

December 23 2015

RISE UP

RESPECT
INTEGRITY
STRENGTH
EXCELLENCE

UNDERSTANDING
PRIDE



Principal Update

With the holiday break, it is a good time for to reflect on the gratitude I feel to be part of the Columbia Academy community. This includes:

- The opportunity to work with an amazing group of students who have the potential to do so much with their lives
- The opportunity to work with an incredibly dedicated staff
- The opportunity to learn from parents and other colleagues how to better serve the needs of our students
- The opportunity to develop a stronger culture of academics within our school
- The opportunity to see your sons and daughters RISE UP by practicing respect, integrity, strength, excellence, understanding, and pride

Thank you for the privilege of working with your children. Happy holidays!

Columbia
Academy

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Duane Berkas

Assistant Principal
Jon Moberg

Assistant Principal
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Dean
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OUR MISSION

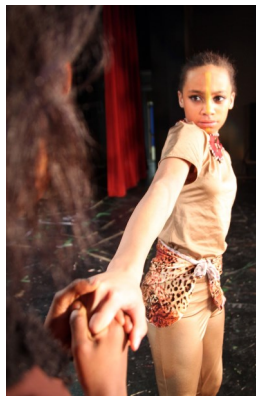
Columbia Heights Public Schools create **worlds of opportunity for every learner** in partnership with supportive small-town communities by challenging all to discover their talents, unleash their potential and develop tools for lifelong success.

Columbia Academy News

Rave reviews for Lion King Jr.



What a show! The Lion King Jr. played to full houses all three performances with more than 700 tickets sold. The Columbia Academy students under the directorship of CA Theater teacher Tara Lorence impressed audiences each night with their energy, talent, and joy. We are very proud of the hard work they put in to make this show such a success. Well done CA Theater team—caste and crew!



Columbia Academy opens homework lab

Columbia Academy now has a Homework Lab every Monday and Thursday from 3:15 – 4:30. Students need to sign up with approval from parents in order to participate. Staff will be present to assist and supervise each night. A snack will also be provided. There is transportation home for those who normally take the after school bus (this bus requires students to walk several blocks when they are dropped off ; (please check with us if you have questions.) We are hopeful that we can get any student who needs assistance in getting things done to attend the Homework Lab on a weekly basis. We encourage you to consider the Homework Lab for your child. Please contact us if you would like him or her to take advantage of this resource!

Columbia Academy News

REACH concludes with parent graduation

Parents who participated in REACH over the past 6 weeks celebrated their achievement with a graduation ceremony on Tuesday. REACH provides parents with information on how to support their child in becoming college and career ready. Approximately 50 parents were part of this year's program at Columbia Academy. We want to thank our trainers, organizers, and students who were part of this year's program as well as the support provided by Student Services. We hope our REACH parents and all of you will continue to come to events at Columbia Academy where we can work together to support your child's success in school and in life.



Mid-Quarter grades

Mid-quarter grades have been mailed home. We encourage you to use the grade report to monitor their progress and work with their teachers to support your child if you see they are having difficulty. Often times, students are capable of doing the work but are either not completing it or turning it in. Other students may be having a difficult time paying attention in class. Discussions with your child and your child's teacher may provide you with insights on how engaged your child is while in school. Middle school years can be difficult ones for many children. We are committed to working with you to make sure that despite difficulties, students are learning what it takes to be successful in school and in life. Here are three possible reminders you can give your child: Pay attention—it is the only way to learn.

Columbia Academy News

CA to host robotics tournament

Columbia Academy will host its third annual Robotics tournament on Saturday, January 9th. If you have never attended a robotics competition, this is your chance to see what this fast growing team event is about. There are now more robotics teams in Minnesota middle schools and high schools than there are hockey teams! Come support our Columbia Academy students as they compete with other teams in getting their robots to push, pull, and climb in exciting competitions. The event goes all day and is free to the public!



Student Council fundraiser begins

The Columbia Academy Student Council's annual Pennies for Patients campaign has officially started. The campaign will continue through the end of February. Pennies for Patients is sponsored through the Minnesota chapter of the Leukemia and Lymphoma society whose mission is to cure blood cancers, improve the life of patients and their families, and ensure access to treatments for blood cancer patients. According to Student Council President Dylan Nichols (pictured) the goal this year is to raise \$2,000. A percentage of all donations are spent on patient and community services, research, public health and professional education but a portion this year will also go directly to Patrick Baumgardner and his family. Patrick is a student in the school district who is currently being treated for Leukemia. We are encouraging all students and staff to bring pennies from home as part of this very worthy cause.



CA Athletics Update

The **girls' basketball team** had a short but successful season with only two losses. Several members of the team (picture to left) are also playing for the high school JV team and many more are participating in traveling or community basketball. We look forward to watching this exciting group of athletes progress through middle school and high school.

Boys 7th and 8th grade basketball begins after the holiday break. There is still time to sign up! Required paperwork is available in our office.



Play for CA!

Columbia Academy News

Columbia Academy

The walls of Columbia Academy are brimming with art work. This year, chief custodian Mr. Adams and his staff have been working with the CA Art Department to install new display cases down the west wing hallway. The display cases are helping feature work that did not fit in the older east and west display cases. We invite you to come and take a tour of our students' art work! It is truly impressive to see what our students are able to create!



Columbia Academy News

Thank you!

A big thank you to our PTO for the successful spaghetti dinner held prior to the Friday night performance of Lion King Jr. Thank you to all of the volunteers and high school musicians who helped make it a success! Special thanks to Shari Alexon, Cheryl Salchow and Jessica for all their work!

A special thank you to CA teachers Ms. Bluth and Ms. Kenevan, their assistants, and students for the amazing work they did decorating the Media Center. It really did bring us happiness!

Breakfast with the Principal in January

We will resume the long tradition of breakfast with the principal at Columbia Academy with the new year. Come join our administrative staff on Friday, January 22nd from 8:30—9:30 for coffee and rolls. This is a chance for us to discuss programs in school, make suggestions and get to know each other.

Important Dates:

- December 24: Holiday break begins
- January 4: School resumes
- January 7 and 8: 5th graders visit CA
- January 8: 8th graders take MN Student Survey
- January 9: CA hosts robotics competition
- January 11: New Student Open House at CA
- January 18: MLK Day (No school)
- January 22nd: Boosters Appreciation night at High School basketball game, 5:30
- January 25: Grading Day (No school)
- January 26: Third Quarter begins
- January 28: CA Band Concert (7 p.m. at Columbia Heights High School Auditorium)

CA Uniforms Reminder!

Columbia Academy is a uniform school. We continue to sell uniforms throughout the school year including fleeces and sweat-shirts for the winter. Please make sure your child comes with the appropriate dress. Students are required to change into uniform if they arrive in other clothing. Thank you for helping keep your child in uniform each day!

Election Reminder!

- School Board Election is on January 26th.

Minnesota Student Survey

The Minnesota Student Survey is conducted every three years with 5th, 8th, 9th, and 11th grade students across the state. The survey asks questions about activities, experiences, and behaviors. Topics covered include tobacco, alcohol and drug use, school climate, physical activity, violence and safety, connections with school and family, health, and other topics. Questions about sexual activity are asked only of high school students. The survey is administered jointly by the Minnesota Departments of Education, Health, Human Services, and Public Safety. Columbia Academy 8th graders will be doing the survey which is approximately 45 minutes long on Friday, January