

November 30 2015

RISE UP

RESPECT
INTEGRITY
STRENGTH
EXCELLENCE

UNDERSTANDING
PRIDE



Principal Update

Columbia Academy continues to focus on developing a culture of academics. Over the past two weeks we have celebrated our pride in the many ways our students have risen up in the first quarter of the school year. Enjoy the pictures on the RISE UP breakfast (click [here](#)) and the door competition ([here](#)). Both events celebrate our pride to be part of the Columbia Academy academic community.

We know that December goes by quickly, but we encourage you to closely monitor your child's work through their nightly binder. Your signature is most effective in holding your child accountable to your high expectations when you take the time to see that they have completed their work and are using their planner to stay organized. We are committed to working with you at home to provide a common message and set of expectations on the importance of being serious about success in school and in life.

Columbia
Academy

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

colheights.k12.mn.us/ca

Principal
Duane Berkas

Assistant Principal
Jon Moberg

Assistant Principal
Rick Ostby

Dean
Camille Erickson

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

Coming next week!

We invite you to come watch our students perform this family favorite under the directorship of CA Theater teacher Tara Lorence. A production like this takes lots of practice and behind the scenes work by those helping with choreography, music, costume and scenery.



Thank you to all of the students, teachers, parents and community members who have been working so hard over the last two months on preparations for this production. We invite you to come with family and friends to see this great show!

Join us also for a Spaghetti Dinner before the show Friday, December 11th in the high school cafeteria. The CA Parent Advisory Council will be selling tickets and serving spaghetti as a fundraiser to support future family events at Columbia Academy. Student musicians will perform as you eat. Come eat and stay to enjoy the Lion King Jr!

CA Robotics successful in first competition



Columbia Academy came away with three trophies in their first competition this year. This was a long day with students traveling and competing for nearly 12 hours last Saturday.

The teams learned a great deal about how to best meet the challenge this year of moving balls and climbing obstacles in order to win. Three teams were recognized for their design and professional collaboration.

We invite you to the Columbia Academy hosted competition January 9th. It is amazing to see what our students get their robots to do!

Columbia Academy News

CA Pride Competition

During the past two weeks, students have taken time in their 10 minute Advisory (STAR) in the morning and afternoon to decorate their doors. The theme was pride in CA and our work together to RISE UP. Last Wednesday a group of parents and community members toured the building and chose winners from each grade level. The doors look so great that we are going to keep them up an extra week! You can find pictures of our doors and the students at work by clicking [here](#). Feel free to come in and have a tour from one of us if you'd like to see the high level of pride on display!



RISE UP Honors Breakfast

The first RISE UP Honors breakfast recognized 42 CA students who were nominated by their teachers for their positive contribution to our school community. Parents and teachers attended the breakfast last Tuesday and listened proudly to what the nominating teacher had said about each student. You can access more pictures of the event by clicking [here](#). Congratulations to each student—like your parents, we are proud of your leadership in our school!



AVID Regional Directors Visit CA

Regional Directors from AVID visited Columbia Academy November 23rd to talk with staff and visit classrooms. The focus of AVID is creating college and career readiness with all students. The visit focused on the work we are currently doing with binders and planners to help students develop the organizational skills that are vital to academic and life success. We were pleased to be able to show that 91% of our parents sign their child's planner. The AVID directors complemented CA on the consistency and quality of work we are doing with organizational skills.



Columbia Academy News



Realizing Educational Achievement at Columbia Heights

Realizing Academic Achievement at Columbia Heights

CA parents are learning what it takes to help get their child to college. REACH, our district parent education program, provides in depth lessons on how to prepare both academically and financially to meet the requirements of college. With classes in both English and Spanish, parents are learning valuable lessons they can share with their child.



CA Study Room offer student support



The Student Support team at Columbia Academy has opened a Study Room where students can be referred for academic and social/emotional support. The Student Support team includes four staff members who work closely with teachers and parents to provide attention to the needs of individual students. One support service they provide is through Check and Connect, which provides daily check-ins with an adult to provide a positive guide in school to individual students. If you have concerns, either social/emotional or academic, for your child, we recommend you contact us so we can see how we can help. We are committed to every child getting the attention they need to be successful and happy in our schools.

The Importance of Grade Point Average

Your child's report card includes their grade point average (GPA) in the bottom right hand corner for the first quarter. Seventh and Eighth grade students can also find their cumulative GPA that is the average of all their grades since arriving at CA. Studies show that students with at least a 2.5 GPA are much more likely to be successful at high school. Know your child's GPA!

**What is the best predictor
of how a middle school
student will do in high
school?
GPA**

Columbia Academy News

Thank you!

We are grateful for donations of time and money that help improve the learning experience of our students. A big thank you to Legion Post 555 for their donation of apples in honor of our teachers! The apples and show of appreciation provide encouragement to staff. Thank you!



Important Dates:

- December 8: REACH parent education program continues at CA, 5:30 p.m.
- December 10: Lion King Jr. at CHHS, 7 p.m.
- December 11: Spaghetti dinner before Lion King Jr at High School cafeteria, 4:30 p.m.
- December 11: Lion King Jr. at CHHS, 7 p.m.
- December 12: Lion King Jr. at CHHS, 7 p.m.
- December 14: CA Choir Concert, 6:30 p.m.
- December 15: REACH parent education program continues at CA, 5:30 p.m.
- December 22: REACH Graduation celebration, 7:30 p.m.

After School Activities bus

Columbia Heights Public Schools has activity buses after school that leave Columbia Academy at 5:30 p.m. These buses are for CA students who are in Robotics, athletic programs (currently Girls' Basketball), Theatre, Yearbook, WEB or Student Council. Please note that it does not transport students from Open Gym on Tuesdays. The activity bus drops students off at designated stops, requiring some students to walk some distance from the bus to their home. With darkness earlier, please make sure your child will be safe and can find his or her way home before having them ride the activity bus. There is also a 4:30 p.m. bus Mondays and Thursdays that provides transportation to designated stops for students in detention.

Special Notes!

- Please let us know if your **home address, email address, or phone number changes**. Questions? Call us at 763-528-4700.
- School Board Election: The Special Election to fill the seat of former School Board Director Lori Meyer is scheduled for Jan. 26. Click [here](#) for more information.
- A second Special School Board election, to fill the seat vacated by former Director Grant Nichols, is scheduled for April 5, 2016. If a Primary is needed, it will be held Feb. 9, 2015. Click [here](#) for more information.
- Learn more about our District by reading the School Board News (click [here](#)).
- With winter coming, please be aware of emergency weather procedures (click [here](#)).
- Nominate a Columbia Academy teacher or staff member for the 2015-201 District Employee of the Year Award (click [here](#)).
- Our District's Mini Adventures preschool child care program has openings for children 33 months to 5-years-old. Call 763-528-4512 for more information.