



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

Update for September 25, 2020

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

LINK UP! TIPS TO HELP STUDENTS CONNECT TO CLASS:

Each morning, students throughout Columbus City Schools are successfully logging in to their virtual classrooms and lessons. Occasionally, there might be a glitch, or students have misplaced the login or links they need.

We want to make sure that parents and community partners can help our students connect to class. Our Family Ambassadors have a few helpful tips and advice to link up:

FINDING THE CLEVER LOGIN PAGE

Clever is the web-based service Columbus City Schools uses to manage different learning applications. It's a one-stop-spot to start each morning where students can link to all of the online educational tools they need, instead of having to search all over the internet.

Clever uses a single-sign-on of the student's District issued ID number, email, and birthdate. To log in to Clever, go to clever.com/in/columbuscity. It's a good idea to bookmark that page.

If you forget the Clever link - or you're trying to help a student - just use Google to search "Columbus City Schools Clever" and the link will come up.

HELPING STUDENTS REMEMBER LOGINS AND PASSWORDS

When you power on the Chromebook or login to Clever, students are required to sign in using their own personal login and password. These student logins are a combination of the child's District-issued ID number/email and their birthdate.

The login is StudentID#@columbus.k12.oh.us (for example, 1234567@columbus.k12.oh.us). The password is the student's birthdate by month, day, and year (for example: 02-15-2008).

Here's the mistake we often see: in the login, make sure you include "@columbus.k12.oh.us" and in the password, make sure that the month and day are 2 digits (so use a zero for months like March (03) or dates like the 4th (04). Also in that password, make sure you separate the numbers by dashes (not underscores).

FINDING CLASSROOM ZOOM LINKS

In Clever, students have access to their teachers' Google Classroom. That's the first place to look for a Zoom link (if the teacher is using Zoom) and for any daily assignments.

Some teachers have also posted their classroom Zoom link in the student schedule found in the Parent Portal and Student Portal. You should also check the staff directory on the child's school website - many teachers have added their Zoom link along with their direct email address.



CHECKING IN ON THE PARENT PORTAL

During this virtual learning period, Columbus City Schools is asking parents and students to verify their attendance with a daily “check-in” on either the Parent Portal or Student Portal.

To do this, parents simply log into their Parent Portal account each day and open the “Today” tab. In the middle of the screen is a section called “Check-Ins” for that day (you can only check-in on the actual date of attendance).

All of the student’s scheduled classes that require attendance to be taken will show up under the “Check-Ins” heading. The system will ask if your student is participating today. Click the “Yes, [Student First Name] is Here” button. That simple.

For elementary students, a message will flash in the upper right corner that says, “Check-In Saved.” The main screen will then indicate that there are no further Check-Ins available. The Check-In option has now disappeared until the next attendance day.

For middle and high school students, they must be checked in to each course. After you check them in to the first course, you’ll get the “Check-In Saved” message. Then check the student in to another course. If you return to the “Today” page, you’ll notice the courses have come off of the list. Continue until all of the courses have had the student checked in.

If you have more than one student in CCS schools, you will have to select the student you are checking in from the drop-down menu in the upper right of your screen.

To help you through this Check-In process, we’ve created an easy-to-follow step-by-step video. To watch the video, go to <https://bit.ly/CCSVirtualAttendance>.

STILL HAVING TECHNICAL TROUBLE?

If you’re still having trouble with a student’s Chromebook, accessing Clever or any of the learning applications, or the student’s email account and password, **call our Technology Help Desk at 614-365-8425.**

If the Chromebook needs repairs or replacements, families will need to contact their building principals and take the Chromebook back to their child’s school.

WARNING TO PARENTS ABOUT A HOTSPOT SCAM

Many of our families have received a District-issued hotspot to help students stay connected to the internet at home. Recently, some parents have received calls from someone threatening to suspend service on the CCS hotspot. It’s a scam!

None of our internet access service providers will contact parents or students directly. The contract for hotspots is with the District and there is no suspension of services as of now. Families should not give out any information or make any payment related to a district-loaned hotspot or internet access device.



P-EBT COMING TO CCS FAMILIES IN NEXT THREE WEEKS:

A second round of funding through the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) Program - federal money for families to buy fresh foods and groceries - is coming to most of our Columbus City Schools families next month.

P-EBT provides additional money for families to buy food due to COVID-19 related school closures or remote learning. P-EBT is administered by the State of Ohio, not Columbus City Schools or Franklin County Job and Family Services.

State rules limit eligibility to only CCS students in Kindergarten through 12th Grade (not Pre-Kindergarten). This includes students who are in the CCS Digital Academy.

This second round of P-EBT benefits are for August and September only, and will total approximately \$94 per child.

P-EBT funds can be spent at stores, shops, or farmers markets that sell groceries. You can buy foods like fruits and vegetables, dry goods, meat, dairy, and eggs.

Families will receive one P-EBT card per eligible child. These P-EBT cards are like debit cards, and families can use it to buy food anywhere SNAP benefits are accepted. SNAP is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, what many people used to refer to as food stamps.

To search for retailers, use this interactive map at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator.

Families who already receive SNAP will have additional P-EBT funds added to their Ohio Direction Card by September 30. Families who do not receive SNAP will get their P-EBT card(s) in the mail in October.

If you have not received your P-EBT card(s) by mid-October, call the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services Hotline at 1-866-244-0071.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR OUR IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

P-EBT funds are NOT SNAP and do NOT impact your or your children's immigration status.

If you think you should receive P-EBT but you don't, please call 1-866-244-0071. Translators will be available to answer your questions.

MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT P-EBT?

Many CCS families report not getting the first round of P-EBT cards issued for the end of the 2019-2020 school year. If you did not receive the P-EBT funds back in the Spring, contact the ODJFS Customer Service Line at 1-866-244-0071 or Family_Assistance_Inquiries@jfs.ohio.gov.

A lot of great information about P-EBT can be found from our partners at the Ohio Association of Foodbanks - including answers to some frequently asked questions - by visiting www.ohiopebt.org.



FUEL UP! HALF-A-MILLION MEALS TO COLUMBUS STUDENTS:

Columbus City Schools continues to provide an unprecedented level of food service for our families during this COVID crisis. In just the last three weeks, our Food Services team has distributed more than half-a-million meals (or about 564,000 meals since September 9).

Every Wednesday (and only on Wednesdays), Columbus City Schools opens 44 Fuel Up Food Sites at schools across the city, where families can grab-and-go 5-day meal packs for each child under the age of 18 to cover breakfast and lunch for a week.

Families seem to appreciate that we changed the hours of distribution to better match their schedules, with pick-ups at midday from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and in the early evening from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Most families are coming right after work in the evening.

CCS families have been assigned a location to pick up their students' meals based on which building is closest to where they live (not necessarily the same school in which they attend). But families may choose to visit a different Fuel Up Food Site - perhaps one closer to work or where children are staying during the day.

A map of the Fuel Up Food Site locations can be found at www.ccsos.us/Page/8603.

TOP FIVE TIPS ON HEALTHY EATING DURING VIRTUAL LEARNING

Just like our students, we can't wait for the first "pizza day" back in our cafeterias. But until we are safely back in our school buildings, our Food Service team offers up the top five healthy eating ideas for parents to use at home:

- **Make the healthy choice the easy choice:** Think about putting a fruit bowl on the counter filled with their favorite fruits. Or place healthier snacks like yogurt, cheese sticks, fruits and vegetables, or whole grain crackers at eyesight in the fridge or pantry.
- **Control the supply lines:** Parents have the power to determine what kinds of food get stocked in the house. Leave less healthy snacks and foods on the shelves at the grocery store. Teach children that those foods are special treats, not everyday foods.
- **Rethink the drinks:** Drinks are often a source of extra calories and sugar that can lead to unhealthy weight gain for our children. Encourage water first for thirst. And try to choose 100% fruit juice when purchasing juice for the home.
- **Snack smarter:** Snacks are meant to provide a small boost of energy between meals. Keep portion sizes small and pair two different food groups together for more nutrition. Consider veggies and hummus; whole grain crackers with cheese, grapes and a cheese stick; or apples with peanut butter.
- **Limit distractions:** It's easy to snack mindlessly when students are focused on the Chromebook. Encourage children to eat and snack at the table without distractions so that they can focus on what they are eating and when they feel full.



MORE LEARNING EXTENSION CENTERS OPEN FOR FAMILIES:

More of our community's "Learning Extension Centers" - safe, free, adult-supervised spaces where students can feel supported while learning virtually and parents can feel comforted knowing that their child is in a secure, welcoming environment during the day - are opening up across the city.

At these Learning Extension Centers, students have access to the internet, learning devices, and school supplies to assist them in remote learning (if they need more than the Chromebook the District is supplying). Most locations are also providing food.

Staff at the centers will be able to assist students in accessing our CCS Remote Learning platforms. In many LEC locations, students will be able to get meals and "after-school" type activities.

Remember, Learning Extension Centers are not run by Columbus City Schools, but we are working to connect families and schools with LEC's closest to them. We are also providing training to LEC staff so they know how to help students (and parents) on getting online and into our Remote Learning platforms.

We keep updating the list of Learning Extension Centers at www.ccssoh.us/reopening. Just click on the "Learning Extension Centers" tab and search for LEC's by region.

MAKING IT EASIER TO ENROLL IN CCS PRE-K:

We're streamlining the process to get our city's youngest learners enrolled in Columbus City Schools' high-quality Early Childhood Education program. And it's FREE.

Even though classes began on September 15, there's still time to enroll. And families who enroll now will have their children immediately placed in one of our open Pre-Kindergarten seats.

Our Pre-Kindergarten curriculum includes interactive lessons, hands-on activities, and engaging learning opportunities with highly qualified Ohio certificated teachers and instructional assistants. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in enrichment activities provided by their teachers and local community partners...more information coming soon.

All early learners who are 4 years of age by September 30 and reside in the Columbus City Schools District have the opportunity to enroll their children in a high-quality Pre-K program with our Division of Early Childhood Education.

Families interested in Pre-K must complete an online registration and schedule an enrollment appointment. Due to social distancing, all appointments are being conducted virtually at the scheduled appointment time.

Begin your online Pre-K enrollment by visiting www.ccssoh.us/enroll. If you have questions about our Early Childhood Education program, go to www.ccssoh.us/domain/209.



SPOTLIGHT: FREE MASK KIT GIVE-AWAY ON THURSDAY

Our partners at the African-American Male Wellness Initiative and Franklin County Job and Family Services are working together to get more protective masks to families who need them.

They will be handing out free mask kits on Thursday, October 1, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the East Opportunity Center at 1055 Mt. Vernon Avenue. Supplies are likely to go quick, so get there early.

SPOTLIGHT: YOGA, SOFTBALL, KICKBALL AND SWIMMING RETURN TO COLUMBUS RECREATION CENTERS AND PARKS

Our partners at the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department are reopening a variety of programs and activities for students and families and all ages, from preschool to seniors, at locations throughout the city. Of course, many of the program have been adjusted, with new health practices and protocols to safely and securely reopen.

The Columbus Aquatics Center has reopened for water aerobics, open swim and lap swimming. All open swim sessions now require advance registration for scheduled time blocks.

CRPD Sports continues its programming into the fall with leagues for softball and kickball. No-touching rules have been implemented wherever possible, and congregating in parking lots, on sports fields and in common areas is not permitted. Sign-ups are at www.CRPDSports.org.

Arts classes, recreational sports (skills and drills only), fitness classes, and access to fitness rooms are available at 29 of the city's community centers. Get Active members can also access fitness and yoga classes.

The Cultural Arts Center downtown is offering classes in painting, drawing, ceramics, jewelry making and more, along with opportunities to explore the main art gallery

The full list of Fall 2020 programs can be found at www.columbus.gov/recreationandparks.

SPOTLIGHT: CATCO'S SATURDAY MORNING MUSICALS

CATCO is Kids' is launching a series of virtual classes begin October 3 with a Saturday Morning Musicals production of the highly acclaimed and new virtual musical for kids "The Show Must Go Online!"

Registration is open for this popular program, as well as for all fall theatre classes, which also include an adult acting class. CATCO classes use theatrical techniques to reinforce values, empathy, and understanding, as well as important life lessons, while providing children – and adults – with the chance to explore their creative side.

Details about each session and registration links can be found at www.catco.org/acting-classes.



SPOTLIGHT: FREE CARTOON FESTIVAL

Cartoon Crossroads Columbus (October 1-4) is an annual festival that showcases the best of cartoon art in all its forms - comics, animation, editorial cartoons, newspaper strips, and beyond - in a city that is a growing center of importance to comics and cartooning. And for CCS students, the festival also focuses on helping the next generation of young cartooning talent develop thriving careers.

Like many large events this year, due to safety and health concerns, Cartoon Crossroads Columbus will be an online festival. Events will be streamed live and available for download on www.CartoonCrossroadsColumbus.org.

The festival is a collaboration with many of our District's arts partners, including the Wexner Center for the Arts, the Columbus College of Art and Design, and the Columbus Museum of Art. These programs will be available to view for free on the Cartoon Crossroads Columbus website and other social media channels.

CENSUS 2020 - YOUR LAST CHANCE TO BE COUNTED

Time is running out to respond to the 2020 Census! We ask that you remind friends, family members, co-workers, and neighbors to participate.

Every person living in Columbus (and throughout the United States) is supposed to be counted. But so far, only 63% of household in Columbus have filled out the Census, which means our community risks losing out on funding for critical public services over the next 10 years.

Census takers are currently visiting households in Columbus that have not yet responded, and everyone is urged to respond when a census taker comes to the door. In addition, the Census Bureau is calling some households to collect responses if they haven't responded yet or to ask about their experience completing the census.

Spread the word that you can still respond online at www.2020census.gov, by phone at 844-330-2020, or by completing and mailing back the paper questionnaire. The time to act is now!

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.