

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Fall 2024

Community CONNECTIONS

District News • Community Ed Offerings • and more!



OUR MISSION

Columbia Heights Public Schools
Creating worlds of opportunity for each and every learner
"All Belong, All Succeed"

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Community Connections is an official publication of Columbia Heights Public Schools written, edited and produced by the Communications Department.

Director of Community Ed & Communications **Kristen Stuenkel**
Communications Coordinator **Emma Bute**

Community Education Advisory Council

- Mohammed Alqaysi
Alix Lewis
- Atinan Anwar
Kathleen Moriarty
- Margarita Donayre
Leo Pham
- Angie Fanning
Tammy Schmitz
- Nichole Hayden
Dale Schuetz
- Keith Windschitl

If you would like to join the Advisory Council or have any questions, contact Kristen Stuenkel at 763.528.4515.

Community Education Department

1440 49th Ave. NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421 • 763.528.4517 • colheights.k12.mn.us/CommunityEd • Weekdays, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
The Community Education Office will be closed: Sept. 2, Oct. 18, Nov. 28-29, Dec. 24-25 and 31.

Kristen Stuenkel

Community Education Director &
Communications Director

763.528.4515 • StuenkeK@colheights.k12.mn.us

Karissa Ouren

Early Childhood Coordinator

763.528.4518 • OurenK@colheights.k12.mn.us

Kathleen Moriarty

Metro North ABE Supervisor

763.706.3850 • Kathleen.Moriarty@ahschools.us

Jodi Gadiant

Community Education Coordinator

763.528.4512 • GadiantJ@colheights.k12.mn.us

Emma Bute

Communications Coordinator &

Adult Enrichment/Senior Program Manager

763.528.4530 • ButeE@colheights.k12.mn.us

Melissa Trent

Agriculture Specialist

763.528.4508 • TrentM@colheights.k12.mn.us

Irene Ventura Solano

Community Education Administrative Assistant

763.528.4517 • Ventural@colheights.k12.mn.us



A Letter from Superintendent Stenvik

Dear Community Members,

As we begin the new school year, we are excited to welcome students of all ages to our educational and enrichment programs. I am thrilled to inform you that throughout last school year we had higher community engagement than ever before for our strategic planning process. With student, staff, family, school board and community input, we are launching a new strategic plan; Vision 2030: All Belong, All Succeed, Creating Worlds of Opportunity, Together. The strategic plan is a living document that outlines the outcomes Columbia Heights Public Schools will strive for over the next five years. The outcomes will be measured on an annual basis. As you can see below, Vision 2030 prioritizes inclusive and connected relationships, strengthening academics, meaningful engagement and clear communication.



For the 2024-25 school year I am looking forward to:

- Connecting with students, staff, family members and community organizations
- Continuing to advocate for equitable school funding from lawmakers
- Celebrating the rich diversity within Columbia Heights Public Schools
- Amplifying students’ opportunities at all ages, birth through adulthood
- Streamlining our education systems



By working collaboratively, I am confident we will all have a great year!

Zena Stenvik
Superintendent
Columbia Heights Public Schools

New CHPS Strategic Plan

All Belong

Enhancing a culture of belonging by ensuring a supportive environment for students, families and staff that welcomes all individual identities and provides access to opportunities, resources and experiences.

All Succeed

Strengthening integrated education systems by delivering equitable and culturally responsive instruction for every student in preparation for college, career and life.

Creating Worlds of Opportunity Together

Elevating inclusive and connected relationships by expanding meaningful engagement opportunities with our families, staff and community that value and amplify all voices.



Scan QR Code
for more details



SENIOR OFFERINGS	Medicare 101 Are you turning 65 soon and want an overview of Medicare? This presentation introduces Parts A, B, C and D of Medicare, as well as what additional insurance options are available. The enrollment process and options for enrollment in Medicare will be discussed along with the personal costs of the program and eligibility for extra help with prescription drug costs. We will introduce the services of the Senior LinkAge Line® that include assistance making personal comparisons using the Medicare.gov website and the Health Care Choices booklet, published by the Minnesota Board on Aging.	Wednesday Sept. 25 2:00-3:00 p.m. FREE FC Room 111
	10 Warning Signs (Recognize Common Signs of Alzheimer's) Join us to learn how to recognize common signs of Alzheimer's; how to approach someone about memory concerns; the importance of early detection; possible tests and assessments for the diagnostic process, and Alzheimer's Association resources.	Thursday Sept. 26 1:00.-2:00 p.m. FREE FC Room 111
	Defensive Driving - Zoom Class If you are 55 or older, save money on your car insurance premiums and become a better driver! Minnesota law requires that insurance companies offer a 10% reduction on auto insurance for three years if you complete a state-approved defensive driving course taught by professional, certified instructors. Senior Discount already applied. This course is held via zoom - no driving or test required. At the end of the course, you will receive a certificate of completion to provide to your insurance agent.	Wednesday Oct. 9 9 a.m.-1 p.m. \$30 (1 Session) Virtual via Zoom
	Wednesday Dec. 4 1:30-5:30 p.m. \$30 (1 Session) Virtual via Zoom	
	Managing Money: A Caregiver's Guide to Finances If you or someone you know is facing Alzheimer's disease, dementia or another chronic illness, it's never too early to put financial plans in place. Join us to learn tips for managing someone else's finances, how to prepare for future care costs and the benefits of early planning.	Monday Oct. 14 1:00.-2:00 p.m. FREE FC Room 111
	Exploring Care and Support Services This class, put on by the Alzheimer's Association, will examine how best to prepare for future care decisions and changes, including respite care, residential care and end-of-life care.	Thursday Nov. 14 1:00.-2:00 p.m. FREE FC Room 111
TRIPS	MinnesotaHelp Network Did you know that there are over 40,000 resources for older adults and their family members in Minnesota? And they are available to you today with a touch of a few keystrokes. Learn how to navigate the MinnesotaHelp data base to find helping resources in Minnesota. Users can create directories, save searches and plans, and compare services side-by-side. We will introduce you to the Long-term Care Choices Navigator, a tool to help seniors and their caregivers find aging services to enable seniors to live and age well in the community.	Tuesday Nov. 19 11 a.m.-12 p.m. FREE FC Room 111
	Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community's Organic Recycling Facility Tour Join us for a tour of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community's Organics Recycling facility. It's one of the largest in the state where they mix food organics with yard waste and turn it into finished compost, which is like a natural fertilizer for soil. We'll learn about the 90 day process to create finished compost and about proper do's and don'ts of organics recycling.	Wednesday Oct. 16 11:45 a.m.-4 p.m. FREE Meet at Murzyn Hall 530 Mill Street NE

Instant Pot/Sheet Pan/Skillet Meals - Zoom Class with Kirsten Madaus

Simplify supper with one pot cooking! Using a sheet pan OR a skillet OR a pressure cooker to make a complete meal saves time and energy. Join Kirsten online in her kitchen as she demonstrates skillet gnocchi with sausage and peas, sheet pan quesadillas or pesce primavera, and pressure cooker beef stroganoff soup or curried wild rice soup for two.

Tuesday Sept. 24 6:30-8 p.m. \$22 (1 class) Virtual via Zoom

Air Fryer Advanced - Zoom Class with Kirsten Madaus

Get ready to level up your air frying skills as Kirsten's demonstration takes you on a journey through the ins and outs of air fryer cooking, showing you how to create a wide variety of dishes without turning on your stove. You'll learn how to whip up delicious and healthy meals like tandoori salmon and potatoes and basque style cheesecake in no time.

Tuesday Oct. 1 & 8 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$40 (2 classes) Virtual via Zoom

"Parent & Me" Homemade Apple & Pear Crisp Making Class

Spend some time in the Columbia Heights High School FACS Classroom and bond with your kiddo while making homemade Apple and/or Pear Crisp with CHHS FACS Teacher, Autumn Trzaskowski! This is a fun opportunity for you and your child to spend some time in the kitchen together and learn some tips on how to safely include your child in your meal-making routine! Autumn will be teaching you how to make homemade apple/pear crisp, and we will be getting to use apples and pears from Blooming Heights Garden! If the fruit is still on the trees, we will get to pick them for the crisps ourselves! Your child will get to learn some knife skills with kid-safe knives and you will get to go home with some delicious leftovers!

This class is set up for one adult and one child for \$25, but if you have two children you want to bring, it is only \$5 more! For each adult, the cost is \$25 (so if there are two adults wanting to attend together with a child, you must register separately) to cover the cost of supplies and instruction. Ages for children attending is recommended 3 to 12, but anyone is welcome as the experience is what you would like it to be with your child! This class is open to any parent, grandparent or guardian and their child!

Thursday Oct. 5 5:00-7:30 p.m. \$25 (1 Adult, 1 Child) \$30 (1 Adult, 2 Children) FACS Classroom CHHS Room #137

Baked Apple Cider Donuts w/ CHHS FACS Teacher, Autumn Trzaskowski

Embrace the flavors of fall with this sweet morning treat! Columbia Heights High School FACS Teacher, Autumn will be teaching you how to create homemade Apple Cider Donuts with everyone's favorite fall flavors (apple, cinnamon and spice)! You will learn the steps to baking donuts to recreate at home, and get to bring leftovers home with you after the class! Join Autumn in the CHHS FACS classroom to learn how to create these yummy fall treats!

Thursday Oct. 24 5:00-7:30 p.m. \$30 FACS Classroom CHHS Room #137

Festive Appetizers and Boards - Zoom Class with Kirsten Madaus

Join Kirsten live online from her home kitchen as she demonstrates Instant Pot hot crab and shrimp dip, air fryer buffalo cauliflower, goat cheese & garlic crostini, jalapeño rarebit poppers, mediterranean mezze boards and more!

Tuesday Nov. 12 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$22 (1 class) Virtual via Zoom

Monthly Meal Planning - Zoom Class with Kirsten Madaus

Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned home cook, this live online class is perfect for anyone who wants to take their meal planning to the next level. From "a Month of Meatless Mondays" to "Taco Tuesdays Ten Ways" to "Souper Sundays", there's something for everyone.

Saturday Dec. 7 3:00-5:00 p.m. \$36 (1 classes) Virtual via Zoom

Holiday Bake and Take Cookies

Get all your holiday baking finished in just one 4-hour class and take home a dozen each of 8 varieties of cookies - a perfect fit for your busy lifestyle. You'll be supplied with everything you need to make and decorate your holiday cookies. You will also have a chance for some sweet sampling! You'll take home 8 varieties of cookies! Grab your apron as participation is required and bring enough containers to hold 8 dozen cookies (hairnets and gloves will be provided). Please arrive on time and stay the full 4 hours. Children under 16 are not allowed. All supply costs included in tuition. Class meets in the high school cafeteria for a brief meeting before entering the kitchen.

Cookies being made are: Sugar Cookies, Gingerbread, Thumbprints, Snowballs, Red Velvet, Peanut Butter Blossoms, Andes Mint Chip Cookies and Rollo Pretzel Cookies.

Saturday Dec. 7 9 a.m.-1 p.m. \$48 CHHS Cafeteria Kitchen



Blooming Heights Garden Tour & Tips on "Putting Your Garden to Bed"

Enjoy a free garden tour of Blooming Heights garden with Agriculture Specialist, Melissa Trent, as we discuss a variety of methods for putting your home garden to "bed" this fall. Melissa will share her personal "garden-to-bed" checklist with you, and give you one of your own to take home. During this walking tour, Melissa will share tips about harvesting and storing your remaining garden vegetables, collecting seeds from your plants, amending your soil and perennial care.

Thursday Sept. 26 4:30-5:30 p.m. FREE Blooming Heights Garden

Photo Organization

Imagine all of your photos organized and a system in place that allows you to access any photo in literally seconds! This class will address the unique needs of Millennials, GenX and Baby Boomers as every generation's photo situation is different. This includes, slides, negatives, VHS, film movies, prints and old memorabilia. We will talk about AI (Artificial Intelligence), scanners, cloud storage, digitizing & restoration of older photos. You no longer have to imagine; make this your reality!

Thursday Nov. 7 6:00-8:00 p.m. \$15 FC Room 111

"Paint Nite MN"

Come join artist Ashley Erickson at Columbia Heights High School for a "Paint Nite" event to remember! With her expert guidance, you'll create a masterpiece that you can proudly display in your home or office. Come out and have a great time, and don't forget to bring your friends! No painting experience needed! Total price of this experience includes the canvas and paint, so you are not required to bring anything with you! Painting smocks will be provided to wear and brushes will be provided. **Registration on our site will have a \$5 registration fee and you will be contacted after to finalize payment of the other \$45. Phone number must be provided.**

Friday Nov. 22 6:00-8:00 p.m. \$50 CHHS Room 98

Yoga

Come explore this ancient exercise system that strengthens the body while calming and focusing the mind. Please dress in comfortable clothes and bring a mat, towel, or rug for floor work. Classes will take place at the Fridley Community Center. Registration is required.

Tuesdays	Sept. 3, 10, 17, 24	6:00-7:30 p.m.	\$36 (4 classes)	Fridley Comm Center 116
Tuesdays	Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	6:00-7:30 p.m.	\$45 (5 classes)	Fridley Comm Center 116
Tuesdays	Nov. 12, 19, 26	6:00-7:30 p.m.	\$27 (3 classes)	Fridley Comm Center 116
Tuesdays	Dec. 3, 10, 17	6:00-7:30 p.m.	\$27 (3 classes)	Fridley Comm Center 116

Yoga Mindfulness

Explore a deeper mind-body connection with Mindfulness Yoga. Please dress in comfortable clothes and bring a mat, towel, or rug for floor work. Classes will take place at the Fridley Community Center. Registration is required.

Saturdays	Sept. 7, 14, 21, 28	10:00-11:30 a.m.	\$36 (4 classes)	Fridley Comm Center 116
Saturdays	Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26	10:00-11:30 a.m.	\$36 (4 classes)	Fridley Comm Center 116
Saturdays	Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23	10:00-11:30 a.m.	\$36 (4 classes)	Fridley Comm Center 116
Saturdays	Dec. 7, 14, 21	10:00-11:30 a.m.	\$27 (3 classes)	Fridley Comm Center 116

Let's Learn All About Emailing - Zoom Class

Learn how to e-mail, forward, reply and send attachments. You will see how e-mails are organized and deleted. Work with other features, such as starred, drafts and sent. Become acquainted with the writing tools, e-mail folders and creating links to direct others to your area of interest and websites you have visited. In addition, we will look at contacts and how to use them. All these features will be clearly demonstrated in Zoom. **When registering, please provide an email so CHPS can send the Zoom meeting link for the course.**

Monday Sept. 16 4:00-5:00 p.m. \$25 Virtual Via Zoom

AI for Older Adults - Zoom Class

Are you curious about AI? Then this class is for you! (Older adults will find this class very rewarding!) We will explore the practical benefits of using a basic form of AI called ChatGPT. Find quick written solutions to problems based on your exact needs. Generate personalized text in seconds for invitations, letters and any other materials you are looking to create. AI will quickly generate any text for you based on your interest. Take your search, research, inquiries and answers to questions to a whole new level! **When registering, please provide an email so CHPS can send you the Zoom meeting link for the class.**

Wednesday Oct. 30 5:00-6:00 p.m. \$25 Virtual Via Zoom

A Practical Computer Class for Adults - Zoom Class

Have you taken computer classes before and been totally lost? Well, this unique class is for those who are looking for simple and practical instructions. Your patient instructor has trained thousands of older adults, with 4 and 5-star ratings! We will discuss the popular YouTube website that offers thousands of free informative and entertaining videos, show a few email tips and tricks, demonstrate online shopping, visit AARP and other related websites for seniors, use some shortcut keys, and navigate Google Search to do research and get information. **When registering, please provide an email so CHPS can contact you with the Zoom meeting link for the class.**

Wednesday Nov. 6 2:00-3:00 p.m. \$25 Virtual Via Zoom

ENROLL NOW in Columbia Heights Public Schools

¡INSCRÍBETE AHORA en las Escuelas Públicas de Columbia Heights!

Columbia Heights Public Schools is a small, diverse school district providing students with the skills, knowledge, tools and support they need to excel both in and out of the classroom. We are committed to providing outstanding educational opportunities, so all learners can develop to their full potential.

Become a Hylander today!

ENROLL NOW >



colheights.k12.mn.us | 763.528.4426

TEACH A CLASS

Do you have knowledge, ideas or passions you'd like to share with others? Consider teaching a Community Education class! For more information, visit colheights.k12.mn.us/communityed/community-education/adultenrichment or contact Adult Enrichment/Senior Program Manager Emma Bute.

Metro North Adult Basic Education

English as a Second (or other) Language (ESL) | Levels 1-3

Monday-Thursday 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Tuesday-Thursday 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Advanced ESL

Monday-Friday 9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Tuesday-Thursday 6:00-8:30 p.m.

FREE

classes for adults!
Day and evening
class times available

Adult Education Center – Columbia Heights/Fridley

4111 Central Ave. NE, Suite 100

Columbia Heights, MN

How to Register

To register for classes, call 763.706.3833 or complete the online interest form available at metronorthabe.org and someone will contact you.

Class times may vary.

**Classes are ONLINE
& In-Person**



CHPS is one of Minnesota's only school districts with an outdoor classroom and living laboratory used by educators and students. Blooming Heights is a great place to learn hands-on gardening skills, and to use math, science, literacy, art and nutrition.

Learn more at colheights.k12.mn.us/communityed/community-education/bloomingheights

Contact Melissa Trent for more information | TrentM@colheights.k12.mn.us

Little Free Library | Books



The Little Free Garden Shop is a place where people can get free garden and wildflower seeds, excess free produce from the garden, and free pantry items.

The produce stand will be stocked with produce most Fridays in August, September & October. Please remember not to pick anything yourself from the garden.

It is located along the sidewalk just south of the garden, next to the Little Free Library, behind the District Center.

1440 49th Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421

Little Free Garden | Produce



Driver's Education

Students will receive a total of 30 hours of classroom instruction and six hours of behind-the-wheel instruction. The classroom portion consists of ten, three-hour classes and the behind-the-wheel portion is three, two-hour private lessons. Pre-registration is required with a \$217 down payment payable to CH Community Education. Classes offered through Safeway Driving School. The additional \$180 is payable to the behind-the-wheel instructor. (\$90 on the first lesson, and \$90 on the second lesson) For more information, contact Safeway at 651.351.9150 or visit safewaydrivingschool.com.

Parents/guardians will be required to complete Safeway's Account Verification. Safeway will send out an email before class begins that gives detailed information about how to login to the student's Safeway account to verify and complete contact information and to review and acknowledge our Service Agreement.



Sessions take place at CHHS in room 105

Session 1

Monday-Thursday Oct. 7-23 3:15-6:15 p.m.
No class Oct. 17

Session 2

Monday-Thursday Dec. 2-17 3:15-6:15 p.m.

The following **MUST** be provided during registration:

- Student full legal name (first, middle and last)
- Home address
- Parent email addresses
- Student date of birth
- Student email address
- Parent phone numbers

Alumni of Distinction | Suzy and Mark Vescio

Columbia Heights High School (CHHS) alumni Mark and Suzy Vescio (class of 1985) have been named their alma mater's 2024 Alumni of Distinction. The Vescios were recently announced as the joint-16th recipient of this award.

"Growing up in Heights, there were always so many opportunities presented to us kids at that time," said Mark Vescio when speaking about his involvement in Columbia Heights post-graduation. "I always felt that future generations should also be presented with the opportunities we had in the 70s and 80s. Getting to be a part of making that possible for youth in Columbia Heights now, so they are able to choose whether or not to try things out as opposed to not having the opportunity to join something, is rewarding."



"From the get-go, growing up in Columbia Heights, we were never 'just a number' in the school or the community. Our kids were never 'numbers'. That is why we wanted to stay here in Heights, because we had that experience while we were growing up," stated Suzy when speaking about the Columbia Heights community and CHPS. "Mark and I wanted the staff at the school to know who our kids were, and wanted the community members to recognize them as a part of the community. This is true of not only CHPS, but of Columbia Heights as a whole. It is such a comfortable place to be, because you can jump in wherever and be a "gap-filler" to support our students and make them feel involved and important. There are so many people that know our students' names and faces, because here in Heights they are not just a number. They are an integral part of the community."

The Vescios began their education as Hylanders, attending CHPS elementary schools, middle schools and both graduated from CHHS in 1985. Mark attended Nelson Elementary and Central Middle School, while Suzy attended Silver Lake Elementary School and Columbia Jr. High School. In high school, both Mark and Suzy were involved with Student Council, with Mark serving as the Student Council President his senior year. Suzy was also involved with the Art Club and Mark played football and managed the girls' basketball team.

The Vescios have spent much of their time outside of work helping out and volunteering with Columbia Heights organizations that support the community's youth. Both Mark and Suzy were a part of the Columbia Heights Athletic Boosters Club for ten years, and Mark also served as President and Vice President during that time. Suzy was the charitable gambling manager for the Boosters and has volunteered with the Columbia Heights Basketball Association. Mark created Youth Basketball Nights in Columbia Heights and also started the CH Athletic Boosters Hot Dog Wagon. He has coached youth programs such as tee-ball, football, hockey, baseball, basketball and more! Mark also received the Ron Wojak Award from the CH Athletic Boosters. Something that the couple is well-known for within the Columbia Heights community is their annual Homecoming Party for Columbia Heights Alum that they have hosted since 1997.

The Vescios will be formally recognized in the fall by the Columbia Heights High School Alumni Scholarship Foundation at the Alumni Foundation Dinner on October 24, 2024.



Activities & Athletics Recap



Follow along with Hylander
Activities and Athletics
@hylanderactivities on
Instagram

Spring Highlights Provided by the CHPS Activities Department

April

- CHHS Head Boys Basketball Coach Willie Brazil selected as Section 4AAA Coach of the Year
- Randy McClendon and Zy'erre Stewart play in the Minnesota High School All-Star Basketball Series
- Ten members of the Speech Team medal at the Section 4AA Speech Tournament. Taymoi Epps (3rd in Prose), Sandy Moncayo Cuji (3rd in Drama), Daphne Kleinschmit (2nd in Drama), Cassidy Wise (6th in Discussion), Bea Carter (6th in Humor), Ray Muhm (6th in Poetry), Carolina Baldovinos Miranda (5th in Poetry), Niina Mohammad (6th in Prose), Melat Mezgebe (5th in Prose), and Danny Churchill (6th in StoryTelling)
- Taymoi Epps, Sandy Moncayo Cuji, and Daphne Kleinschmit compete in the MSHSL State Speech Tournament
- CHHS hosts the inaugural Tri-Metro Jazz Band Festival
- CHHS hosts the Tri-Metro Artist Collective Student Art Show at the Columbia Heights Public Library
- Over 320 student athletes participating in spring sports
- Successful run of the CHHS Spring Play "The Day the Internet Died", under the direction of Jessica Bolles
- Thanhtruc Mai is the 2024 Athena Award Winner
- Ryan Agudo Medina is the 2024 Oscar Eng Award Winner



May

- 15 CHHS Students earn a Superior or Excellent Award at the MSHSL Region 4AA/5AA Art Festival
- Yumna Ali was honored with the Spotlight in the Arts Award, the highest award that can be earned in Visual Art from the Minnesota State High School League
- CHHS Synchronized Swim Team advances to the MSHSL State Tournament:
 - Short Solo- Liliam Taly Palma
 - Short Trio- Simone Edstrom, Cheirdi McClellan, and Sage Dalzell
 - Short Team- Genevieve DuRose, Katelynn Hackett, Liliam Taly Palma, Sage Dalzell, Cheirdi McClellan, Simone Edstrom, and Sheryn Narvaez Piza
- CHHS-DLS Synchronized Swim Head Coach Camille Kuusisto named "2024 Coach of the Year" by the MN High School Synchronized Swimming Coaches Association
- Eleven members of the Track & Field Team medal at the Section 4AA Track & Field Championship Meet. Danchau Le (2nd in Long Jump, 4th in Triple Jump, 8th in High Jump), Il'Maime Ntambwe (1st in Triple Jump, 8th in 100 Hurdles), Kevin Romero Rivera (6th in 3200 and 8th in 1600), Melissa Torres (3rd in 100 and 4th in 200), Khoi Le (7th in Long Jump), Taymoi Epps (9th in Shot Put), William Lacy (3rd in Discus), Iris Bergan (5th in Triple Jump), Girls 4x800 Relay (7th place)



June

- Il'Maime Ntambwe earns 13th place in the Triple Jump and Danchau Le earns 18th place in the Long Jump at the MSHSL Class AA State Track & Field Meet
- CHPS congratulates senior athletes who are continuing their athletic careers:
 - Ryan Agudo Medina, who will be attending University of Northwestern for Soccer
 - Isabel Hernandez Monroy, who will be attending St. Catherine's University for Track & Field and Cross Country
 - Randy McClendon, who will be attending North Iowa Area Community College for Basketball
 - Hakara Ogul, who will be attending Augsburg University for Football
 - Melissa Torres, who will be attending St. Mary's University for Track & Field
- Over 235 6th-12th grade students participating in Summer Youth Camps



Columbia Academy's Marie Nelson Named CHPS Local #710 Teacher of the Year

Columbia Heights Public Schools English Language (EL) teacher at Columbia Academy, Marie Nelson, has been named the 2024 CHPS Local #710 Teacher of the Year.

Nelson began her time at CHPS as a student teacher, while still a college student and working on obtaining her teaching license. Since her official start here in 2008, she has not only been a teacher, but has also helped with the ENCORE afterschool program, has helped with summer school, is on the CA Sunshine team, on the CA Leadership Team, is the EL Department Chair at CA, is the Where Everyone Belongs (WEB) leadership advisor, a consultant for CA mainstream teachers on integrating EL strategies and a new teacher mentor. Nelson has also done multiple cultural immersion experiences to enhance her teaching in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Part of the selection process includes an essay from each nominee. In Nelson's application essay, she states, "Throughout each day, each week, each year, we have an opportunity as teachers to allow our most authentic selves, including our experiences, passions, and skills to meet our students where they are at. Each day, they present us with an ever-changing combination of their past experiences, current realities, passions, needs, hopes and dreams. When we stay present enough to allow for it, we can discern which parts of ourselves the moment might invite to the table."

"My advisor told me, when getting placed for student teaching, that I was going to like Columbia Heights," Nelson said. "And it is very clear that my advisor was correct, because after student teaching at Valley View Elementary, I was hired at Columbia Academy and I've never left!"

The award is sponsored by the Columbia Heights Federation of Teachers Local 710. With her selection, Nelson will represent CHPS for 2024-2025's Minnesota Teacher of the Year award.



ENCORE offers extended learning opportunities focused on technology, arts, environmental studies, health/fitness and academic support. All class offerings are designed to provide students with the skills they will use to be successful in college and careers.

ENCORE is available to students in grades 1-8.

For more information, visit colheights.k12.mn.us/ENCORE

To learn more and to register, please visit <https://colh.cr3.rschooldtoday.com/public/home/> or scan QR Code



ENCORE Aquatics

If you are new to swimming or looking to advance your skills we have classes for you. Lessons will take place at the Columbia Heights High School Pool this fall on Saturdays. Levels 1-3 are available for ages 4+. See registration site for details.



CHPS 2023-2024 Employee of the Year | Leueen Saavedra

Columbia Heights Public Schools announced in June that Leueen Saavedra, Cultural Liaison for Columbia Heights Public Schools, is 2023-2024's Employee of the Year.

Saavedra has been employed at CHPS since 2010 and is the fifteenth recipient of the award. Leueen not only helps with the enrollment of new students, but is a resource for new families in the community, being able to help out both the English- and Spanish-Speaking families, as she is bilingual.

Leueen was honored by the CHPS Board of Education at a meeting on June 11, 2024, where she was given her award by the members of the BOE.



Congratulations to the CHHS Class of 2024



Get Involved at CHPS! Join a District Committee

CHPS is committed to involving CHHS students, parents and community members on district committees. Please email the key contact person for more information about joining the council or committee.

- **Communications Advisory Council:** Provides feedback and suggestions for the CHPS Communications Department on how CHPS can better communicate (giving and receiving information) and build relationships with students, staff, parents and community members. For more information please contact Kristen Stuenkel, Director of Community Education & Communications: StuenkeK@colheights.k12.mn.us.
- **Community Education Advisory Council:** Provides feedback and suggestions for Community Education programs which include early childhood, ENCORE, child care, adult enrichment and education, and Blooming Heights. For more information please contact Kristen Stuenkel, Director of Community Education & Communications: StuenkeK@colheights.k12.mn.us.
- **Student Wellness Committee:** Provides feedback and suggestions about areas of student wellness including CHPS food service, Blooming Heights, physical, health and nutrition education, and student mental health supports. For more information please contact Kristen Stuenkel, Director of Community Education & Communications: StuenkeK@colheights.k12.mn.us.
- **World's Best Workforce:** Committee focused on district goals and programming. The committee makes recommendations and brings ideas to the district administration to support "creating worlds of opportunity for each and every learner." For more information please contact Tara Thukral, Director of Teaching & Learning: ThukralT@colheights.k12.mn.us.
- **American Indian Parent Advisory Council:** Limited to students and families who identify as American Indian. This committee supports the American Indian Education Program by planning cultural events and providing suggestions for curriculum that benefit American Indian students and families. For more information please contact Yolanda Dorr Slowey, American Indian Mentor: DorrSloY@colheights.k12.mn.us.

Child Care

Adventure Club | Kindergarten-Grade 5

Adventure Club programming facilitates a variety of activities to promote learning beyond the classroom including arts & crafts, guided group time, themed activities, dramatic play, cooking, games, outdoor play, science and more!

Hours, Dates, Locations & Fees

2:20-6:00 p.m. Regular School Days | 6:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Non-School Days
Programming is available for Highland, North Park and Valley View students.
Open most school vacations and non-school days.



Program Fees* Per Child	Registration Fee	After School	Non-School Day	Drop-In
	\$25	\$22.50	\$50.50	\$26

*Fee assistance may be available through Anoka, Ramsey or Hennepin County Child Care Assistance Programs. Contact your county for details.

Learn More

For more information including fees or to register visit www.colheights.k12.mn.us/communityed/community-education/ac or call 763.528.4517.

Mini Adventures | 36 Months-5 Years Old

Mini Adventures is a four-star Parent Aware child care program for children 36 months to 5 years old. In Mini Adventures, your child will participate in a variety of activities including mathematics, guided group time, literacy, dramatic play, music, games, outdoor play, arts & crafts, movement and more! Early Childhood Screening is required for all participants. Independent toileting is required for children before participating.



Hours, Dates, Location & Fees

6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. weekdays, year-round at the Family Center.



Weekly Program Fees* Per Child	5 Days	4 Days	3 Days	2 Days	1 Day
	\$323	\$273	\$215	\$152	\$77

*Breakfast, lunch and snack included in weekly fee. We accept County Child Care Assistance and Pathways I scholarships. Pathways II scholarships may be available for those who qualify.

Learn More

For more information, visit fc.colheights.k12.mn.us/programs/1/mini or call 763.528.4517

2024-2025 Calendar Information

This year, to reduce waste, Columbia Heights Public Schools has decided to send the District Calendar to homes of only enrolled students and their families. Calendars are also provided to each staff member and newly enrolled families. If you are interested in receiving this year's CHPS calendar, there are extras at Murzyn Hall, Columbia Heights City Hall, and at the CHPS District Office that you can pick up.

If you are unable to pick up a calendar from any of these locations in person, please visit colheights.k12.mn.us/contact-us to fill out a form and request a calendar. Please include your address within the form.

The calendar is also available online and available to download the PDF version on the District website. You can find it by scanning the QR code or by following this link: colheights.k12.mn.us/calendar.



Short Sessions

- **Nature-Based (September-October)**

Learn about nature and explore different activities outside in our Blooming Heights Edible Schoolyard and Outdoor classroom as well as local parks too!

Participate in group time with your child, for part of the class will be a educator-led discussion about ways to support and engage your child in nature.

- **Create Art (November-January)**

In this mini session, engage in theme-based activities and group time with your child each week and engage in parent discussion on how to create and support your child's learning through art.

Spanish-Speakers

Las familias disfrutarán aprendiendo y jugando juntas a través de actividades y tiempo en grupo con canciones y cuentos. Los padres se reunirán con nuestra educadora de padres para aprender sobre el desarrollo infantil, hacer preguntas y recibir apoyo para padres. Para familias cuyo idioma materno es el español.

Terrific Toddlers

Toddlers are curious and busy! Spend time with your child, exploring and engaging in activities, songs, and stories in the classroom for part of the morning. Engage in discussion with other parents/caregivers in an educator-led discussion, while your child interacts with peers and fun activities.

Mixed Age

This class is a time to enjoy learning and playing together through activities designed for you and your child(ren). Boost your parenting/caregiving skills through an educator-led discussion for part of the class, while your child(ren) enjoy interacting with their peers.

Preschoolers

Come to our one day a week preschool program with parent education. This class will focus on all areas of development and offer a lot of opportunities to learn and grow with same age peers.

Infants

Bringing home a new baby comes with a lot of joy as well as challenges, and we are here to help! Join other families with infants to connect, play, and learn about infant development including sleep, nutrition, attachment, and more. Each family will receive a CHPS welcome baby bag!

Night Owls

Night Owls is a great way to connect with your child(ren) after a long day! Join other families for fun activities and group time, followed by an educator-led discussion while your children enjoy connecting with peers and engaging in early learning activities.

Drop In & Play

Looking for something fun to do with your child? Drop in with your child to play and learn in a classroom rich with materials to explore. No registration or payment required!

Turn page for class calendar

Register now for the 2024-2025 school year. For more information, visit [FC.colheights.k12.mn.us](https://fc.colheights.k12.mn.us).
ECFE Classes start Monday, September 9, 2024.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	Short Sessions (1-5 years old) 9:00-11:00 a.m. Nature-based (Sept. 9-Oct. 28) Create Art (Nov. 11-Jan. 13)	Terrific Toddlers (12-30 months) 9:00-11:00 a.m.	Mixed Age (0-5 years) 9:00-11:00 a.m.	Infants (0-11 months) 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Drop In & Play 9:30-11:00 a.m.
PM	Spanish-Speakers (1 session) (0-5 years) 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.	Spanish-Speakers (2 sessions) (0-5 years) 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.	Preschoolers (30-36 months) 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.	Spanish-Speakers (2 sessions) (0-5 years) 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Night Owls (0-5 years) 4:30-6:00 p.m.	

All ECFE offerings have the same sliding scale fee, except for the *Incredible Infants* classes* and the *ECFE Short Sessions***

\$24 (\$0-18,999)	\$66 (\$19,000-29,999)	\$106 (\$30,000-49,999)	\$148 (\$50,000+)
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**Incredible Infants*

\$6 (\$0-18,000)	\$14 (\$18,001-29,999)	\$20 (\$30,000-49,999)	\$27 (\$50,000+)
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***ECFE Short Sessions*

\$8 (\$0-18,000)	\$22 (\$18,001-29,999)	\$35 (\$30,000-49,999)	\$49 (\$50,000+)
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Scan the QR code for more information about each of our classes. ECFE classes are either separating or non-separating depending on the class. Each class will include developmentally appropriate activities to participate in with your child as well as parent/caregiver education.

Haga clic en el código QR para obtener más información sobre cada una de nuestras clases. En las clases de ECFE algunas te separas de tu alumno y otras no dependiendo de la clase. Cada clase incluirá actividades apropiadas para el desarrollo para participar con su hijo, así como la educación de los padres/cuidadores.



Join the Early Childhood Advisory Council

Join the Early Childhood Advisory Council! Our council is comprised of parents and guardians involved in early childhood education and care programs. Benefits include: Providing input and feedback, developing leadership skills, planning seasonal Family Center celebrations, creating new friendships and support from other members and having FUN!

Our council meets monthly to provide input and feedback about programming and community needs, plan events and raise funding for classroom materials. For more information, or to join, call 763.528.4518

School Census

Are you in the school census? Being in the census ensures that you will receive Early Childhood mailings, receive notification of Early Childhood Screening, and receive PreK and Kindergarten information when your child is eligible to attend. If you've recently had a baby, moved or did not receive this catalog in the mail, contact Nicole Geffre in the District Office at 763.528.4420

One-to-One Visits

Columbia Heights Public Schools offers free one-to-one visits after the birth or adoption of a new child or for parents/caregivers who simply have questions about their child's development. During these visits, our licensed parent educator will provide developmental, behavioral and social emotional support to all families in person, by email, or by phone day and evening. Call 763.528.4536 for more information. Scan the QR Code to fill out the ECFE Referral Form.



PreK

Register now!
Space available in PreK 3 and PreK 4 for the 2024-2025 school year!

PreK 3 | 3 years old by Sept. 1

PreK 3 prepares children for lifelong success! PreK 3 curriculum and assessment is aligned with PreK 4 and Minnesota Early Learning Standards. Classes are taught by licensed early childhood education teachers. Early Childhood Screening is required for all PreK 3 students. Transportation is not available. For more information, or to register, visit [FC.colheights.k12.mn.us/programs/prek-3](https://colheights.k12.mn.us/programs/prek-3).
Monthly tuition is based on a sliding fee scale. Financial assistance is available to families who qualify.



Mon/Wed/Fri	\$22 (\$0-11,000)	\$42 (\$11,001-20,000)	\$62 (\$20,001-30,000)	\$84 (\$30,001-40,000)	\$105 (\$40,001-50,000)	\$135 (\$50,001+)
Tues/Thurs	\$14 (\$0-11,000)	\$28 (\$11,001-20,000)	\$42 (\$20,001-30,000)	\$56 (\$30,001-40,000)	\$70 (\$40,001-50,000)	\$90 (\$50,001+)
Mon/Wed/Fri	8:00-10:30 a.m.	FC Room 112	Tues/Thurs	8:00-10:30 a.m.	FC Room 112	
	11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	FC Room 112		11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.	FC Room 112	

PreK 4 | 4 years old by Sept. 1

PreK 4 is a FREE program that provides an engaging and educational environment to prepare your child for Kindergarten. PreK 4 curriculum and assessment is aligned with Kindergarten and the Minnesota Early Learning Standards. Classes are taught by licensed Early Childhood Education teachers. Early Childhood Screening is required for all PreK 4 students. Busing is provided for PreK 4 families who live within the District boundaries. Classes are held Monday-Friday at Highland Elementary, North Park School for Innovation and Valley View Elementary.

Mornings 7:55-10:25 a.m. **Afternoons** 11:45 a.m.-2:15 p.m. **Full Day** 7:55 a.m.-2:15 p.m.

To register your student for PreK 4, visit colheights.k12.mn.us/Enroll or visit the Placement Center.

Registration Information

For more information on Community Education Registration, including class eligibility and policies, visit colheights.k12.mn.us/CommunityEd or call 763.528.4517. To register for Mini Adventures, call 763.528.4517. To register for PreK 4, visit the Placement Center or call 763.528.4426.

SUBSCRIBE
To receive CHPS news by email, visit colheights.k12.mn.us/district1/administrativedepartments/communications/hylanderconnect



Columbia Heights Public School District #13
1440 49th Ave. NE
Columbia Heights, MN 55421-1939

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Twitter	@CHPSisd13
Instagram	@CHPSisd13

**Enroll Now
Inscríbete Ahora** >

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