



E- NEWSLETTER

Columbus School District

March, 2020

Learning Today; Leading Tomorrow

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VOTE APRIL 7

Request an absentee ballot by April 2.
If voting in person, please do so safely.

THE INVESTMENT | not to exceed \$30 million



AGING INFRASTRUCTURE

Address the most pressing needs at all three schools including ADA accessibility, plumbing, heating/ventilation, electrical, etc.



HIGH SCHOOL UPGRADES

Addition and renovations to improve Career Tech Ed (shop), art, band/choir, library, cafeteria/kitchen and weight/fitness areas.



ELEMENTARY CAPACITY

Addition (including a secure entrance, classrooms, a cafeteria/kitchen, and 2-court gymnasium) and renovations to bring 3rd, 4th and 5th grades back to the elementary school.



LAND PURCHASE

Acquire land for future development of a school and/or outdoor athletic and recreation spaces.

TAX IMPACT | the annual tax impact is \$162.00 per \$100,000 of property value

920.350.0365

referendum@columbus.k12.wi.us

www.columbus.k12.wi.us/referendum2020



The health and safety of our students, staff, families, and community has been and will continue to be the Columbus School District's top priority. Our transition to a digital learning environment has been successful thanks to our committed families, outstanding staff, and supportive community.

In normal times, or in those like today, we are always taking our most immediate challenges head-on while not losing focus on our needs for the future. **Based on the Governor's announcement, the state will be holding the election on April 7 as planned.**

Please visit myvote.wi.gov prior to April 2 to request an absentee ballot. If you prefer to vote in person, please do so safely.

We remain available by phone or e-mail to answer any questions you may have about the referendum.

Community-Led Process. Community-Led Solution.

#CommunityLed

▶▶ Don't forget to flip the ballot!

The District's referendum question will appear on the back of the ballot.

Community-Led Process. Community-Led Solution.

A Special Message from the Nurse

Hello families,

I hope this message finds you all happy and well. I wanted to provide you all with a brief recap and update on the ever-changing COVID-19 situation, as well as reiterate important prevention and protection measures to help slow the spread of the virus.

As of Sunday, March 22, 2020, there were 381 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Wisconsin, with community spread reported in several areas across the state, including Brown, Columbia, Dane, Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Waukesha counties. Community spread is defined as the transmission of the virus in which the source can no longer be identified. Multiple states around the nation are showing community transmission of the virus. We expect these numbers to continue to rise. Handwashing, avoiding non-essential travel, and practicing strict social distancing remains imperative to the slowing of this virus, flattening the curve, and keeping our healthcare system afloat.

As a reminder, if you come into contact with someone who has tested positive for the Coronavirus, or if you begin to exhibit symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath), please self-quarantine and call your healthcare provider. Not everyone can or will be tested and your physician will advise on next steps. In addition, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services has contact information for any immediate concerns or questions regarding COVID-19. Individuals can text COVID19 to 211-211, visit www.211Wisconsin.org, or call 211.

Prevention and Protection Strategies:

- Wash your hands frequently! Proper hand hygiene includes washing your hands with warm soap and water, then drying with a clean towel. When appropriate, hand sanitizer with at least a 60% alcohol content may be used instead. Clean hands before eating, after using the bathroom, before entering and after leaving a public place, after coughing/sneezing/blowing your nose, and after contact with a high-touch surface
- Avoid non-essential travel. Practice social distancing. Stay home as much as possible. Do not engage in social gatherings or playdates. Talk to your employer about working from home. Go to the store less often. Use drive-thru and pick-up services. Cancel non-emergent appointments. Explore your doctors virtual visit options.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes. Cough and sneeze into the crook of your elbow and/or use a tissue, discard immediately, and wash your hands.
- Stay home if you are sick unless you need to seek medical care and have been advised by a physician
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched/used items daily. Depending on the surface material, the virus can survive up to 3-4 days
- Avoid close contact with those who are ill. And again, work to minimize interactions with others, even if they appear healthy, and maintain a distance of at least 6 feet

Thank you all for your continued patience and support as we navigate through this situation. If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at bbayer@columbus.k12.wi.us.

Sincerely,

Brittany Bayer, RN

From the Superintendent

COMING

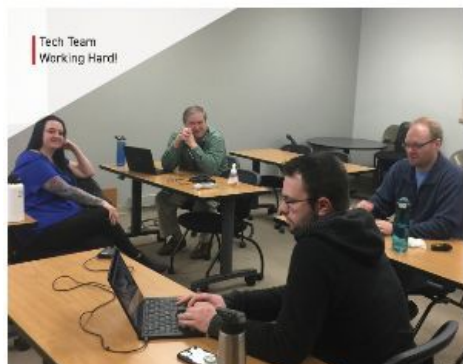
TOGETHER

Staff cleaning multiple devices and providing curb-side pickup service of instructional materials/devices.



Letter to Our Families and Community

March 2020



As the buzz of the last week quiets, I felt compelled to share the experiences during the transition of our schools and staff to a virtual learning environment with our families and community.

At the opening in-service in August, I dubbed the 2019-20 year, the year of the butterfly. I quoted Maya Angelou, "We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty." As educators, we were all reminded to look for butterfly moments throughout our year.

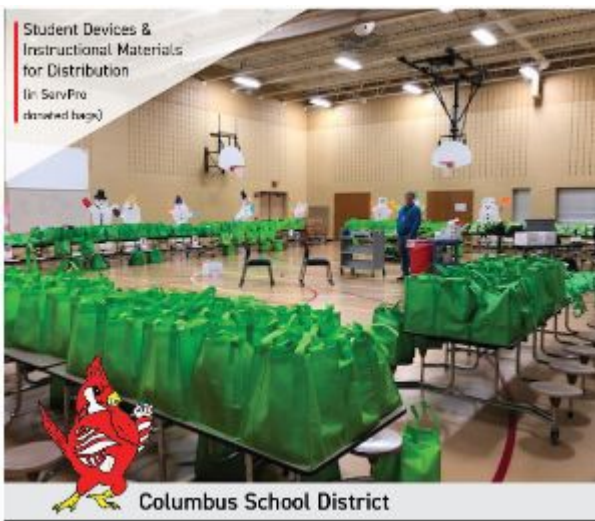
Those glimpses of beauty, joy, happiness that encourage us to continue in our roles as educators. A quote you may have seen often during the COVID-19 crisis by Keith Ellison states, "*We're Americans - in times of crisis, we step up.*" Well, I'd like to adapt the Ellison quote to reflect my experiences in the Columbus School District last week to "We're Educators - in times of crisis, we step up." And oh, how they did, for their students, their families, and their community.

Last Thursday, the message educators received was schools are going to stay open as long as possible. Public Health and our communities need us to remain open. And so, it was education as usual. However, the concern and worry for the safety and health of many



families changed rapidly. We sent communication to families Friday early afternoon and by late Friday, the Governor announced school would close on Wednesday. After meeting with area Superintendents over the weekend and discussing the health and safety concerns for our immediate area, the decision was made to close the district immediately. As I continued to communicate the changes, I can only imagine the start, pause, go, start again, stop emotions our teachers, administrators, (and families) were feeling. And yet, action was taken.

When the initial shock wore off, emotions set aside, educators stepped up. When the District needed staff to help distribute meals, we had many hands offered, while a core team delivered every morning in the wind, rain and snow. When the District needed instructional materials to be compiled and placed in bags for grade levels 4K - 5, it was done in under FIVE hours. The technology staff was in the building on Sunday after the first communication preparing iPads for distribution and has worked tirelessly throughout to ensure a seamless virtual learning transition. The Facilities Manager sought donations of bags for the materials (Thank you SERVPro delivered within one hour!); and the custodial crew is cleaning and disinfecting our building top to bottom. Our food services team is preparing meals daily to ensure no child within our district goes hungry. Teachers are redesigning instruction to ensure student learning moves forward for students, even though many are feeling they missed out on the opportunity to say good-bye. The many staff who cleaned desks, lockers, prepared personal items, devices, instructional materials and



packed bags, and delivered the bags to parents curbside in the wind, rain and snow so that each and every student could be prepared for the next step in their virtual learning experience. For our pending retirees, who await anxiously, not knowing if indefinitely means forever - never to return to their classrooms, buildings or students. Columbus educators stepped up in the last week giving our students and families everything they had to ensure this transition to a new learning experience will be the best it can be. Butterflies everywhere!

This continues to be a fluid situation that has no road map. I am in contact daily with superintendents in Dane County and CESA 5, as well as the Public Health Department. To meet the needs of our students, staff, and families, we are all sharing ideas, doing the best we can to navigate this situation. What I have learned is that change is certain and that yesterday's plan may not be today's plan nor tomorrow's plan based on most recent recommendations.

I have no doubt that with the Columbus educators leading your students in the new virtual learning experience, we will traverse this journey successfully, together and stronger for having gone through the process. Like butterflies.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns as we begin the virtual learning journey.

Anette Deuman

Continuity of Learning

March 27, 2020

Open Letter to Students and Parents- What to Expect From Columbus Distance Learning

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

As I sit down to write this, I have never been prouder of the resiliency and adaptability of the students and staff members of Columbus School District. Life literally changed overnight, and on Monday, March 30, we begin our latest chapter in our educational journey- distance learning.

Thank you for your patience as our staff continues to work hard and to prepare to make this transition. This plan has evolved quickly and there will be bumps that we will address as we encounter them, but we are in this together with one goal: advancing learning for all students. Here is what you can expect.

By 5pm each Friday, teachers will post weekly distance learning lesson plans on a shared document for their school. These plans may be found in the [Virtual Learning](#) folder off the district's main website.

All teachers will be continuing instruction through the use of [Google Classrooms](#) (or other previously established platforms). They are contacting students and families with how to gain access. This is where teachers may do things like post instructional videos, host a class discussion, and ask students to submit work. Each instructional day, teachers will be asking for some kind of two-way communication about learning. It might be as simple as a reflection question or as complex as a request to submit an assignment.

Weekly lesson plans for Week 1 (week of March 30) are already up on the [Virtual Learning](#) tab of the district website.

Beginning with Week 2 (week of April 6), in order to allow flexibility in meeting student needs, the revised instructional schedule for each week will look like this:

Day of the Week	Activity	Notes
Monday	Conferring and/or Instruction with Small Groups and Individual Students	Staff will communicate with specific students through Google Classroom if there is small group/individual instruction to be done. The goal of this day is to provide a little extra support like pre-teaching and/or re-teaching for students who may benefit from it. Students who are not participating in small group/individual work may be asked to do practice activities like "reading to self" or working on a paper, but no new <u>whole group</u> instruction will be given.
Tuesday	Instruction	Please see weekly lesson plans/Google classrooms
Wednesday	Instruction	Please see weekly lesson plans/Google classrooms
Thursday	Instruction	Please see weekly lesson plans/Google classrooms
Friday	Collaboration and Planning	Staff will be collaborating and planning. Students may be asked to do practice activities like "reading to self" or working on a paper, but no new instruction will be given.

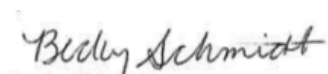
Instructional days will follow the Columbus School District calendar, so if there is a scheduled day off (ex: April 10 and April 13), then those days are still off for virtual learning. If the calendar has a scheduled late start or early release, due to the already changed instructional format, those are still days of instruction.

(*Please note- students receiving special education services may receive additional services on certain days and should refer to instructions previously sent out by special education staff)

Instruction will focus on essential learning standards that have previously been identified by staff. Grading practices will also be updated to address what is best for students in this current situation. Yesterday, the district sent [Columbus Guidance for Grading and Graduation](#) to staff.

As always, if you have questions about classes, please reach out to the teachers either through the Google classroom or email. Principals, student services, and all administrative staff also remain available through email. All staff email addresses are available in the [staff directory](#).

We are here for students and committed to their growth and development. Stay safe and don't hesitate to reach out with questions.



Becky Schmidt
Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Columbus Elementary School/Discovery Charter School

Message from the Principal,

As a former music teacher, I can't help but remember that March is *Music in Our Schools Month*. The importance of music in a child's life is so much more than singing along to their favorite song on the radio. As many of my previous messages reflect the importance of literacy and creating routines, this message will not stray from that focus, rather support it once again! When an infant hears music, brain development occurs, even while sleeping. As a young child, they learn to move to rhythms and quickly learn that music has repetition. Some of the first times a child "reads music" is when they see pictures move from left to right that match the sound they either hear or are making. This early literacy skill supports the reading standard of understanding the concept of print. Something essential for all readers to know before learning to read. And it continues throughout their life, the correlation between reading music and reading words makes and draws connections for the student at every level. It was always exciting to see a student who struggled to read books but could read the music symbols proficiently. This certainly wasn't a fluke, those students had literacy skills that tapped into their brain development a little different than others, which is why giving all students the opportunity to learn to read music at a young age is so vital to their literacy skills. I am proud that we have such a strong K-12 music program in the Columbus School District, it supports, expression, social and emotional skills, cooperation, and literacy. If you get a chance this month, THANK your child's music teacher for contributing to all those traits they support.



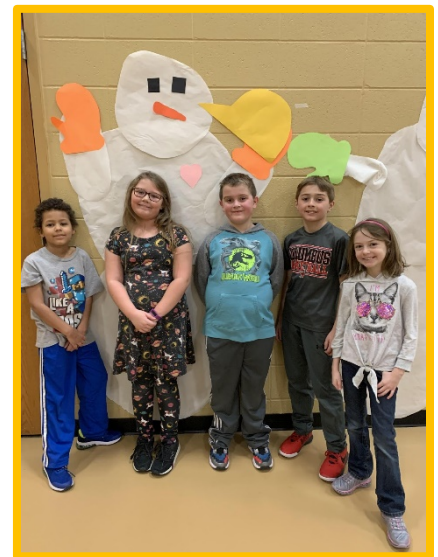
Mrs. Hellpap



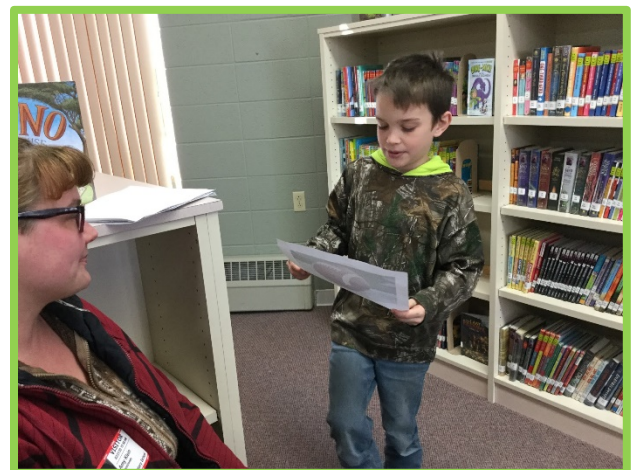
The CES Kindergarten Students shared their super reader powers with their families on January 29th.



On blustery days when it is too cold to play outside, Ms. Schutz's kindergarteners play inside and use their fine motor skills to make necklaces!



2nd grade DCS students WOW'd the crowd with their science expedition on Feb 21st. Families and school friends came into the library to see and hear reports about the students topic of interest. They related it to their study of matter and left the listener with information about solids, liquids and gases.





Cooperation is a big, HUGE component to physical education. One example of teamwork in progress was done while constructing large snowmen in the gym. Students had to run, run, and run in a relay to collect all the pieces needed for the monumental task. Team members exercised, shared ideas, gave feedback, designed, and built a unique snowman. This was all accomplished through cooperation.

Columbus Intermediate School/Middle School

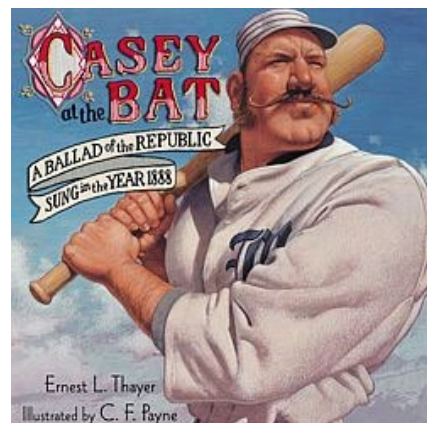
Notes from the principal...

Connections between literature and lunch!

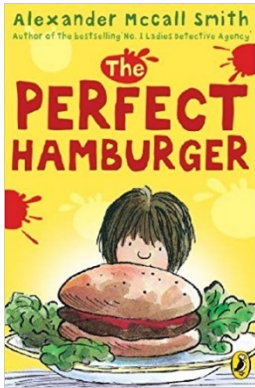
Read Across America - As part of our school's celebration of Read Across America ... I am featuring a book that also connects in with the lunch from that day. Kids have more fun when connections are made.

Casey at the Bat (image from mlb.nbc.com) - This poem in book form by Ernest Lawrence Thayer is a great example of overcoming obstacles and surprise endings. This classic American poem is a great read for everyone in the family. So, as kids eat their hotdog (today's lunch), I thought it would be fun to imagine being at the ballpark.

Leo Tolstoy is an author many of us as adults have read and many of our middle school students will read in high school/college. The famous books, **War and Peace** and **Anna Karenina** are works that are classics in many curriculums. This is connected to Mac and Cheese. Tolstoy was famous for his Mac and Cheese with layers of butter, parmesan, and pasta. So, as kids eat Tuesday's lunch of mac and cheese - hopefully they can connect it to classic literature.



Michael Perry, is a well-known Wisconsin author that has published several **Population: 485: Meeting Your Neighbors One Siren at a Time, Truck: A Love Story, and Coop: A Year of Poultry, Pigs, and Parenting**. As the students eat chicken nuggets for lunch, it is important to realize that poultry is an industry that is important to Wisconsin. This industry is a 135-million-dollar industry in our great state.



Several towns in America claim to be the home of the hamburger - but Seymour, Wisconsin rises to the top of our list with its spiffy 12-foot-tall statue of "Hamburger Charlie" Nagreen, who claimed to have invented the sandwich (and coined its name) in Seymour in 1885. The novel, **The Perfect Hamburger**, is a mystery about a snazzy fast-food chain moving into a small town, and a local business, a favorite hamburger restaurant, begins to suffer. gets an idea that's sure to bring back the diners, but there's just one problem. The secret recipe for the burgers is missing! (lexile.com)

Who doesn't enjoy a great slice of pizza? This graphic novel is a great way to introduce the genre of horror to students. **Pizza Tree**, by Mark Poulton is a new novel about what happens when you plan a slice of pepperoni in your backyard. Personally, I would have eaten it.

As students learn and adjust through a long winter, I think it is a great way to celebrate two things that can keep us going before the temperatures rise - food and books!



Middle School Sports Happenings

Wrestling

Middle School wrestling consists of 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. There is usually a wide range of experience. Some athletes have never seen or been part of a match before and others have been wrestling since they were young. Wrestlers compete with students from other schools that generally have similar years of experience and ability. A match consists of 3 one-minute periods. A pin ends the match. A pin is when a wrestler has both shoulder blades touching the wrestling mat for 2 seconds or time has expired. Usually wrestlers at a middle school meet will wrestle 1 to 3 times at the meet. Wrestlers will learn how scoring and a match works. Ultimately, every athlete will learn humility in winning and losing. The goal is to improve every day, learn moves from neutral (on feet), top, bottom, and pinning combinations. Our last meet of the year is the conference meet. Each student will have the opportunity to wrestle opponents their same weight and grade throughout our conference.



Forensics



CMS forensics students have been working hard over the past two months perfecting their pieces in preparation for their upcoming meets. Forensics at the middle school level provides an opportunity for students to be involved in various forms of public speaking. Play acting, historical speeches, poetry, oral interpretation, and more are included in the competition. In addition to the enhancement of public speaking skills, students sharpen their research skills, writing skills, and their ability to

work in cooperation with others through discussion and debate. Come cheer them on as they will be performing at Poynette Middle School on March 9th, and at Columbus Middle School on March 17th.



Project Unify



Project Unify members led students in the Columbus Intermediate School to pledge to stick together. The students were given a piece of colorful Duct Tape and when taped their name onto the pledge, they promised to stick together against bullying. The students pledged to stop hurtful teasing and encourage others to do the same, do their part to make the school a safe place by being kinder to others, not let their words or actions hurt others, and treat others the way they want to be treated. Middle school project unify members led the students in an activity that supported sticking together. Project Unify is excited to spread inclusivity and kindness around the building.



Project Unify also participated in the Polar Plunge. This was an exciting event that supported Special Olympics Wisconsin. The students in the Columbus Middle School Project Unify raised \$1,755 to support the cause! Nine Project Unify members and both advisors jumped into the frozen lake.



Columbus High School

Winter Sports Update

The Girls Basketball Team made it to the 2nd round of the playoffs, but their season ended with a loss to Waupun. We are really proud of the girl's and the coaches! They finished with a 7-17 record.



The Boys Basketball team finished their season with a 14-8 record

CHS Wrestling had a strong season, and one of our wrestler's James Roche, made it to the State Wrestling Tournament. Congratulations James!



James Roche at State Wrestling Tournament

Classroom Activities

In Tech Ed, Mr. Schroeder oversees the pouring and casting of metal, as our students work on a class project.



The Ag Careers and Leadership Class takes a field trip to Mid-State Tech

Visit by State Superintendent of Schools

State Superintendent of Schools Carolyn Stanford Taylor visited the Public Library to discuss the library's work with community partnerships. Board members Mike O'Brien and Cindy Damm stopped by to show support of the great work that the library does as a partner with the school district.



Notes from the Nurse:



Tips to Boost Immune System

Influenza and other viral illnesses still remain prevalent in our community, and across the nation. Here are some simple ways to improve and keep your immune system healthy.

1. **WASH YOUR HANDS:** Washing your hands and/or using hand sanitizer when appropriate remains one of the most effective ways to avoid getting sick or spreading an illness to another person. Remember to wash your hands with warm soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and dry with a clean towel. If proper handwashing technique is used, it can reduce the transmission of an illness or infection by up to 40%.
2. **EAT A HEALTHY & BALANCED DIET:** Certain foods contain nutrients that assist your immune system in fighting off illness. Vitamin C, B6, and E are valuable nutrients that work with your immune system to keep you healthy. Foods such as oranges, grapefruits, tangerines, strawberries, bell peppers, spinach, kale, broccoli, chicken, salmon, tuna, chickpeas, nuts and seeds are high in these important nutrients. Other foods like garlic, mushrooms, ginger, and onions also have properties that can boost your immune system. However, foods high in sugar, and other foods that lack nutritional value, may even hurt your immune system by attacking cells that kill bacteria.
3. **DRINK PLENTY OF WATER:** Staying hydrated is an important part of keeping your body and immune system healthy. Water helps eliminate and remove toxins from your body that can have a negative impact on the effectiveness of your immune system. In most cases, it is recommended to drink 8–8-ounce glasses of water per day. Try adding lemon, orange, or strawberry to your water for increased flavor and additional intake of those important vitamins.
4. **EXERCISE:** Regular exercise helps your immune system in a number of ways; the rise of body temperature during and after exercise prevents bacteria from growing and helps fight off any infection, it assists with flushing bacteria out of the lungs and airways; contributes to the circulation of white blood cells throughout the body; and it slows the release of stress hormones.
5. **REST:** During sleep, your immune system releases proteins. When you are sick, an increase in these proteins are necessary because they help your body fight off infections and reduce inflammation.

School-aged children may need 10 or more hours of sleep per night, teenagers need around 9–10 hours, and adults between 7–8 hours.

6. **REDUCE AND MANAGE STRESS:** Chronic stress leads to an increase in hormones that suppress your immune system. Finding ways to decrease stress levels, and recognizing the importance of self-care activities, can help with this. Meditating, reading, doing yoga, working out, and spending time with friends and families are some ideas to reduce stress.
7. **GET SOME SUNSHINE:** Vitamin D has been found to increase the production of antibodies and activate the cells of the immune system so they can respond to an infection faster. In addition, low levels of Vitamin D can actually increase your risk of an illness/infection.

Technology Update

During the closure and with virtual learning starting up, the technical support department will be available to support student and staff needs. We are available to help students with issues they may have with their district provided Chromebook, district applications and Hot Spot troubleshooting basics. We can be contacted by email: support@columbus.k12.wi.us or by phone: 920-623-5950 x2222. Please do not call the Chromebook or iPad manufacturer for assistance, all support on the Chromebooks and iPads should be with the district technical support department. Just a reminder, all replacement parts be it a charger cord or any other part on the Chromebook must be repaired/handled/ordered by the School District. Please DO NOT order your own replacement part. We are here to help with your virtual learning technical needs!

Calendar / Upcoming Events

April

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10 No School
13 No School School Board Meeting 7 PM, City Hall	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27 School Board Meeting 7 PM, City Hall	28	29	30	

Contact Information www.columbus.k12.wi.us Phone Number: 920.623.5950

Superintendent:	Annette Deuman	<i>adeuman@columbus.k12.wi.us</i>
Director of Business Services:	Kent Ritchie	<i>kritchie@columbus.k12.wi.us</i>
Director of Special Education:	Lisa Blochwitz	<i>lblochwitz@columbus.k12.wi.us</i>
Director of Curriculum/Instruction:	Becky Schmidt	<i>bschmidt@columbus.k12.wi.us</i>
Technology Manager:	Chet Bembenek	<i>cbembenek@columbus.k12.wi.us</i>
Facilities Manager:	Troy Marshall	<i>tmarshall@columbus.k12.wi.us</i>
Food Service Director:	Laura Austin	<i>laustin@columbus.k12.wi.us</i>