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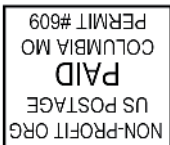


★ FALL 2021 ★

QUARTERLY CONNECTION



ECRWSS POSTAL CUSTOMER



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Board of Education



CPS awarded Early Childhood Education Program of the Year

The Missouri School Boards' Association (MSBA) FutureBuilders recognized Columbia Public Schools' early childhood program as the Early Childhood Education Program of the Year.

MSBA FutureBuilders Board selects award recipients based on innovative approaches and outstanding ability by public schools to engage and support the development of the children and overall commitment to early childhood education.

Columbia Public Schools' Early Childhood Education program is designed to address the developmental learning needs of children ages 3-5. Certified staff work closely with families and community resources to enhance the social/emotional, physical, learning and communication development of young children.

The CPS program worked toward decreasing the achievement gap by practicing a conscious understanding of the unique challenges and barriers faced by individual students, families, administrators, teachers and staff to provide additional supports designed to help overcome obstacles.

The program also took a new approach towards biases that effect students, families and educators.

"Whatever walk of life happened before entering school has an effect on students, parents and teachers," Preschool Director Nicole Langston said. "When we are able to see the child with loving eyes and empathy, we can move forward without bias and break through walls of equity by knowing and understanding everything about our families and ourselves."

With more than 30 years of progress data for students who began in CPS preschools, coordinators evaluated what was working and where there were opportunities for growth, then aligned curriculum and teaching practices between preschool and kindergarten to foster smoother transitions to prepare students for future success.

Kindergarten teachers who receive students from the program now have more information about their incoming students, beyond academic data, and can better prepare themselves, their teaching practices and their classrooms for a successful year.

Students who go through the program have increased kindergarten readiness skills in reading by 12.41 percent and in math by 8.38 percent. The program has also resulted in changes to the overall culture in the classroom.



There are numerous ways to get information on happenings in Columbia Public Schools.

CPS MOBILE APP

Download our app to get a personalized window into the latest news and information about the district and your student's school. Available for free via the App Store or Google Play. Search for Columbia Public Schools.

CPS-TV

CPS-TV, the channel dedicated to showcasing news and events happening within Columbia Public Schools, has a variety of videos and live events to keep you informed, including Board of Education meetings and news and information about our schools and students. CPS-TV is viewable on several easy-to-watch platforms. Watch on Mediacom channel 81, CenturyLink channel 97 and Charter/Spectrum channel 985, or connect to the live stream at www.cpsk12.org/cpstv. Viewers can also download the Cablecast Screenweave app to their Apple TV, Roku or FireTV device and search for the CPS-TV channel. Visit www.cpsk12.org/cpstv for more details.

PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

Parents and guardians receive important messages from CPS and Student Transportation of America via the contact information on file at your student's school. Be sure to keep your contact information current with the school to receive these important messages. You can also access messages through the district's mobile app. More information is available at www.cpsk12.org.

PEACHJAR

Check out the PeachJar icon on the school district homepage to access fliers for community events and activities provided by local organizations.

CPS FAMILIES PORTAL

Access all CPS apps through CPS Families Portal using your assigned ID and password.

- **Home Access:** A web-based, real-time tool allowing families to check their secondary student's current attendance, scheduled courses, grades and more. Please contact your school directly for more information.
- **Schoolology:** Allows access to course materials and assignments both at school and home.

CoMoEd program sees continued progress

The CoMoEd program, a teacher development program created by Columbia Public Schools, sees continued progress with both high school and program graduates.



The CoMoEd program was designed to recruit and retain locally educated and culturally-competent educators. The program seeks to provide better representation of minority students and teachers in Columbia Public Schools.

The program begins while students are in high school, providing them mentors that stay with them throughout college. They are also provided paid summer internships while in high school.

Upon high school graduation, students receive a four-year scholarship to one of the program's partnering institutions to earn their degree in education. Upon graduation from college and obtaining their teaching certificates, students are provided a teaching position with Columbia Public Schools.

Students who receive scholarships must first apply to the CoMoEd Scholarship Committee, providing two references and an essay. Their transcripts and high school activities are assessed, and students are interviewed. Students must also be accepted by one of the program partner colleges – Columbia College, Central Methodist University, Stephens College and the University of Missouri.

Currently there are 11 students participating in the high school portion of the program, with three scheduled to graduate in 2022.

Two CPS students in the program graduated high school this year. Nyah Adair will attend Central Methodist University and DeHajnae West is going to Columbia College.

Tyus Monroe, the first college graduate of the program, began her career as a CPS teacher this fall at the secondary level.

"These students are hard-working and resilient," CoMoEd Coordinator Nicole Adair said. "You can't outwork them. They have an incredible work ethic. This program provides the emotional and clinical supports they need to succeed."

The program began with a group of retired teachers, community leaders and others who wanted to encourage more minority students to become educators. The group looked to a similar internal CPS program that was in place in the early 90s and started by Monica Naylor, daughter of Beulah Ralph, to provide support during the summer months to minority students who wanted to become educators.

With an enhanced concept of this initial program, the group approached then Superintendent Peter Stiepleman, who then reached out to local colleges. The college administrators, understanding the value of supporting local students educated in CPS and keeping them in the market after graduation, partnered to provide free tuition to students.

Although students are only required to teach four years with CPS, the intention is to retain them until retirement.

"It is awesome to walk shoulder to shoulder with these students throughout their education, and to see their dreams of becoming culturally competent educators realized," Adair said.

New to the team



Dr. Jennifer Rukstad

Interim Chief of Human Resources

Rukstad most recently served as the assistant superintendent for secondary education and previously was the principal at Rock Bridge High School. She has more than 20 years of experience in education, including serving as an assistant principal, athletic director, teacher, intervention coordinator and coach.



Dr. Helen Porter

Interim Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education

Porter has a long history in Columbia Public Schools, starting with her own education. She attended West Junior High School and Hickman High School and began working at Oakland Middle School in 1997 as a teacher, then a teaching fellowship mentor, administrative assistant, assistant principal and principal.



Jeff Mielke

Oakland Middle School Interim Principal

Mielke has been in education for 21 years. His time in the classroom includes teaching both at the middle school and high school levels prior to joining CPS. He has been an assistant principal for the last 11 years, including the last nine years at Oakland Middle School.



Taylor Drennan

John Warner Middle School Principal

Drennan transitioned from assistant principal to interim principal of John Warner Middle School in 2021. Prior to John Warner Middle School, he gained administrative experience at Gentry Middle School and Alpha Hart Lewis and Shepard Boulevard elementary schools. He has more than seven years of teaching experience, working with students in kindergarten through eighth grade.



Dr. David Stallo

Midway Heights Elementary School Principal

Stallo has been the assistant principal at Paxton Keeley Elementary School for the past two years. Prior to that, he served as the assistant principal at Shepard Boulevard Elementary School. He has 15 years of education experience, including six years with Columbia Public Schools.



Ron Monson

Director of Facilities and Construction Services

Monson joins Columbia Public Schools after serving as the director of facilities at the University of Missouri College of Engineering. Previously, he was the assistant director of Facilities and Construction Services at CPS.



Morgan Neale

West Boulevard Elementary School Principal

Neale has 18 years of experience in education. She began as a music teacher at a district in Kansas City, Mo., and has served as a CPS music teacher at Gentry and Lange middle schools and Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary School. She was also an assistant principal at West Boulevard and Rock Bridge elementary schools.



Brian Rehgl

Interim Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary School Principal

Rehgl most recently served as the assistant principal at Parkade Elementary School for the past three years. Prior to his leadership role at Parkade Elementary School, he spent 10 years teaching first, second and fourth grade students at the elementary level.



Kristina Contrades

New Haven Elementary School Principal

Contrades has served as the assistant principal for Blue Ridge Elementary School for the past three years. She has 14 years of experience with Columbia Public Schools, including nine years serving as a classroom teacher and two years as an instructional/fellows mentor.



De'Vion Moore

Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Schools

Moore most recently served as the principal for Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary School. Prior to that, he served as the assistant principal at West Boulevard Elementary School. He has nine years of experience at CPS and was a learning specialist at Hickman High School before joining West Boulevard.



Keith Henry

Director of Transportation

Henry served as the director of transportation for Lee's Summit School District prior to joining CPS. He has more than 27 years of experience and is past-president of the National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT) and the Missouri Association for Pupil Transportation. Henry is a former member of the Board of Directors of the Pupil Transportation Safety Institute (PTSI) and chairman of the annual Missouri School Bus Safety Competition.



Leigh Spence

Director of Secondary School Counseling

Spence has spent 20 years with Columbia Public Schools, most recently as the director of counseling at Battle High School. Prior to her time at Battle High School, she spent 10 years as a counselor at Hickman High School.

Bond Projects Update

Here is a snapshot of some of the many projects district crews have been busy working on this summer to prepare for the start of the 2021-22 school year.



Foundations for the **Rock Bridge Elementary School** west addition are nearly completed and wall construction is underway. The new entry and parking area is established, and the installation of a new fire sprinkler piping and security upgrades is in progress.

The district completed the ongoing project to improve air quality throughout school workshops this summer. The **Rock Bridge High School** theater scene shop, used by the department to build sets, will have new ventilation. This project, along with minor upgrades scheduled for the **Columbia Area Career Center**, will complete this project.

Lange and Smithton middle schools are undergoing restroom renovations.

Roseta Avenue Learning Center's renovations include increased accessibility and updates to safety and security. Removing and replacing the asphalt improved the playground, parking lot, driveway and sidewalk and included updates for better accessibility.

The **West Boulevard Elementary School** kitchen renovation is nearly complete and new equipment is in the installation process.

Russell Boulevard Elementary School's remodel and security upgrades included new flooring, new cabinets and sinks, refinishing wood frames and painting and rewiring throughout the entire building. The stage also received a vertical chair lift for accessibility.

The multi-phase improvements and remodeling at **Jefferson Middle School** have started. These improvements include a new gymnasium, elevators and stairs and improvements to the athletic field. The next phases include a new gymnasium building, improvements to the track and the addition of an elevator for better accessibility.

Upgrades to the HVAC system for efficiency and reliability are complete at **Lange Middle School, Paxton Keeley** and **Ridgeway elementary schools**. Boiler maintenance for **Hickman High School** and boiler replacement at **Paxton Keeley Elementary School** are in progress.

High school athletic improvements included new turf additions on the **Battle High School** baseball and softball fields, a new sideline fence and revised infield lines at the **Rock Bridge High School** softball and baseball fields and new turf and field lighting at the **Hickman High School** practice field.

NEW SUPERINTENDENT LEADS WITH SCHOLARS-FIRST VISION



Columbia Public Schools' commitment to preparing all students to graduate college-, career- and life-ready is underscored by new CPS Superintendent Dr. Brian Yearwood's focus on putting scholars first.

The Columbia Board of Education selected Yearwood in mid-March after a nationwide search to replace Superintendent Peter Stiepleman, who retired as superintendent on June 30. Yearwood began work on July 1.

As a teacher and coach, an assistant principal, an elementary school principal, a middle school principal and an assistant superintendent, Yearwood has spent his career focusing on understanding how scholars learn and providing opportunities through an educational framework that meets the needs of scholars and staff.

Originally from Trinidad and Tobago, he attended New Mexico Military Institute in Roswell on a tennis scholarship. He earned a Bachelor of Science, a Master of Education Administration and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas.

"As I begin my role as superintendent, I want to build on the current progress Columbia Public Schools has started," Yearwood said.

Yearwood sites collaboration as an essential part of his leadership style and said as part of his transition to CPS he looks forward to meeting with board members, staff, scholars, parents, community members and all other stakeholders of the school district.



Scholars First

Continue Strong Relationships

Recognize our Differences

Hours, bus, and lunch information



www.cpsk12.org/schoolcalendar

SCHOOL HOURS

7:55 a.m. – 2:55 p.m.

8:05 a.m. – 2:05 p.m.

8:20 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

7:40 a.m. – 2:40 p.m.

8:20 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.

7:30 a.m. – 2:35 p.m.

8:55 a.m. – 4:05 p.m.

9:08 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.

7:40 a.m. – 2:40 p.m.

8:20 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.

8:20 a.m. – 1:35 p.m.

8:20 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.

12:20 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.



Classes begin Tuesday, Aug. 24, for grades 1 – 12 and Thursday, Aug. 26, for Kindergarten.

Preschool: Center for Early Learning – North

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Eliot Battle, Benton STEM, Locust Street Expressive Arts, Midway Heights, New Haven, Ridgeway, Rock Bridge and Two Mile Prairie elementary schools

Alpha Hart Lewis, Beulah Ralph, Blue Ridge, Cedar Ridge, Derby Ridge, Fairview, Grant, Mill Creek, Parkade, Paxton Keeley, Russell Boulevard, Shepard Boulevard and West Boulevard elementary schools

Gentry, Jefferson, John Warner, Lange, Oakland, Smithton and West middle schools

Battle, Hickman and Rock Bridge high schools

Douglass High School

Quest at the Center of Responsive Education – South

Early Childhood Special Education morning class – North

Early Childhood Special Education (including LEAP) morning class – Discovery Center

Deaf Hard of Hearing Program – Discovery Center

Quest at the Roseta Learning Center – East

Early Childhood Special Education afternoon class – North

Early Childhood Special Education (including LEAP) afternoon class – Discovery Center

BUS SCHEDULES



Bus information is available at www.cpsk12.org/transportation.

Families may select bus transportation during the annual school registration process. Please note, students in grades kindergarten through 8 who live within one mile of their school and students in grades 9 through 12 who live within two miles of their school are not eligible for bus transportation. Bus transportation is not generally provided for any preschool students. If you have additional questions, please contact your student's school.

MEAL PRICES



Menus available online at www.cpsk12.org/nutrition or follow us on Twitter [@CPSLunch](https://twitter.com/CPSLunch).

STUDENTS

All student meals are free until June 30, 2022. Additional milk, juice and/or a la carte only prices may vary. Parents may pay for additional a la carte items online at www.myschoolbucks.com or via the CPS Families Portal.

ADULTS

Breakfast: \$2.40 | Lunch: \$3.90

Free and reduce-price lunch applications are accepted all year long and available at www.cpsk12.org/nutrition or at your child's school. A new application must be completed every year to qualify for benefits. During the 2021-2022 school year, all meals are free to students. While meals are free to all students, it is important to complete an application to receive additional benefits that are offered locally, or by your state, and/or federal government. Families may be eligible for benefits if household gross income meets 135-185% or less of the federal poverty level, if your household receives SNAP or TANF benefits, if your child is of foster status, or is deemed homeless, runaway, or migrant.