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QUARTERLY CONNECTION

WINTER 2025



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QUARTERLY CONNECTION



Two Mile Prairie Elementary School introduces lottery option for 2026–27 school year

Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, Two Mile Prairie Elementary School will become the newest lottery school in Columbia Public Schools, implementing a limited, abridged enrollment lottery designed to balance family choice with responsible capacity planning. The school will feature agriculture-focused learning opportunities.

Two Mile Prairie lottery will apply only to entry-level grades. The lottery will include one kindergarten classroom and a limited number of first-grade seats, creating a structured opportunity for families outside the school's attendance boundary to apply through the CPS lottery system.

Amanda Bruckerhoff, principal of Two Mile Prairie Elementary School, said she's excited to share the real-world activities, outdoor exploration, and hands-on experiences that give Two Mile students a unique learning experience.

HOW TWO MILE PRAIRIE'S LOTTERY WILL WORK

The lottery is intentionally limited in scope and carefully designed to support long-term enrollment planning. By confining lottery enrollment to kindergarten and first grades, CPS can more accurately project class sizes as students progress through future grade levels, helping prevent capacity challenges in later years.

Families who live within the Two Mile Prairie Elementary School attendance boundary will continue to have guaranteed enrollment and are not required to participate in the lottery. The lottery only applies to families who reside outside the boundary and wish to enroll their child in one of the designated lottery seats.

Applications will be accepted during the district's established lottery window, which opens on March 12. If applications exceed available seats, placement will be determined through the CPS lottery process.

Two Mile Prairie Elementary School Students Get to Participate in:

- Ag Week, a school-wide event that brings agriculture to life with special guests, field trips, and interactive activities.
- Growing, caring for, and harvesting plants, while learning how food moves from seed to plate.
- Exploring our campus prairie, fields, and pond to study wildlife, observe ecosystems, and enjoy guided fishing.



Two Mile lottery school continued

BALANCING NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS AND CHOICE

The addition of Two Mile Prairie as a lottery school reflects CPS's ongoing effort to balance its commitment to neighborhood schools with growing interest in school choice options across the district.

Rather than adopting a full open-enrollment model, CPS is taking a deliberate, data-informed approach, introducing lottery access at the foundational grade levels while preserving the school's long-term capacity and instructional continuity.

"What makes Two Mile Prairie so special is our small, close-knit community," Bruckerhoff said. "There is something truly unique about a school where every staff member knows every child. As we grow, I am committed to preserving the small-school culture we are passionate about while welcoming new families to experience the meaningful relationships and learning opportunities that define our school."

As Columbia continues to grow, strategies like the abridged lottery help CPS respond to enrollment demand while keeping student learning, stability, and access at the center of decision-making.

"What makes Two Mile Prairie Elementary School so special is our small, close-knit community."

Amanda Bruckerhoff

Principal, Two Mile Prairie Elementary School



CPS Foundation Hall of Leaders

The Columbia Public Schools Foundation celebrated six new additions to its 2025 Hall of Leaders. These individuals were recognized for their accomplishments and contributions to our society.

The Columbia Public Schools Foundation is a non-profit organization that funds programs to enhance the learning and advancement for students and help teachers through community cooperation.



J'den Cox
Outstanding Alumni

A graduate of Hickman High School, Cox was inducted into the Mizzou Hall of Fame in 2022 for his wrestling career. He went on to win two senior world titles and a bronze medal in the Rio Summer Olympics in 2016. In 2024, Cox retired from competition and became a USA Wrestling coach.



Stephen Webber
Outstanding Alumni

Webber graduated from Hickman High School where he played varsity soccer and was captain of the debate team. After the attacks in 2001, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and served two combat tours in Iraq. In 2024, Webber was elected to the Missouri State Senate to represent Boone County and has been an advocate for public education.



Beverly Borduin
Outstanding Retired Educator

Borduin retired in 2011 after serving as principal of Grant Elementary School for six years. During her nearly 30-year career with CPS, she served as both educator and administrator. Her honors include an Outstanding Administrator award and an Outstanding K-3 Teacher award from the Columbia Fund for Academic Excellence.



Linda Harlan
Outstanding Retired Educator

Harlan retired in 2011 after a teaching career with CPS spanning more than three decades. She was an original member of the Rock Bridge High School faculty, and influenced development of all programs, activities and curricula at the school. She is a recipient of the National Council of Teachers of English Center of Excellence Award for Humanities Curriculum.



Susan Maglich
Outstanding Retired Educator

Maglich retired from CPS in 2008 after teaching for more than 30 years at the elementary level. She spent her career mentoring other teachers in literacy instruction as a Title I team leader, a grade level leader, a mentor of student teachers, and a developer of literacy curriculum.



Carissa Havens
Outstanding Volunteer

Havens has served as a volunteer at Ridgeway Elementary and Jefferson Middle schools since 2017 and as a substitute teacher for CPS since 2021. Whether serving on the PTSA, helping with events and field trips, organizing school fundraisers, or working behind the scenes, Havens shows up to make a difference.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

ROCK BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR NAMED 2025 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLAR

Rock Bridge High School senior **Theo Wen Volz** has been named a member of the 61st class of U.S. Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors for graduating seniors. Wen Volz is one of only three Missouri students selected for this distinction, joining 161 students nationwide recognized for their accomplishments in academics, the arts, and career and technical education.

RBHS TEACHER NAMED 2025 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS DISTINGUISHED TEACHER

Travis Martin, mathematics teacher at **Rock Bridge High School**, has been named to the **2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program's Distinguished Teachers** roster. Rock Bridge student **Theo Wen Volz**, a member of the 2025 class of U.S. Presidential Scholars, nominated Martin. This award highlights the exceptional impact of educators on student learning.

8 CPS STUDENTS NAMED 2026 NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation has announced more than 16,000 Semifinalists in the 71st annual National Merit Scholarship Program, including eight students from Columbia Public Schools. From Hickman High School: **Philip Chindris** and **Liang Lim**; from Rock Bridge High School: **Lorelei Guan**, **Keaton Hall**, **Sophia Li**, **Jenna Lin**, **Benjamin Nguyen** and **Annalisa Powell**.

CPS RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING

The Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO) has recognized **Columbia Public Schools** with the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting. The award honors the district's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

ATHLETIC DIRECTORS EARN RECOGNITION

Columbia Public Schools Athletic Director **David Egan** was awarded the MIAAA Athletic Director of the Year Award. Battle High School Athletic Director **Sammie Symonds** was awarded the Missouri Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA) Newcomer Athletic Director of the Year Award.

HICKMAN TEACHER NAMED FINALIST FOR AVID SECONDARY TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Hickman High School AVID Teacher **Teresa Gooch** is a finalist in the 2025 AVID Global Achievement Awards for Secondary Teacher of the Year. This award is for the AVID Elective Teacher or Site Team Teacher who has made outstanding contributions to the implementation and advancement of the AVID College and Career Readiness System. This honor places Gooch among the top three nominees nationwide.

WELLNESS COORDINATOR TO LEAD STATE SCHOOL HEALTH COALITION

CPS Wellness Coordinator **Bridget Lolli** has been elected chair-elect of the Missouri Coordinated School Health Coalition (MCSHC) and steps into a leadership role supporting health and wellness efforts across Missouri. Lolli's dedication and expertise in this space will help shape meaningful initiatives that benefit school communities statewide.

EAGLE BLUFFS' SCHOOL MASCOT

Eagle Bluffs Elementary School officially has a mascot. Future students and families voted over



EAGLE BLUFFS ELEMENTARY

the summer and selected the griffon, proposed by CPS Elementary Student **Avonlea Tyler**. A griffon is a mythical creature with the head, wings, and talons of an eagle, which is a natural tie to the school's name.

ROCK BRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPIONS

Columbia Public Schools is proud to celebrate the success of Rock Bridge High School students and teams who recently captured state championships.

CHEER — STATE CHAMPIONS: The **Rock Bridge Cheerleading Team** has won the Missouri Cheerleading Coaches Association (MCCA) Class 6 Small Division State Championship

TENNIS — DOUBLES STATE CHAMPIONS: **Kate Kimes** (Sophomore) and **Rebecca Stamose** (Senior) brought home the 2025 Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) Class 3 Girls Tennis Individual Doubles State Championship for Rock Bridge.

SWIMMING & DIVING — BOYS STATE CHAMPION: **Ryan Coughenor** (Senior) has claimed the MSHSAA Class 2 Boys Swimming & Diving State Championship for Rock Bridge High.



2026-27 Kindergarten Enrollment

Countdown to Kindergarten!

To be eligible for kindergarten in 2026-2027, a student must be five years of age before **August 1, 2026**.

For additional information visit cpsk12.org/kindergarten or call Columbia Public Schools at **573-214-3414**.



Winter weather

procedures & reminders

School will be canceled, or a 2-hour delayed start will be implemented after roads are tested. Should cancellation or a 2-hour delayed start be necessary, efforts will be made to notify radio and television stations by 6 a.m. If a decision can be made earlier than 6 a.m., the district will make every effort to do so. Information will also be sent via the district's parent messaging system, posted on the district's website, and on CPS-TV.



Parents may make the final decision regarding a child's attendance. If the parent views the weather as too severe or the road conditions too dangerous, absences will be excused.

Difficulty in contacting parents usually prevents early dismissals; however, under appropriate circumstances, the district may permit early dismissals. On inclement weather days, please continue to listen to local radio and television stations for news of early dismissals. Additionally, information will be sent via the district's parent messaging system, posted on the district's website, and on CPS-TV.

Your child's school will provide direction and updates on specific after-school activities in the event of inclement weather, as each school building will have different scheduling and rescheduling needs.

STAY INFORMED

Parents and guardians are automatically signed up to receive text, phone and email messages from your child's school and the district via the district's parent messaging system. If you are not receiving text messages and emails, please contact the registrar at your child's school(s) to update your contact information. Email and text messages will be sent in the event of a weather cancellation to parents with correct contact information on file with their child's school.

Check the school district website at www.cpsk12.org.

Tune in to CPS-TV streaming on the CPS-TV website at www.cpsk12.org/cpstv. CPS-TV is also available on Mediacom, Spectrum, Roku, AppleTV and FireTV.

Construction updates

COLUMBIA AREA CAREER CENTER (CACC)

The expansion project at CACC is complete and the new space was officially opened on November 4th. The project added 26,000 square feet for new labs and other hands-on learning experiences for students throughout Boone County.



EAGLE BLUFFS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Site concrete is complete on the north and east sides of the building. Asphalt has been installed on the playground area and parking lots, and the last sidewalk has been poured. The irrigation and landscaping work is in progress. Metal panel installation is complete on the exterior of the building, including the outside of the administration area and the front entrance. Flooring installation has begun in the administration areas. Work is underway in the classroom areas, where lighting, mechanical/electrical/plumbing (MEP) devices, sinks and acoustic baffles were installed. Windows have been installed in the administration and commons areas, and the remaining drywall, lighting, and MEP devices were installed in all offices. Flooring in the classrooms has also begun. The electrical connections to the gym equipment is complete, and the ceiling grid, lighting, and MEP devices were installed in the storm shelter restrooms, offices, and storage spaces. Framing of the clouds in the commons area is complete and elevator installation has now begun.

