



Bright Spots and Big Moments in Mapleton

Friday, May 8, 2026

Welcome to **Spark! Bright Spots and Big Moments**, your biweekly roundup of feel-good stories, standout moments, and celebrations from around Mapleton. From student achievements to staff highlights, this community newsletter is all about what makes Mapleton shine.

Spark stories:

Bright Spots: Shout-outs and recognitions

Big Moments: Experiences, milestones, and celebrations

Behind the Spark: Staff profiles or features

Community Connections: Events, partnerships, family highlights
High Fives!

[Share your good news!](#)

[Send a "High Five"!](#)

Bright Spots



Welby named one of Colorado's Centers of Excellence

Welby Community School of the Arts has been named a Colorado Centers of Excellence school by the Colorado Department of Education. This incredible honor was awarded to just 18 schools across the state this year. The Centers of Excellence award celebrates schools serving a high percentage of at-risk students that are also achieving outstanding academic growth over time.



This achievement reflects the dedication, creativity, and commitment of Welby's staff, students, and families. Their work to support every learner and ensure strong academic progress truly stands out.

We're so proud of our Welby Hawks and the example they set for what's possible when a school community comes together around student success.

Right At School - Mapleton's new before and after care program

Mapleton is excited to welcome a new before-and-after school care provider to the district. Beginning in the 2026-27 school year, [Right At School](#), a leading provider of high-quality before- and after-school enrichment programs, will operate at two locations in Mapleton.



Location #1: Achieve Academy (9100 Poze Blvd., Thornton, 80229) – This location will serve families from Achieve Academy, York International School, and Explore PK-8.

Location #2: Meadow Community School (9150 Monroe St., Thornton, 80229) – This location will serve families from Meadow Community School, Monterey Community School, and Clayton Partnership School.

Please note: Welby Community School, Valley View Innovation School, Adventure Elementary, Global Campus, and Trailside Academy families are invited to enroll in the before and after-school program offered by the YMCA and hosted at Trailside Academy. [For details, click here.](#)

[Right At School](#) will offer before school and after school programming to kindergarten through 8th- grade students beginning on Tuesday, August 11, 2026.

To learn more about the Right At School, visit the [Right At School registration page](#), select "Colorado," then "Mapleton Public Schools," and then your school.

A flyer with pricing details is attached.



mapleton, co - EN+ES_1-5DayPricingFlyer_Right Club _Before After.pdf

Download
7.3 MB

Congratulations to Mapleton's 2026 Awards for Excellence winners!

We are so proud to celebrate employees who, through the eyes of their colleagues, students, and community members, truly exemplify Mapleton's Standards of Excellence – High Expectations, Authenticity, Belonging, Integrity, and Equity. These individuals reflect the heart of our work and the values that bring our schools to life every day.

Each honoree was nominated by those who know their impact best, their colleagues. This year's winners were selected through a thoughtful process led by last year's Award for Excellence recipients and our Superintendent Student Advisory Group, ensuring that student voice and staff leadership were both at the center of this recognition.

Classified Employee of the Year

Linda Carrasco, Adventure Elementary

"One of her greatest gifts is her demeanor. She has an "abuelita" presence that naturally lightens the mood and puts people at ease. Whether she is nurturing a student who comes in with an owie, offering reassurance during a tough moment, or joking with colleagues to break tension on a busy day, she brings humor and heart into everything she does."



Licensed Employee of the Year

Elizabeth Tarbutton, York International School

"In a classroom shaped by loss, she helped students reclaim safety, dignity, and hope. Her leadership during this incident— initiating trauma-informed support, coordinating mental health intervention, and restoring belonging—embodies Mapleton's Standards of Excellence in every way."



Administrator of the Year

Ryan Fiore, Preschool on Poze

"With a heart like Mr. Rogers and the influence of a mayor, his presence and dedication to the staff, students, and families at Preschool on Poze is truly unmatched."



We're a **Colorado Asthma-Friendly School!**



Colorado Asthma-Friendly Schools follow proven steps to help students with asthma stay healthy. When children get good asthma care at school, they miss fewer days and can learn better. Your school's hard work helps keep all students healthier and supports their success in the classroom.



Mapleton celebrates asthma-friendly schools

We are excited to share that all Mapleton schools have been recognized as a Colorado Asthma-Friendly School at the Gold level by the University of Colorado!

What does this mean for Mapleton students?

This recognition demonstrates Mapleton's commitment to creating a safe, supportive environment for students with asthma. Mapleton's schools have implemented comprehensive asthma management practices that:

- Ensure students have quick access to emergency medications
- Provide staff training on asthma recognition and response
- Create healthier indoor air quality for all students
- Support students in participating fully in physical education and activities
- Coordinate care between school, families, and healthcare providers

Why it matters:

Asthma affects approximately 70,000 school-age children in Colorado and is one of the leading causes of chronic disease-related school absences. By implementing evidence-based asthma-friendly practices, we're working to:

- Improve student attendance
- Enhance academic achievement
- Reduce emergency room visits
- Support long-term health outcomes for students with asthma

Thank you to our district nurses, staff, and community!

Big Moments



Signing Day for Skyview Wolverines football stars

The Mapleton community came together at the Welcome Center to celebrate a special milestone as three graduating Wolverines signed their letters of intent to continue their football careers at the collegiate level.

Aydin A. of York International School signed with Luther College in Iowa, where he will continue his career after anchoring the line at center for Skyview.

Philip T. and Zander S., both seniors from Academy High School, will take their talents to Lewis-Clark Valley College in Idaho to play for the Mighty Loggers. Philip is set to transition to tight end, while Zander, who made the switch from lineman to running back during his time at Skyview, looks to continue his offensive role in college.

“It means everything,” said Head Coach Norm Maestas. “Our program continues to grow, and it’s players [like them] who put in the work to make that happen.”

Coach Maestas plans to honor these athletes by displaying their photos in the locker room, a reminder to future Wolverines of what dedication and perseverance can achieve.

We are incredibly proud of these student-athletes for representing Skyview at the next level and continuing to build the legacy of our football program.

Skyview Track and Field teams claim another victory

Congratulations to the Skyview Wolverines boys and girls Track and Field teams on claiming the Colorado League Championship this month at George Dittiro Stadium in front of an electric home crowd!



Competing against Adams County, Gateway, Thornton, and Aurora Central, Skyview delivered a commanding performance, creating a wide gap between themselves and second place. The boys finished with 226 points, while the girls added 214 to complete an impressive championship sweep.

The boys extended their streak to nine consecutive league titles, while the girls secured their sixth in a row. This level of sustained success reflects the hard work, focus, and pride shown by our student-athletes and coaches all season long.

A special shoutout to our seniors for leading the way in their final league meet. Your impact on this program is lasting.

Next up, the Wolverines head to the CHSAA State Championships at Jeffco Stadium in Lakewood, May 14–16. Good luck, Skyview!

Mapleton Transportation team places Top 3 at state competition

We are so proud to celebrate Mapleton's transportation experts, Karry Gavito and Kelly Jiron, who represented our district at the CSPTA Bus Roadeo on April 25, and earned 3rd place overall!

Karry, who drives the Penguin Bus, and Kelly, a para on the Horse Bus, competed as a team across a series of events that highlight both skill and care. Together, they completed emergency response scenarios, load and secure challenges, a full school bus pre-trip inspection, and a road-eo skills course. They also took on a 50-question written test covering topics like special needs, safety, First Aid and CPR, the Colorado Driving Handbook, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, CDE regulations, and the CDL manual.



This competition reflects the level of knowledge, coordination, and attention it takes to safely get students to and from school every school day.

With their strong finish, they have qualified to advance to the national competition this November in Austin, Texas.

As a District of Choice, Mapleton proudly provides free transportation for students living a mile or more away from their school of choice. More than 3,000 students board Mapleton school buses every school day, and we are so proud of the team “driving” student success!

Congratulations!

Get ready to celebrate Mapleton's class of 2026!

Mapleton Public Schools will honor the class of 2026 with a scholarship breakfast on Friday, May 15, and a district-wide commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 16.



Friday, May 15

- **7:30 a.m. – Senior Scholarship Breakfast at the Skyview Student Center (8990 York St., Thornton 80229):** This event honors members of the class of 2026 who received a scholarship to help them pursue their post-secondary dreams.

Friday, May 15

- **10:30 a.m. – Graduation practice (mandatory):** All graduates are required to report to the Rosa Auditorium on the Skyview Campus (8990 York St., Thornton, 80229) for graduation practice
- **12:30 p.m. – Senior BBQ at the Skyview Student Center**

Saturday, May 16

Class of 2026 Graduation Day!

- **8 a.m. –** Graduates must arrive at the Rosa Auditorium on the Skyview Campus
- **10 a.m. – Commencement ceremony** begins, DiTirro Stadium on the Skyview Campus

Celebrate with friends and family near and far! Mapleton's graduation ceremony will be livestreamed so everyone can be part of this special milestone. Share the link below <https://youtube.com/live/f8T2W-H6Znk?feature=share>

To learn more about parking, diplomas, inclement weather plans, and more, visit [Mapleton's 2026 graduation page](#).

Learn more about Graduation 2026

Behind the Spark



Mapleton Water World Days - sign up now!

Make a splash with an exciting trip to Water World! Participants will enjoy a fun-filled day at one of Colorado's favorite water parks, featuring thrilling slides, wave pools, and plenty of opportunities to cool off. Lunch is included, so kids can refuel and keep the fun going.

Hyland Hills will provide transportation to and from Water World. Drop-off will take place at 10:30 a.m. at Adventure Elementary (7725 Conifer Rd, Denver, CO 80221). The group will be at Water World from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Pick-up will be at 3:30 p.m. at Adventure Elementary. **This**

program is for Mapleton Public School students 6-13 years of age and spots are limited! [Sign up today!](#)

Dates:

Tuesday, July 7, 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Cost: \$25 per student

Ages: 6-12

Tuesday July 21, 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Cost: \$25 per student

Ages 6-12

*Hyland Hills offers grants to subsidize costs. Families may apply for grants using this link:

<https://www.hylandhills.gov/community/hyland-hills-foundation/>

Sign up for Water World Day!

Community Connections



WE ARE OPEN!

Thursday from 9–11 a.m.
No appointment needed!

Wolverine Den: Fresh Food and Support for Mapleton Families

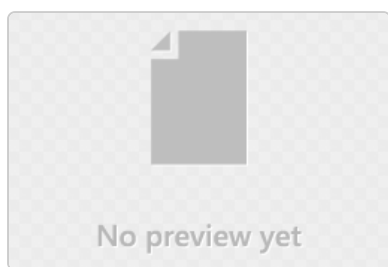
The Wolverine Den is a food pantry open to all Mapleton families and offers a simple, welcoming way to pick up essentials each week – at no cost. At the Wolverine Den you will find a variety of grocery items and household staples to support your family. You can visit the Wolverine Den on the southeast side of Achieve Academy (9100 Poze Blvd., Thornton, CO 80229) every Thursday from 9 to 11 a.m. No appointment is needed.

To get started, you can create a quick account through the Food Bank of the Rockies. This information is kept confidential and shared only with the Food Bank of the Rockies:

<https://newclient.link2feed.com/>

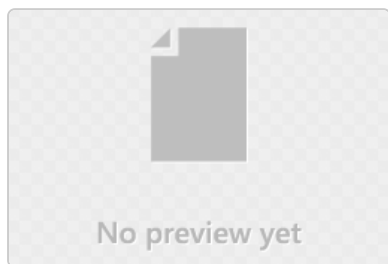
The Wolverine Den is made possible through a partnership between Mapleton Public Schools and Food for Hope, working together to support and nourish our community.

Check out the videos below to learn more about the Wolverine Den!



Mapleton Public Schools, Adams County School District 1 on Reels |...

[facebook.com](#)



Bienvenidos a Wolverine Den, un espacio acogedor en Mapleton que...

Bienvenidos a Wolverine Den, un espacio acogedor en Mapleton que ofrece alimentos frescos y apoyo cuando lo necesite 🐾 Este banco de alimentos gratuito está abierto a todas las familias de Mapleton...

[facebook.com](#)

High Fives!

[Submit a High Five!](#)

High Fives are going strong!

[High Fives](#) are an simple and meaningful way to recognize the many difference-makers across Mapleton. Take a look at some of our latest submissions below.

Brittany Martinez, Integrated Services Special Populations

Thank you for always having a smile on your face. Thank you for your constant effort and for always giving your best. Your work not only meets expectations but also lifts our spirits and motivates us. It's a privilege to work alongside you!

Submitted by Beronica Gutierrez

All staff at Mapleton Public Schools

I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to the entire Mapleton team for their perseverance, courage, and dedication to enriching the lives of all our children and youth through education and guidance. May God's kindness and love be with you as you continue this valuable mission. Blessings to you and your families.

Submitted by Dulce Gonzalez

Monica Thompson and Raylene Romero

Monica and Raylene have worked together to serve our students and have achieved the Gold Recognition Level for Colorado Asthma-Friendly Schools from the CDE and CU Anschutz. We are grateful for their commitment to implementing best practices that create a healthier, safer environment for students and staff.

Submitted by Explore PK-8, Explore Health Services

Jennifer Chaplin, Zachary Cheatham, Kendall Bridges, Performing Arts

This year's traveling performing arts teachers have done an outstanding job engaging the Trailside performing arts students! Chaplin, Cheatham, and Bridges reinforce our school's Habits of Character while teaching our students how much fun performing arts can be!

Submitted by 5th and 6th grade Trailside teachers

Zach Page, Samantha Chaney, Sam Warden, Heather Gorey, and Alondra del Hierro, Explore PK-8

Shout out to our incredible Explore SPED team for truly seeing each child and meeting them exactly where they are. The patience, creativity, and heart you bring every single day does not go unnoticed. You create spaces where students feel valued, capable, and supported—and that matters more than words can say. nAs a parent of a child with different abilities, I can tell you firsthand how meaningful it is to have a team who genuinely cares. Knowing my child is surrounded by people who understand, advocate, and celebrate them for who they are is everything. Thank you for the work you do, the love you give, and the difference you make in the lives of our kids and families. 💖

Submitted by The Ramirez Family

Tessa Crooks, Explore PK-8

Tessa is sunshine on a rainy day! The energy she brings to our school is infectious and she is always willing to lend a hand to make our community stronger. We appreciate her so much!

Submitted by Alexis Ramirez

Micah Klaver, Karen Hoppis, Kurt Dennis, Jeff Sparrow, and Ali Casillo, Explore PK-8

Thank you for being such fierce advocates and supporters of our Explore NEST Parent group. We are so lucky to have an admin team that is dedicated to creating a welcoming community and we want you to know your impact is felt!! Appreciate you all so much!

Submitted by Explore NEST

Ali Blankenship and Sydney Martinez, Explore PK-8 4th Grade team

Not only does this power team create an environment for huge academic gains but they also create classrooms that promote kindness, respect and compassion. Kids are better for having an opportunity to spend time in their classrooms! Special shout out to Ms. Martinez for being willing to sponsor D&D club!

Submitted by The Ramirez Family

Elena Baca, Explore PK-8

Elena goes above and beyond to support our students and staff at Explore! She is hardworking, kind, patient, flexible and fun. Thank you for all the support you have given our kiddos this year!

Submitted by 3rd and 4th grade classrooms (POD)

Submit a High Five!

Spark! Bright Spots and Big Moments – Call for Submissions

Do you have a bright spot or big moment to share? Email communications@mapleton.us, or call 303.853.1020 to share your ideas!



Mapleton Public Schools

www.mapleton.us

Contact

