



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

Update for October 30, 2020

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

LET'S CONNECT MORE COLUMBUS FAMILIES TO MORE LEARNING EXTENSION CENTERS DURING MORE OF THE DAY:

Growing into a true community-wide engagement model that's addressing the educational and social-emotional needs of Columbus City Schools students and families, efforts to provide Learning Extension Centers throughout the city are gaining more support as we look to connect more families to these valuable resources during this time of continued virtual learning.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL ANNOUNCES NEW SUPPORT FOR LECs

On Thursday, our Superintendent Dr. Talisa Dixon joined our partners Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther, City Council President Shannon Hardin, and I Know I Can Board of Directors President Tei Street to celebrate a \$2 million city invest in Learning Extension Centers (LECs).

The City is earmarking a CARES Act grant to enter into a contract with I Know I Can to provide funding to organizations operating Learning Extension Centers. The majority of these funds will pay for more staffing, volunteer training, and background checks - along with programming, supplies, food, and other materials - to help expand the services and hours of operation currently being provided by Learning Extension Centers.

The idea for the Learning Extension Centers came out of the Department of Engagement and our Engagement Reopening Task Force back in the summer. That's when we partnered with many of our city's non-profit and faith-based organizations on opening safe, adult-supervised, welcoming spaces where students are supported while learning virtually during the day.

These centers offer internet access for students to interface with their teachers and virtual assignments while also providing safe, educationally-conducive environments for students whose families may not have the resources at home.

HELPING FAMILIES FIND A LEC CLOSE TO HOME

We have more than 145 Learning Extension Centers and similar child-care centers identified across the city, with a wide range of services being provided at different hours throughout the day. LECs provide services for free, while many of the child care providers charge a fee.

Each LEC is unique: providing different services at different hours. We're hoping more centers will open with more options for families who need assistance throughout the entire remote-learning school day.

To make it easy for families to find the LEC closest to their homes, we have created an interactive map and online listing at www.ccs.oh.us/LearningExtensionCenters. In the coming days, we will be upgrading this map to provide more search functions.



ASKING ORGANIZATIONS TO OPEN LECs IN MORE NEIGHBORHOODS

With this additional support from the City and many of our District's educational and social service partners - and with the demand for more Learning Extension Centers with longer service hours coming from our families - it's hoped that more organizations will be willing to step up and open LECs, especially in underserved neighborhoods.

Remember, though the LEC provides a "spot" for students to learn, these centers do not take the place of the student's teachers or school. Instead, LECs provide reliable virtual access to schools, teachers, and supplemental services.

LECs are not part of Columbus City Schools, and the District will only promote and coordinate with LECs who offer their services at no charge to CCS families.

Columbus City Schools encourages LECs to be open during the same hours as the regular school day to provide students with a full day of access to the internet and academic supports.

Organizations who choose to open a LEC should be ready to provide the following supports and resources to students:

- A safe, supervised, educationally-conducive environment that has broadband for students to be able to virtually interface with their teachers or participate in the CCS Digital Academy.
- Volunteers to be able to assist students when needed.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for all students and staff.
- Volunteers to assist with tutoring and lunch at many of the sites.
- Additional Chromebooks, wifi hotspots, and computer equipment as needed.

Thank to our some of our partners, organizations who open a LEC will also be able to offer health and wellness checks through Nationwide Children's Hospital, college and career guidance through our higher education access partners from I Know I Can, and engagement support from City Year and Communities in Schools.

LECs are asked to participated in the Columbus City Schools health and safety training protocols. LEC directors and staff should also have completed background checks. Some centers may also be required to obtain temporary pandemic child care licenses through the State of Ohio.

To help other organizations get started, one of our current LECs has shared a sample of a plan for operating a LEC. Organizers can use it as a template for creating their own plans.

To find all of this information and more, we've added a new section to our Learning Extension Center portal for organizations that would like to open, manage, or register a Learning Extension Center with our Department of Engagement. We also host a weekly Zoom session for LECs to share best practices and get up-to-date information.

To register and learn about being an LEC, go to www.ccssoh.us/LearningExtensionCenters.



AGREEMENT WITH COLUMBUS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION FIRMS UP LEARNING PLANS FOR RETURNING STUDENTS

Earlier this week, the District and the Columbus Education Association - the bargaining unit which represents approximately 4,000 teachers, librarians, nurses, counselors, psychologists, and other educators - announced a shared agreement on learning plans through the end of the first semester and our safe transition to blending learning later this school year.

The Memorandum of Understanding, which covers the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year, balances the priority of providing an equitable education to all students within the context of the health and safety concerns of the pandemic.

It includes a number of critical, enforceable provisions to protect the health and safety of students who attend in-person classes and the staff who are working with them on-site. The safety procedures include:

- Requiring everyone (staff and students) to wear a mask on the bus and in school
- Hand sanitizer available in every classroom and lab
- Cleaning and sanitizing of high-touch areas including door handles and faucets
- Disposable overlay coats if needed
- Gloves for programs if needed
- Personal bins for students' items
- Tool bins for sanitizing between use
- Plexiglass dividers if needed to maintain six feet of social distance
- Labs and classrooms will be cleaned and sanitized daily
- Safety signage on doors, floors, walls, and handwashing stations

To date, the District has spent more than \$5 million on the purchase of safety materials and training for teachers, staff, and students. This includes masks and PPE, hand sanitizer, protective barriers, cleaning equipment and supplies, and professional development.

WELCOMING OUR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION STUDENTS BACK TO OUR BUILDINGS ON MONDAY:

Students in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs at Columbus Downtown High School and the Fort Hayes Career Center will begin blended learning on Monday, November 2.

CTE students will attend in-person two days per week and continue to learn remotely three days a week. This includes students in our Advanced Manufacturing, Business, Construction, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Education, Health, Information Technology, Media Arts, Public Safety, and Visual Arts programs.

For these students, in-person learning is critical to learning the proper skills required for certification. Without certification, students cannot compete for these good-paying jobs in the workplace or attain the appropriate post-secondary credits.



NEW OPTIONS FOR FAMILIES VISITING FUEL UP FOOD SITES

Columbus City Schools is upgrading how it provides food for students at its 44 Fuel Up! Meal sites across the District with new options for families.

Beginning Monday, our Food Services team will add a daily Monday-through-Friday grab-and-go option at lunch - available from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. - with more traditional menu items.

The meals will include freshly-prepared hot and cold items such as pizza, hamburgers, lasagna rolls, salads, fresh fruits and vegetables, muffins, juice, and milk. Families will also be able to pick up the next day's breakfast.

Also new, the District will now provide take-home meals for weekends and holidays.

Thinking about families who aren't able to come every day, the District will continue offering five-day meal packs once a week, on Wednesdays during lunch from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and in the early evening from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

In compliance with federal guidelines, families who choose to pick up a five-day meal pack on Wednesdays will not be eligible to pick up a daily meal over the next five (5) calendar days.

Since the start of the District's unprecedented Grab-and-Go food site effort at the beginning of this pandemic last March, the CCS Food Services team has provided more than two million meals to young people throughout our entire community.

ADDITIONAL TECH SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES:

Continued virtual learning has meant a few more technology-related questions from students and families, with questions ranging from Chromebook troubleshooting to resetting passwords.

The Columbus City Schools' Technology Help Desk is now offering extended hours to help families with limited technology issues.

The Help Desk can help you figure out:

- General access questions
- Login issues (Chromebook, Clever and learning apps, Email, Google Classroom, etc.)
- Parent/Student Account issues
- How to find student Zoom Meeting ID
- How to reset your hotspot password

The Help Desk's hours of operation now run Monday-Thursday from 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; and Sunday afternoons from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

You can also email the CCS Technology Help Desk at ccshelpdesk@columbus.k12.oh.us.



SHARE YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION UPDATES:

Please share this Community 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.