



## INSIDE ISSUE:

NASA Artemis Moon Tree

Get the scoop

New to the team

Construction updates

News you can use

Hours, bus, and lunch information



★ FALL 2024 ★

# QUARTERLY CONNECTION



## ECRWSS POSTAL CUSTOMER

Aslin Administration Building  
1818 W. Worley Street  
Columbia, MO 65203

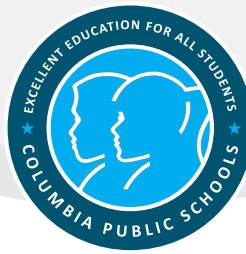
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# CPS secures NASA Artemis Moon Tree

Columbia Public Schools is the proud recipient of a Moon Tree seedling which was recently planted at the Eugene Field Center where elementary gifted education classes (EEE) are held.

The NASA STEM Artemis Moon Tree program is both a nod to Apollo 14’s legacy and part of NASA’s Office of STEM Engagement’s Next Generation STEM project.

In January 1971, NASA astronaut Stuart Roose, command module pilot for the Apollo 14 mission, carried tree seeds into lunar orbit that were then grown into seedlings and disseminated around the world.

In celebration of the Artemis mission, NASA re-introduced a new era of Moon Trees to commemorate the Apollo 14 mission and engage a new generation by bringing a spirit of space exploration back down to earth. The Artemis mission carried five species of tree seeds thousands of miles beyond the moon for a period of about four weeks before returning to earth.

“Together, NASA and the Forest Service will deliver a piece of science history to communities across our nation,” said Mike Kincaid, associate administrator of NASA’s Office of STEM Engagement. “Through this partnership, future explorers, scientists, and environmentalists will have the opportunity to nurture and be inspired by these Artemis artifacts in the community where they live, work, and learn.”



Elizabeth Brown, first-grade teacher at the Field Center, was intrigued the moment she learned about the Moon Tree opportunity. With a passion for space study and several students interested in space

exploration, she said it was a tremendous opportunity to engage students and the general community.

Brown completed a lengthy application which conveyed CPS’s ability to care for the various tree species and maximize educational opportunities around the life and growth of the tree. She also communicated her intent to engage the community as a whole.



“We wanted everyone to be able to enjoy the Moon Tree on some level,” Brown said.

At the time, Brown had no idea how many applicants she would be competing against or what their chances would be. At the end of the 2022-23 school year, Brown received a letter stating that CPS was one of 1,300 applicants and had been awarded stewardship of a Moon Tree seedling.

The tree’s planting was necessary shortly after arrival, but before NASA was ready to have recipients announce their awards. Committed to the tree’s survival, Brown enlisted the assistance of several CPS staff members to help with the planting and ensure healthy growth.

**“ Through this partnership, future explorers, scientists, and environmentalists will have the opportunity to nurture and be inspired by these Artemis artifacts in the community where they live, work, and learn. ”**

**Mike Kincaid, NASA**

# Moon Tree continued

One of the resources provided by NASA was a list of local arborists. This list led Brown to Samuel Wright, a certified arborist with the University of Missouri and a member of the Boone County Tree Board. Wright helped with some adjustments to the tree post-planting and provided education on the needs of the tree, specific to this climate. Brown said Wright stops by regularly to check on the tree and provide ongoing guidance.

As a steward of a Moon Tree, CPS has access to many resources to help integrate space exploration and learning into the existing curriculum. Brown said NASA is still placing trees and she expects to learn more about the various resources in the fall. Brown and fellow Field Center Teacher Jess Wolf plan to integrate studies of the Moon Tree into the first-grade lessons, bridging the topics of tree culture and space.

Additional community outreach to publicize the tree has also begun. Brown has engaged Benjamin Knapp, Interim Director for the Center of Agroforestry at the University of Columbia, to share information about the tree with Mizzou students so they can be involved. Knapp has expressed interest in partnering with CPS by creating speaking opportunities for graduate students to visit CPS classrooms and talk about what they do and the importance of the agroforestry industry.

Brown says that beyond the excitement of having a tree that orbited the moon, she sees this as an opportunity to get students excited about STEM by having a personal connection right outside their classrooms. She said one of the resources provided by NASA are cards similar to trading cards that feature all the different people who were part of the Artemis mission, giving students a broad insight into all of the ways they can have a career in a space-related field other than being an astronaut.



90% of students / 90% of the time

Here are a few facts about attendance:



- Missed school days can significantly impact a child's learning and overall health.
- Students who attend school regularly perform better on exams and assessments.
- Missing two days a month—excused or unexcused—can add up to a child being considered chronically absent.
- Students who miss 9 or more days of school each year may not be on track to graduate.
- If a student has a doctor or dentist appointment during the day, parents are asked to have their children attend the rest of the day. This reinforces the importance of going to school and attending classes.
- Schools lose revenue when students don't attend.



## COLUMBIA SCHOLAR CLINIC

*Only open to Columbia Public School Students*

The Columbia SCHOLAR Clinic offers a spectrum of services, including primary care, ophthalmology, physicals, and dental services.

**Hours: 8 am - 5 pm - Mon-Fri**

1010 Rangeline Street, Columbia, MO 65201

Office: 573-476-0022 | Fax: 573-476-0023

help@clarity-healthcare.org

clarity-healthcare.org

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

### PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

Parents and guardians receive phone, email and text 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](http://www.cpsk12.org).

### CPS FAMILIES PORTAL

Access all CPS apps through CPS Families Portal using your assigned ID and password, including:

- **Campus Parent:** Campus Parent puts your student's school information at your fingertips. Access grades, attendance, schedules and more.
- **Schoolology:** Allows access to course materials and assignments both at school and home.

### 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, and Spectrum channel 985, or connect to the live stream at [www.cpsk12.org/cpstv](http://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](http://www.cpsk12.org/cpstv) for more details.

### 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.

### PEACHJAR EFLYERS

Check out Peachjar on the district and school website homepages to access flyers for community events and activities provided by local organizations.

# New to the team

JOIN US IN WELCOMING THESE NEW TEAM MEMBERS TO THE CPS FAMILY.



**Dr. Jeff Klein**

### *Chief Academic Officer*

Klein has nearly two decades of experience in district-level leadership. He has served as the assistant superintendent for academic services and the executive director of research, evaluation, and assessment in the Park Hill School District in Kansas City, Missouri. He began his career as a special education teacher and school psychologist and holds a doctorate in education from the University of California-Santa Barbara. He earned a master's degree in business, an educational specialist degree in education administration, and a master's degree in school psychology. Klein has received the Missouri Governor's Quality Leadership Award and the Missouri Outstanding District Office Support Award.



**Lazell E. Ofield, II**

### *Chief Operations Officer*

Ofield comes to Columbia Public Schools after serving as the director of operations for Kansas City Public Schools. He will oversee operations in several areas including transportation services, technology services, nutrition services, custodial services, and facilities and construction services. Ofield has more than a decade of experience in both healthcare and K-12 educational facilities. Additionally, he is certified in Environmental Services Executive (CESE), Educational Facilities Professional (CEFP), and is a member of the Missouri School Plant Managers Association (MSPMA). Ofield holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Park University.



**Amy Rogers**

### *Mill Creek Elementary School Principal*

Rogers has eight years of leadership experience in Columbia Public Schools, serving as the assistant principal at Mill Creek Elementary School for the past three years and as the assistant principal at Paxton Keeley and Beulah Ralph elementary schools prior to that. She received her master's in teaching from the University of Virginia and served as a teacher and school counselor in Virginia and Florida prior to moving to Columbia in 2010. In 2016, she earned her education specialist degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia.



**Brian Rehg**

### *Parkade Elementary School Principal*

Rehg has served as the assistant principal at Parkade Elementary School for the past six years, prior to which he was a classroom teacher with experience in first, second, and fourth grades. Rehg brings 15 years of experience in education, eight of which have been in school leadership. He holds an educational specialist degree in educational leadership-superintendency from William Woods University.

# Construction updates

## NEW SOUTHWEST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Sitework has begun with completion of the excavation on both the east and west sides of the site. Construction on roads is next, including aggregating piers and installation of a new approach lane on South Sinclair Road.



## BATTLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ADDITION

Work on the addition to Battle Elementary School is scheduled to begin this fall. The completed project, slated for August of 2025, will provide additional classrooms, a new storm shelter, and bring student capacity up to approximately 650 students.

## COLUMBIA AREA CAREER CENTER

A dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony was held in June for the renovation and expansion of the CACC facility and the project is well underway.



Interior demolition of the east wing is finished, and renovation has begun. In the construction shop, crews have completed all necessary piping and built walls for a new custodian's office. Walls are erected in the battery storage room, and boilers have been set in the mechanical room. Duct and additional piping work has also begun. Similar work is happening in the auto shop, welding shop, commons area, and agricultural space.



In the west wing, new lights and flooring are being installed along with painting throughout. New walls have been added to the student healthcare facility as well as partition tracking. Similar updates are being made to multiple classrooms, commons areas, IT rooms and the dining/baking classroom. Exterior work is also progressing, including demolition of the existing foundation footings and work on underground utilities.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

**CPS to offer new sports in 2024-25 school year**  
Columbia Public Schools will offer boys volleyball and girls stunt teams in the 2024-2025 school year. Battle, Hickman and Rock Bridge high schools will offer the new sports in the spring 2025 season. Additional information will be available in the fall.

## RBHS student takes first place in baking and pastry arts national competition

Sydney Bliss (Rock Bridge High School) took first place at the 60th Annual SkillsUSA competition. The National Leadership and Skills Conference is the ultimate recognition of excellence in career and technical education.

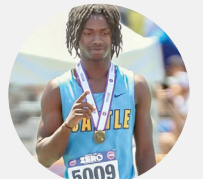


## CPS Recognized for excellence in financial reporting

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to Columbia Public Schools for its annual comprehensive financial report (fiscal year ended June 2023). This award is the highest form of recognition attainable in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting and represents a significant accomplishment.

## Track & Field Individual State Champions

**Anna Ferguson** (Senior, Battle High School) won first place in Pole Vault and **Vernell Holt** (Junior, Battle High School) won first place in Long Jump. The National High School Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association also named Holt as a 2024 Outdoor Track & Field All-American.



# Hours, bus, and lunch information



[www.cpsk12.org/schoolcalendar](http://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. – 1:35 p.m.

8:20 a.m. – 3:20 p.m.

8:20 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.

12:20 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.



Classes begin Tuesday, Aug. 22

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

Bethel Street Center

Deaf Hard of Hearing Program – Discovery Center

Roseta Avenue Center

Early Childhood Special Education morning class – North

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

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](http://www.cpsk12.org/transportation).

Families may select bus transportation during the annual school registration process. Please note, students in grades kindergarten through eight who live within one mile of their school and students in grades nine through twelve 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. For information concerning school transportation routes and schedules, contact Student Transportation of America at **573-214-3860**.

## MEAL PRICES



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

### STUDENTS GRADES K-5

Breakfast: \$2.15 | Lunch: choice of garden bar, featured hot lunch item, whole-grain Uncrustable PBJ sandwich, yogurt plate, or Anytimers lunch kits. All options served with a fresh garden bar: \$3.30 | Additional milk: \$0.65 each

### STUDENTS GRADES 6-12

Breakfast: \$2.15 | Lunch: choice of garden bar, featured hot lunch items, Smart Mouth pizza, chicken Caesar salad, or whole-grain Uncrustable PBJ sandwich. All options served with a fresh garden bar: \$3.30 | Additional milk: \$0.65 each

### ADULTS

Breakfast: \$3.00 | Lunch: \$4.75

### FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCHES AND BREAKFASTS

A new application must be completed every year to qualify. Families approved to receive SNAP benefits or Temporary Assistance (TANF) benefits qualify to receive free meals with a submission of an application. Visit [www.cpsk12.org/nutrition](http://www.cpsk12.org/nutrition) select Free and Reduced Meals for a paper copy of the application or to apply online starting July 1, 2024.

Reduced-price Breakfast: \$0.30 | Reduced-price Lunch: \$0.40

Parents may also pay for school meals online via the **CPS Families Portal**, *My School Bucks*: [myschoolapps.com](http://myschoolapps.com).

For any questions about meal services, visit our website at [cpsk12.org/nutrition](http://cpsk12.org/nutrition), email [lunch@cpsk12.org](mailto:lunch@cpsk12.org) or call **573-214-3480**.