



Bright Spots and Big Moments in Mapleton

Friday, May 22, 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



Congratulations, Class of 2026!



Mapleton Public Schools

On Saturday, May 16, Mapleton Public Schools celebrated the 435 graduates of the class of 2026.

Valedictorian Cristian G., from Academy High School, opened the commencement celebration noting "...while each of our stories is different, what connects us is what we've accomplished together. And, when you step back and really take it all in, it's pretty incredible."



And he's right.

- Collectively, the class of 2026 earned more than \$9.9 million in scholarships! This includes three Daniels Fund Scholarships and one Boettcher Scholarship, two of the most prestigious awards a student can receive in the state of Colorado.
- The class of 2026 completed nearly 255 college courses through concurrent enrollment, earning close to 800 hours of college credit before even leaving high school!
- Several seniors were recognized as AP Scholars, and others received First Generation and School Recognition Awards from the College Board.
- More than 30 seniors graduated with professional certificates ready for the job market, and more than 150 students earned Career and Technical Education cords in the fields of health sciences, business engineering, education, and technology.
- A record 32 Mapleton seniors graduated with the Seal of Biliteracy, the highest number in district history. The Seal of Biliteracy is an official recognition placed on a student's diploma and transcript, signifying proficiency in English and at least one other language
- Mapleton's class of 2026 gave back to the community, contributing more than 12,000 hours of community service to organizations and causes that support and improve their school, neighborhood, and beyond.
- Multiple graduates earned All-District and All-State honors, and three students are continuing athletic careers at the collegiate level.
- Mapleton's Junior Air Force ROTC drill team was named the best in the state – again!
- A member of the class of 2026 from York International School graduated with perfect attendance all four years!

"Taken together, these accomplishments tell the story of a class that is not only prepared for what comes next, but one that reflects the very best of who we are—hardworking, diverse, service-

minded, and ready to make an impact in what lies ahead,” said Cristian.

Cristian was one of 10 valedictorians on stage, including Keegan B. and Shantelle C. from Global Leadership Academy, Madelyn D. from Mapleton Early Career Prep, Yeneisy D. and Faith C. from Mapleton Expeditionary School of the Arts, Alexis T., from York International School, Evelyn M., from Mapleton Online, Aspen D. from Performing Arts School on Broadway, and Natalia E., from North Valley School for Young Adults.

The commencement ceremony also included performances by Mapleton’s High School Choir, and the playing of Pomp and Circumstance by the Mapleton band.

To revisit the ceremony or watch it for the first time, click the link below!

Congratulations to the Class of 2026. We are immensely proud of your achievements and look forward to watching you make your mark on the world.

Watch Mapleton's 2026 Commencement Ceremony



Celebrating the class of 2026 scholarship recipients

Before walking the stage at graduation, Mapleton’s Class of 2026 scholarship recipients, their families, and staff gathered at the Skyview Student Center for the district's annual Scholarship Breakfast. This special tradition celebrates the achievements of our graduating seniors who received scholarships to help support their post-secondary plans.

Combined, 120 graduates earned more than \$9 million in scholarships! With continued support from the [Mapleton Education Foundation](#), 63 scholarships totaling nearly \$492,000 were awarded

to graduating seniors this year, helping to make college and career pathways more accessible for Mapleton students.

Congratulations to all of our scholarship recipients!



Showing up every day: York senior graduates with perfect attendance in high school

In eighth grade, Tanner C. realized he had gone an entire school year without missing a day. What started by chance soon became a goal.

Four years later, Tanner is graduating from York International School with perfect attendance throughout his entire high school career — not missing a single class period, excused or unexcused.

An accomplishment this rare takes commitment, consistency, and support. Tanner credits his parents and grandparents for always helping him get to school and stay focused on his future.

For Tanner, the motivation was straightforward. Missing a day of school means missing material, and catching up, which is harder than it sounds during high school. Staying present meant staying on top of things and staying on top of things meant future success.

His achievement also arrives at a meaningful moment for York International. Earlier this year, the Colorado Department of Education recognized the school for its sustained, schoolwide efforts to improve student attendance. Over the past three years, York has reduced its chronic absenteeism rate — the share of students missing 10% or more of the school year — by 7.68%, one of the largest declines in the state

This fall, Tanner is headed to CU Denver, where he plans to study Psychology. Congratulations, Tanner, on this remarkable achievement!

Read the full story in Mapleton's newsroom.

Mapleton Newsroom

Big Moments

To help celebrate the 40th anniversary season of the [City Park Jazz](#), Mapleton's high school jazz band, the Jazz Messengers, will be opening the first jazz concert of the season!

The concert will take place on **Sunday, June 7**, and **Mapleton's jazz band will perform between 5:30-6 p.m.**, right before the headlining band. The show is free and open to all ages.

This event will be attended by more than 8,000 people and is a great opportunity to celebrate Mapleton! We hope to see you there!





Legacy Project improves DiTirro Stadium

If you attended Mapleton's graduation ceremony, you may have noticed the brick sign at George DiTirro Stadium looking fresh and bright.

The transformation is the result of the first-ever Legacy Project from Mapleton's Air Force JROTC Raider Squadron. The Legacy team included cadets Xitlalli R. and Valeria H. from Mapleton Early Career Prep, Ravyn K. from Mapleton Expeditionary School of the Arts, Melanie M. from Academy High School, and Irma S. from York International School. Ms. Lisa Hollingsworth and Mr. Craig Snider from MEC Prep partnered on the project to help secure necessary supplies and ensure a smooth operation from start to finish.

Valeria first learned about the opportunity for the Legacy Project from Lt. Col. William Arrington and SMSgt Danny Alltop. She rallied a team of cadets and, shortly after Spring Break, they got to work.

"During campus cleanups, we'd always walk by it and say it looked pretty bad," said Xitlalli.

Restoring the sign started with chipping away more than a few layers of paint. For nearly three weeks the students would meet for one hour a day, scraping, cleaning, and painting.

"Personally, I thought chipping the paint was fun," said Irma. "It felt good to be a part of something that leaves a mark on the district."

"It was a lot of fun," said Valeria. "We were talking and painting. My favorite part was being with everyone and meeting people from other flights."



Several of the cadets who worked on the project, including Valeria, Irma, and Xitlalli, graduated this year and were able to admire their accomplishment from the field. Valeria's sister, a 2020 Mapleton graduate, spotted the sign on graduation day and immediately noticed the difference.

"The sign was in bad shape," Valeria said. "After, it looked completely new."

All three graduates spoke about how meaningful it was to leave something better than they found it. Valeria hopes future cadets will have similar opportunities, and she thinks the gardens at the Skyview Campus are a great future legacy opportunity.

Thank you for a great Legacy Project and for making the DiTirro Stadium shine!



Students design a new look for Thornton Police SRO car

Students in the MESA Graphic Design and Media Arts Career and Technical Education Pathway are putting their creativity and career skills into action through a real-world community partnership project with the Thornton Police Department.

Students were challenged to create original police vehicle wrap designs focused on community connection, school pride, and positive relationships between students and School Resource Officers (SROs). The winning design will be used on the Skyview Campus SRO police car next school year.

Using industry-standard programs including Adobe InDesign, Illustrator, Fresco, and Photoshop, students applied professional design skills such as typography, branding, layout, and color theory to develop concepts centered on protection, education, unity, and trust within the community.

Many of the student designs highlighted themes of teamwork, diversity, Skyview spirit, and building strong community relationships.

"My design was intended to transform the routine cop car into a symbol of trust, connection through community, and school pride," said MESA student Josiah D. Adrian C. said his design represents unity between students and police, and protection.

Projects like this give students meaningful opportunities to apply classroom learning to authentic community experiences while building college and career-ready skills. We are proud of the creativity, professionalism, and thoughtfulness our MESA students demonstrated throughout this project!

Behind the Spark

Mapleton Public Schools Before and After School Care in Mapleton		
Care Program	Schools Served Before and after care, as well as transportation, available to students attending the following schools.	Registration Information
	Hosted at: Achieve Academy 9100 Poze Blvd., Thornton, 80229 Achieve Academy Explore PK-8 York International School	Scan the QR code to learn more about Right At School and register today.  For more information, please contact Right at School at 855.287.2466.
	Hosted at: Meadow Community School 9150 Monroe St., Thornton, 80229 Meadow Community School Monterey Community School Clayton Partnership School	
	Hosted at: Trailside Academy 2300 W. 67th Place, Denver, 80221 Trailside Academy Valley View Innovation School Adventure Elementary Global Primary Academy Global Intermediate Academy	Scan the QR code below to learn more about YMCA programs and register today.  For more information, please contact YMCA at 303.704.3427.

Before and after school programs in Mapleton

Mapleton Public Schools understands that high-quality before and after school care is incredibly important to families. For many parents and caregivers, access to safe, enriching, and reliable care outside of the school day is not just a convenience, it can be a deciding factor when choosing a school. Mapleton is pleased to be partnering with two organizations to bring before and after school care to Mapleton families.

Right At School

Mapleton is excited to welcome Right At School as a new provider of before and after school programming. Right At School will offer on-site programming at two locations, with Mapleton’s transportation team providing bus service from other schools to each program site.



Location 1:

Achieve Academy (9100 Poze Blvd., Thornton, 80229)

This location will serve families from **Achieve Academy, Explore PK-8, and York International School.**

Location 2:

Meadow Community School (9150 Monroe St., Thornton, 80229)

This location will serve families from **Clayton Partnership School, Meadow Community School, and Monterey Community School.**

[Visit Right At School to view pricing, watch the recording of the virtual parent forum, learn more about the program, and register for before and/or after school care for the upcoming school year.](#)

Right at School in Mapleton

YMCA

Mapleton partners with the YMCA to offer out of school care at one location, with Mapleton's transportation team providing bus service from other schools to the site.



Location:

Trailside Academy 2300 W. 67th Pl., Denver, 80221

This location serves families from **Adventure Elementary, Global Primary Academy, Global Intermediate Academy, Trailside Academy, Valley View Innovation School, and Welby Community School of the Arts.**

[Visit YMCA Out of School Time Care for pricing, more information, and to register for the upcoming school year.](#)

YMCA in Mapleton


Mapleton Public Schools
www.mapleton.us | 303.853.1000



Summer Food Service Program

Free meals for children 18 years and under!

Thanks to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Mapleton Public Schools is offering FREE dine-in breakfast and lunch at three school sites to children under 18 years old. Adult meals are available for \$3.25. Check the list below for dates, times, and pick-up locations!

Mealtimes and Locations (Mon. - Fri.)

	<h3>ADVENTURE ELEMENTARY</h3> <p>7725 Conifer Rd., Denver, 80221</p> <p>Breakfast: 8 - 8:30 a.m. Lunch: 12:30 - 1 p.m.</p>	 <p>Mon-Fri June 1-12</p>
	<h3>GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY</h3> <p>Broadway Campus, Bldg 2, 7480 Broadway, Denver, 80221</p> <p>Breakfast: 8 - 8:30 a.m. Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.</p>	 <p>Mon-Fri June 1-12</p>
	<h3>TRAILSIDE ACADEMY</h3> <p>2300 W. 67th Place, Denver, 80221</p> <p>Breakfast: 8 - 8:30 a.m. Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.</p>	 <p>Mon-Fri June 1-12</p>



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Summer Food Program returns to Mapleton

Mapleton Public Schools is pleased to offer free dine-in breakfast and lunch for children 18 years of age and under Monday through Friday, June 1-12, at three locations in the district.

Dates: Monday-Friday, June 1-12

Locations:

Adventure Elementary

- Breakfast: 8-8:30 a.m.
- Lunch: 12:30-1 p.m.

Global Leadership Academy

- Breakfast: 8-8:30 a.m.
- Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Trailside Academy

- Breakfast: 8-8:30 a.m.
- Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Through the Summer Food Service Program, every child aged 18 and under can enjoy no-cost summer meals at schools, parks, and other neighborhood locations. This program is made

possible by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Visit the [USDA website to find additional Summer Food Service Program locations](#) in your neighborhood. You may also call the **National Hunger Hotline** at **1-866-3-HUNGRY**.

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!

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 free food pantry open to all Mapleton families. The Wolverine Den offers a simple way to pick up essentials each week including 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.

Mark your calendar! The Wolverine Den will close for the summer on Thursday, June 18.

To get started, you can create an 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.

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

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...

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](#)

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For more information, contact Noah
at 303-650-7615 or Nrumbyrt@hylandhills.gov

High Fives!

Submit a High Five!

End the school year with a High Five!

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

Laura Bavalos, Transportation

A huge shout out to Laura in Transportation! We had a field trip for students to celebrate their hard work on CMAS and Laura was our bus driver. She got us where we needed to go safely, the ride was super smooth, and she was so kind! I noticed how students smiled as she greeted them as they got on the bus. Thank you, Laura, for making our day extra special 😊

Submitted by Janelle P., Valley View

Brie Shoemaker, Welby Community School of the Arts

We want to give a huge shout out and thank you to Brie Shoemaker for helping us dive into the Benchmark Curriculum! Her expertise and guidance has been invaluable to our team and is going to make our implementation in the fall a super smooth process!

Submitted by Welby Crew

Gunnar Bettis, Performing Arts School on Broadway CTE

Gunnar is not only top notch at his position helping students with performing arts CTE, but when technology needed posters printed to help with the District graduation, Gunnar happily helped to print those that same day! I appreciate everything he does to help his lab run smooth and help the district whenever needed.

Submitted by Zack Pearson, Technology

Mapleton Staff

As I will be leaving at the end of this year to enjoy retirement, I've been reflecting on my time in Mapleton. It has been a true honor to build friendships with so many wonderful people here. This district is filled with dedicated individuals committed to every student's success. Thank you for making my time in Mapleton the best twenty years of my life. I wish everyone continued success!

Submitted by Melodie Mull, Finance/Purchasing

High School Assistant Principals, Post Secondary Options Counselors, Transportation Department, Operations Department, Safety & Security Department, Nutrition Department, Communications Department, IT Department, City of Thornton Police Department

I want to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to each of you for your contributions to a truly successful 2026 graduation ceremony. I couldn't have done it without the support, teamwork, and expertise you each brought to the event. So many departments and individuals came together behind the scenes, and it showed—everything ran smoothly, and the experience was special for our students and families. The weather cooperated, and thanks to all of you, the day went off beautifully. I am truly grateful. 😊

Submitted by Tiffany Dragoo

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

