



COLUMBIA ACADEMY

# Columbia Academy News

## Principal Update, February 2017

# RISE UP

RESPECT  
INTEGRITY  
STRENGTH  
EXCELLENCE

UNDERSTANDING  
PRIDE



Greeting from Columbia Academy,

Our newsletter showcases good things happening at Columbia Academy. While it is not possible to include all the great work that goes on in classrooms each day, this update highlights important ways our students are rising up in our school.

We are proud of the academic achievement of our A and B Honor Roll students from quarter two. Middle school GPA is one of the best measures of how well a student is preparing themselves for success in high school. It is an indication of both what students have learned as well as what habits students are developing. We believe effort is the key to learning; GPA is one way we can measure whether or not students are applying themselves in school. Congratulations to each of our A and B Honor students! We look forward to seeing more and more students on these lists.

In addition, we also saw excellence in our arts programs this past month, especially with the choir and band concerts. We are strong believers in the arts being a key component of a full educational program. Thank you to all who attended the

concerts in support of our students.

Finally, we continue to work to focus on teaching literacy in our schools because we know it is vital to continuing education. Over the next few months, our students will hear the message of the importance of reading as we move towards the annual assessment of each student's proficiency level. We thank you for your support in working together to encourage students to work hard every day to become better prepared for a lifetime of learning.

Columbia  
Academy

900 49th Ave NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
763-528-4700

[colheights.k12.mn.us/ca](http://colheights.k12.mn.us/ca)

Principal  
Duane Berkas

Assistant Principal  
John Awsumb

Assistant Principal  
Rick Ostby

Dean  
Matt Miller

### OUR MISSION

Columbia Heights Public Schools create **worlds of opportunity for every learner** in partnership with supportive small-town communities by challenging all to discover their talents, unleash their potential and develop tools for lifelong success.

# Columbia Academy News

## CA Musicians Perform in January

Columbia Academy musicians were busy performing in January. CA choir and band concerts took place in the High School auditorium to large audiences. Highlights included our small but courageous group of boys singing "Alexander Hamilton" to the delight of all, 80 intermediate band students on stage together, and the advanced band including a moving tribute to MLK that included a narrative of his life. We are proud of our young musicians and encourage them to continue to make music and enrich their lives through music. The lessons learned on the importance of diligence, the satisfaction that comes with excellence, and the joy of creating are just some of the reasons to make sure your child continues in band and/or choir. Mr. Boyd and Ms. Rubris are two more good reasons—we are proud of the work they do each day with our students.



## The Big Dance!

A big thank you to our Student Council for organizing a very fun end of semester dance. With more than 400 students attending, it may have been one of our biggest dances ever! Student Council brought in a DJ, photo booth, inflatable obstacle course, food, and more. The only suggestion given to me by students who attended was to make it last even longer next time. Students had fun and were well behaved—great job Student Council!



# Columbia Academy News

## CA Welcomes Fifth Graders

Columbia Academy hosted fifth graders from our three elementary schools in January. Assistant Principal John Awsumb organized and led three very successful visits with the assistance of Ms. Nelson and her 8<sup>th</sup> grade WEB leaders. 5<sup>th</sup> graders learned about the many electives we offer and our commitment to both academic success and to help each of them RISE UP. We hope that our future 6<sup>th</sup> graders left excited about next year and knowing that Columbia Academy is a place where they will be welcomed.



## Literacy is Key

Columbia Academy continues to focus on making sure our students are strong readers and writers. Literacy is key to success in high school, college, and career. Three things we want to make sure we do to help students improve in this critical area are the following:

**Mindset:** Students will work harder if they believe in their ability to succeed. Students with a growth mindset are more likely to not give up when reading difficult text. We want our students to know that improvement comes with effort because our brains are capable of growing.

**Practice:** Students who read more, learn more. Students who learn more are able to understand more. Students should read at least 20 minutes a day to make sure they are developing the vocabulary and background knowledge to read more.

**Instruction:** Students become better readers when all teachers teach reading and writing. All Columbia Academy teachers work every week on improving reading skills in their classes as part of our school-wide commitment to literacy instruction.

In a few short months, we will measure how well our students can read by giving the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments to all of them. Encourage your child to see literacy as crucial to their future success. Encourage them to take reading seriously in class and at home and to prepare themselves to show what they can do.

*So much depends on literacy*

Read...Read more...Read even more



# Columbia Academy A Honor Roll





# Columbia Academy B Honor Roll



**Grade 6 B Honor Roll**



**Grade 7 B Honor Roll**



**Grade 8 B Honor Roll**



## CA Geography Bee Winner

Congratulations to Catherine Loper, our CA champion of the annual school-wide Geography Bee! Catherine, a 7th grader, was a CA

semi-finalist last year and won it all this year. School winners qualify to compete in a state wide competition. Well done Catherine!

## Pick up times

A reminder that school ends at 3:15 each day. Students who are not participating in after school activities should make their way home at this time. We understand that picking up your child is not always possible at this time, but we want to also make sure we have a safe environment in our front lobby. In April, we will begin locking the front lobby at 5:30. Students involved in after school activities have the opportunity to take the bus home at 4:30 and 5:30. Thank you for working with us to make sure your child gets home safely each day.

## Important Dates

February 9: CA Basketball game  
 February 11: Robotics State Tournament  
 February 13: 6th grade swimming begins  
 February 15: NAEP (50 8th graders)  
 February 15: CA Basketball game  
 February 16: CA Appreciation night at HS Basketball (Free Pizza between JV and Varsity games)  
 February 20: No school (President's Day)  
 February 23: CA Academic Night  
 February 27: WIDA testing begins  
 February 27: Swimming, 2nd 6th grade group  
 March 2: Parent Teacher Conferences  
 March 7: Parent Teacher Conferences  
 March 13 - 17: Spring Break

## NAEP Test at Columbia Academy

The National Educational Assessment of Progress (NAEP) is given across the United States every year to a select number of 8th grade students. Columbia Academy has been informed that we will test 50 identified 8th graders. Parents of these students will be notified by letter. NAEP scores are used to measure progress across the country in various subject areas.

Columbia Heights High School Class of 2017

Order by March 6 and 20% of purchase goes to CHHS

Buy great food and help our students!

## Senior All Night Party Fundraiser!



1

Go to [www.schwansCares.com/c/30432](http://www.schwansCares.com/c/30432)

2

Click "Shop to Give"

3

Shop!

4

Or Call-855-870-7208

Columbia Heights Public Schools is hiring for positions in the food services department. If you are interested please visit the employment website at <https://www.colheights.k12.mn.us/> and click on the employment tab or call HR at 763-528-4421.