. - demonstration of CCS Virtual Academy platform
 - Thursday, July 30, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. - to be determined
 - Tuesday, August 4, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. - focus on English as a Second Language - SPANISH
 - Wednesday, August 5, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. - English as a Second Language - SOMALI
 - Wednesday, August 5, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. - English as a Second Language - NEPALI
 - Thursday, August 6, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. - English as a Second Language - ARABIC
 - Thursday, August 6, 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. - English as a Second Language - FRENCH
- * *ESL interpreters and community partners will be in these sessions to provide help to New American and immigrant families who need language assistance.*

Families must register to attend the F.A.C.E. 2 Face virtual family engagement sessions by visiting www.ccsok.us/rsvp.



PRACTICING COVID-PREVENTION HABITS BEFORE FIRST DAY:

During this week's Virtual Family Engagement Session, the top school nurse in Columbus City Schools encouraged families to begin practicing the habits that are designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19 before classes begin again in September.

Dr. Kate King, CCS Director of Health, Family, and Community Services, suggested that parents take time now to talk with their children about COVID-19 if they haven't already. Explain in age-appropriate terms why wearing masks is so important during this pandemic. Especially for our youngest students, Dr. King suggests putting a mask on a stuffed animal to demonstrate how easy it is to wear one and how masks work. Start by asking the student to wear a mask for a few seconds, then a few minutes and longer each day... so that by the first day of in-person classes, they will be comfortable wearing a mask during long periods of the school day.

Maintaining a healthy and safe environment in the schools building is a top priority in the Columbus City Schools Reopening Plan. Each school building will be assigned a school nurse, who will work closely with the principal and head custodian to create a plan and apply District mitigation processes for the health and safety of their building. This includes education for staff regarding COVID-19 and overall District health strategies

WHAT IF SOMEONE AT SCHOOL TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19?

School nurses will be responsible for tracking and monitoring symptoms, possible exposures, and positive cases. In close communication and collaboration with Columbus Public Health, the school health team will determine possible exposure or transmission to other students or staff.

Following guidelines set by the national Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Ohio Department of Health, and Columbus Public Health, the school will notify appropriate parents/families and staff of possible exposure and provide directions for next steps.

Start preparing your student (and your entire family) for following healthy guidelines and practicing COVID mitigation/prevention processes. Make a plan for how to pick up your student from school if they are sick or show symptoms. And update the information on your child's Emergency Cards in the school office.

MORE INFORMATION AS PLANS CHANGE

It's important for families to know that the Superintendent's reopening recommendations may change based on many factors. District leaders are in continual discussions with state and local health experts regarding the status of the COVID-19 pandemic. Updated information and changing guidance from health and education officials necessitate operational flexibility. That's why Dr. Dixon has shared that CCS families should anticipate changes to the reopening plan.

More information and updates on our reopening plan - along with answers to the frequently asked questions we've been hearing - can be found online at www.ccsok.us/reopening. There's also an easy-to-navigate video library with additional answers to several common questions.



REGISTRATION OPEN FOR CCS K-12 DIGITAL ACADEMY:

More than 1000 students have already registered for the all-virtual CCS K-12 Digital Academy.

For families who may not want to send their children to school in-person, this completely-remote learning option will be self-paced so students can go as quickly or as slow as they need to complete the work to earn credits. District staff will work with families to create personalized learning experiences for Digital Academy students.

Student attendance and idle time will be tracked through the district-selected platforms. The Digital Academy will use Edgenuity for K-8 students and Apex for high school students.

SPECIAL NOTE: a demonstration of the Digital Academy platforms will be provided during the July 28 Virtual Family Engagement Session, from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

It's important for families to keep in mind that registering for the Digital Academy is a semester-long commitment. Once school begins on September 8, students must remain in the Digital Academy through at least the first two quarters of the school year.

Registration for the Digital Academy is open through Saturday, August 1, via the Parent Portal.

HELP WITH YOUR PARENT PORTAL

The Parent Portal is a great tool for families to contact teachers, check grades and attendance, view assignments, apply for the school choice lottery, and complete the annual update.

Each parent/guardian has their own personalized activation code to access the portal. To receive your code - or if you have lost your previous login information - email your picture ID along with your child's name and date of birth to parentportalaccess@columbus.k12.oh.us.

To get to the Parent Portal, visit our website at www.ccsok.us and click on the FAMILIES tab, then click on the Parent Portal link.

SPECIAL NOTE: if you've never logged on to the Parent Portal - or if you have questions on how to access all of the great features - we'll provide a tutorial and answer your Parent Portal questions during the July 21 Virtual Family Engagement Session, from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

VACCINE CLINICS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

It's so important for kids to stay up-to-date on vaccines, especially during this COVID-19 pandemic. Columbus City Schools is partnering with Nationwide Children's Hospital to make it easy for children and young adults to get their needed vaccines at locations close to home.

For added safety, all patients are prescreened before and at the time of their appointments. Staff are wearing protective masks and goggles at all times, and all equipment and work areas are cleaned thoroughly.



Here are the locations and dates for the neighborhood vaccine clinics from Nationwide Children's Hospital:

Linden-McKinley STEM Academy - 1320 Duxberry Avenue
July 21

Buckeye Middle School - 2950 Parsons Avenue
July 22

Marion-Franklin High School - 1265 Koebel Road
July 24

Northland High School - 1919 Northcliff Drive
July 29

West High School - 179 S. Powell Avenue
July 31

All clinics are from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Schedule your visit by calling 614-355-2590. Walk-ins are welcome. Complete medical visits or COVID-19 testing are not provided, only vaccines.

SPOTLIGHT: SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

There's still plenty of time to swing into summer reading! Our partners at the Columbus Metropolitan Library remind us that reading just 5 books over the summer can help a student retain their reading skills and return to school in the fall without learning loss.

Keeping reading skills strong is particularly important this summer as students adjust to remote learning and other school changes.

Join the Columbus Metropolitan Library's online Summer Reading Challenge through August 1. Complete reading hours and "Reading Activity Bingo" to be entered into raffles for prizes. Tune in to virtual events throughout the summer, including performers for all ages and online storytimes

If you don't have a library card, it's easy to apply for one online. Use your library card to download free eBooks and eAudiobooks for the entire family and to check out books to take home and read.

Visit the library's website at www.columbuslibrary.org to learn more about the Summer Reading Challenge, great book recommendations, and how to check out books to read at home.

Reading is free and is the best investment in summer learning that you can make. You may even find yourself carried away by a great book. It happens all the time.



SPOTLIGHT: HELP WITH HOME REPAIRS IN LINDEN

Our partners at the City of Columbus recently announced the set-aside of \$500,000 to assist families in the Linden community with exterior home repairs.

It's part of the "614 for Linden" collaborative. Healthy Homes, the affordable housing arm of the Healthy Neighborhoods Healthy Families initiative out of Nationwide Children's Hospital and Community Development for All People, will be the nonprofit collaborative partner to help oversee the exterior home repair program.

Exterior home repair assistance will be available to Linden residents whose families earn up to 65% Area Median Income or \$54,925 for a family of four. Eligible repairs include windows, siding, and roof repair.

Families who want to learn more about the program should call 614-355-3639. Healthy Homes will be taking applications on a rolling basis.

SPOTLIGHT: TEENS EARN MONEY AND LEARN CAREER SKILLS

Do you have a 14-year-old or 15-year-old student who'd be interested in earning money while gaining valuable career skills? Our partners at the Godman Guild and Franklin County Job and Family Services are signing teens up for the "Ready 2 Earn" virtual job-readiness program.

This six-week program teaches participants how to create a resume, write a cover letter, and set career goals. Our partners at Tech Corps will also be online to offer training for career pathways in the high-demand fields of technology.

Students who complete the program can earn a free Chromebook and up to \$1000.

For more information and to sign up, visit www.godmanguild.org/ready.

SHARE YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION UPDATES:

Please share this Community Update with the families and stakeholders you serve.

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 students and families.

**Our work is far from over, and we want to honor your continued commitment.
Please share your updates with us at Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us.**