

Comet Comments

SCHOOL ISSUE - NOVEMBER 2022



FROM THE
DESK OF:

Craig Fisher



The holiday season is upon us. This time of the year can be extra busy and stressful. I hope all of you are looking forward to spending extra time with friends and family. Before we get to break on December 23rd, high school students should be pushing themselves to finish this first semester strong. Final exams will be December 22nd and 23rd. Both days are half days for students. All classwork needs to be turned in before the holiday break. Report cards will be mailed home the week of January 16, 2023.

One thing students at the high school level seem to always struggle with is self-advocacy. Sometimes students can be intimidated or too prideful to ask for help. This is completely normal for their age, but it is a skill that needs to be sharpened. Students who struggle with independently asking for help or assistance usually have a tendency to have a lot of missing assignments. Missing assignments do nothing but hurt a student's chances for success.

Talk to your child about their classes, but also speak to them about trying to specify where they are struggling in a certain subject. Instead of "I don't get it," try to get your child to add to that statement like, "I don't get it because of..., " or "I am struggling to understand what..."

Your child can either ask a teacher for help during class, or before/after school. Our teachers and staff at Coloma High School are willing to help all of our students be successful. Learning to express exactly where a student is struggling can lead to a snowball effect. If a student struggles with one skill but does not express their struggles, then that one struggle becomes many. Usually skills build on top of one another. If a student expresses their struggles early enough, then their struggle will not become a major problem. A student will also see an improvement in their success.

Coloma High School still offers Homework Hour Mondays-Thursdays from 3:00-4:00pm. If students want a place to get their homework done or have a question, we have a teacher ready to help students. Sometimes a smaller environment with not as many people around can help a student express their questions or struggles. Your child can take advantage of this time to help study for final exams.

We can see the end coming to the first semester. It is time for all students to tighten down and focus on making it to that finish line. We can all help support students at Coloma High School by having conversations with students about their classes and how they can improve.

Coloma High School wishes all of our Comet families a Happy Holiday Season, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New year!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

December 8: Band Concert 6pm

December 14: Late Start, School Starts at 10am

December 15: Choir Winter Concert 7pm

December 22 and 23: ½ day exams

December 23: End of MP2 and 1st Semester

December 26 thru January 6: Christmas Break

January 9th: 2nd Semester Begins

MISSION STATEMENT:

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and empower them for their future success.

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IMPORTANCE OF COMPLETING FAFSA

Paying for college might feel overwhelming, but there are many ways to reduce the cost to your family.

1. **The first step in securing any kind of financial aid is completing the FAFSA.** To complete the FAFSA, go to www.studentaid.gov and create an account. The earlier you complete the FAFSA, the more financial aid is available.
2. Has your student received Medicaid for two consecutive years between ages 9 and now? They may be eligible for the Michigan Tuition Incentive Program (TIP), which provides significant financial assistance at various institutions. Complete your FAFSA and go to the MiSSG Student Portal to determine your eligibility at: www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid.
3. Whether or not students qualify for financial aid, everyone can apply for scholarships. Scholarships fall into three general categories:
 - a. **National/state scholarships** are often large prizes with large applicant pools and can be found through reliable websites such as Fastweb and CollegeBoard.
 - b. **Local scholarships** are available to CHS students or Berrien County students only, and applications are available at: www.berriencommunity.org.
 - c. **School/program-based scholarships** are listed on college websites and are only available to accepted students who meet certain eligibility requirements. We recommend that students focus on local and college-based scholarships.

For more information on FAFSA, and/or scholarships, please contact Mr. Shaffer at: gshaffer@ccs.coloma.org or 269-468-2400 ext. 4004.



During the month of October, our seniors had a friendly competition with Watervliet High School. The purpose of this competition was to increase both college applications and submitting Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

To help encourage our seniors, we even offered gift certificate drawings. However, the biggest incentive was that seniors were able to smash "ever so gently" a pie in the face of a teacher of their choosing if they completed their FAFSA.

"PIE DAY" will occur November 21st, during RTI! All seniors are invited to watch the event!

Coloma Families,

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has recognized that many households in more rural areas either have no access to high speed internet or don't have the means to afford high speed internet. The special Affordable Connectivity Program is an FCC-run program to help low-income families pay for internet service and connected devices like a laptop, tablet, or internet hotspot.

<https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/>

There are a number of ways to qualify for the program. If eligible you could receive up to \$30/month discount on internet service, a \$75/month discount for qualifying Tribal members, a one-time discount of \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer, or a low cost internet service plan fully covered.

Visit the link above to follow the 3-step process to see if you qualify, apply for benefits, and find a participating company in our area.

Ben Rimes

Director of Technology | District Improvement Chair
Coloma Community Schools
269.468.2424



Coloma Community Schools remains committed to safely transporting our students to and from school. With winter approaching, we want to remind you that there will be days when we encounter road conditions that may slow our bus routes. We value safety and ask you to be patient should your student's bus run a few minutes late due to road conditions. If we determine road conditions are dangerous, we will cancel school. When school is in session, there will be days when we encounter road conditions that are safe, but our buses will be traveling at slower speeds.

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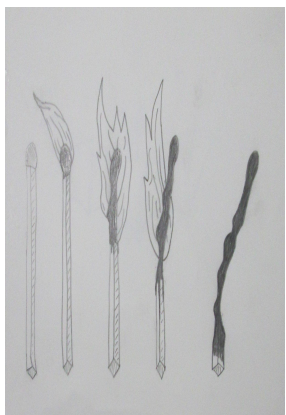
Classroom News



Ceramics recently completed their pinch pots. They first had to learn how to create a pinch pot using a small ball of clay. Once they made the pinch pot they had to cut it in half to show they had even walls and a floor which is important for the drying process or it would crack. After they had this skill mastered they learned to slip and score to attach parts. Students then researched pinch pot artists and created a design to make as a pinch pot. Now ceramic students are working on their coil projects. (Brianna and Christian pics)



During the month of Inktober students were given 12 minutes to create an artwork based on one of the Inktober prompts. Inktober is an event that runs during October to encourage people to draw daily using only pen. Ceramic students did quick sculptures and Art 1/ Advanced students did drawings in their sketchbooks. (Inktober Photos)



Art 1 students have been learning to draw what they see and not "draw what they know". They have focused on slowing down when they're drawing by using contour line. Using one continuous line to draw an object encourages them to look more often at what they are drawing and helps them to see details they may normally miss. (Kaden)



Art club decorated a holiday tree last Thursday for the North Berrien Historical Museum. They used ribbons that they created themselves and their ornaments were "polaroid" picture drawings that shared their favorite memories of winter break and the holidays. The holiday tree is part of a display of over 30 trees at the Museum. The trees will be available to be seen by the public from December 9th to January 1st. The public will be voting for the best decorated tree December 9-11th.



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All Hail the Bard!

William Shakespeare is a name we all know, but why all the fuss over a British writer who died over 400 years ago? First off, Shakespeare in the classroom is a study of language. Shakespeare introduced approximately 3,000 words and phrases into the English language. He is a poet, and a study of Shakespeare is challenging and enriches our language. Furthermore, Shakespeare is a master storyteller. His plot lines include war, revenge, mistaken identity, madness, love and corruption. His themes are universal and give us great opportunities for critical analysis in the classroom. Shakespeare is part of our cultural consciousness. He is often referenced as an icon in our culture, and students need to understand that. Shakespeare is even part of the Michigan Department of Education's recommended core texts for high school language arts. Why? Because Shakespeare is relevant. Students relate to Romeo and Juliet's newfound love and Hamlet's angst. Most of all though, Shakespeare is fun. Even the most reluctant of students are drawn into the compelling worlds that Shakespeare creates because he speaks to all experiences.

I am very excited to be teaching *Hamlet* to our English 11 students throughout the month of December. *Hamlet* incorporates timeless motifs about procrastination and perfectionism that are relevant to our students. Shakespeare's decision to burden the character of Hamlet with both internal and external conflict gives the character a great feeling of depth and relatability that students crave. While many students enter into this thorough study of one of Shakespeare's greatest works reluctantly, year after year they walk away with a great appreciation of this old, but timeless and amazing work.

BY: KEVIN VANPETEGHEM

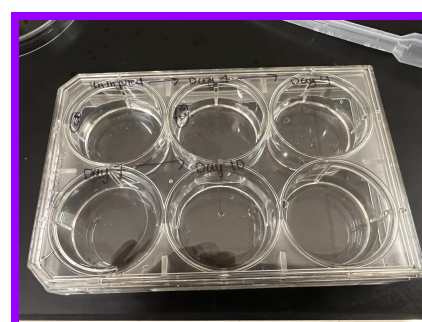
Playing and Learning with Planaria



This fall Behavioral Science students had a unique opportunity to do a lab with a doctoral student from Western Michigan University. Our class was studying animal behaviors such as taxis (the movement of an organism based on a stimulus) and kinesis (movement in a non-directional way such as speeding up or slowing down). Samantha Hack, M. Sc brought us flatworms from the Beane Lab at WMU. Students were able to observe live planaria, feed them and watch how they responded to various stimuli. An extra bonus was getting to observe a regeneration series in which different wells had planaria in different stages of regenerating their cut-off body parts! This experience was a big hit with students and we are so grateful for the partnership formed with the Department of Biological Sciences at Western.



Microscope work



Regeneration Series



Demonstration

BY: SARA GLISSON

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★STUDENTS OF THE ★MONTH



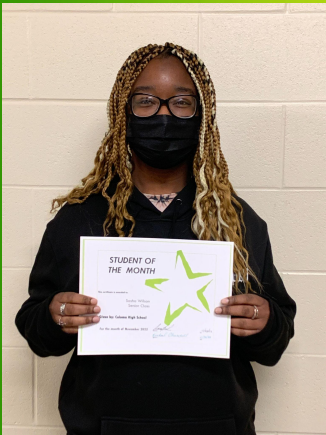
**9TH GRADE -
Grayson Coulter**



**10TH GRADE -
Fatima Avelino Reza**



**11TH GRADE -
Alsye Grenon**



**12TH GRADE -
Sasha Wilson**

STARFISH AWARD

With 24 years of teaching English, Mrs. Ickes favorite part of teaching is watching a student accomplish something that they did not think they could accomplish on their own. Words of wisdom: "Working hard and being a problem solver will take you far in your work and personal life."



I nominated my long term coworker, Jennifer Ickes, because of her dedication for doing what is best for kids. She is extremely involved in our school athletics, student government, the teacher's union, monitoring the halls, stepping in to help colleagues, and has high expectations for herself and others. Mrs. Ickes' commitment to her students and our school culture is quite evident and she is most deserving of the "Starfish Award."

- Mrs. Sara Glisson

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