

April 2nd 2016

## Principal Update

I want to congratulate CA's own Alison Humpal, 2016 Columbia Heights Public Schools Teacher of the Year! We have many fine teachers in this district so it is a true honor to receive this award. Ms. Humpal teaches English and provides leadership in the area of literacy to her department as well as our entire school. Ms. Humpal cares deeply for her students and it shows in her classroom. Her commitment to her profession is exemplary and we are proud that she is here for your child.

March was a good month for Columbia Academy with other notable achievements that you can read about in the newsletter but I am especially proud to see our students continue to develop a true understanding that this is a school with high expectations. Our teachers send a consistent message that all of our students can be successful with hard work. We have great teachers who are deeply committed to your child's success. I know they appreciate your and my support.



CA English Teacher Alison Humpal  
2016 Teacher of the Year  
Columbia Heights Public Schools

Columbia  
Academy

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Principal  
Duane Berkas

Assistant Principal  
Jon Moberg

Assistant Principal  
Rick Ostby

Dean  
Camille Erickson

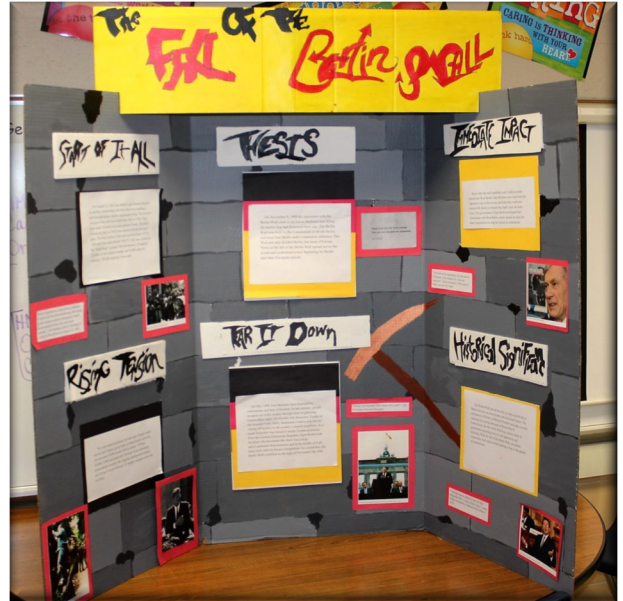
### OUR MISSION

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

## CA History Day competitors heading to State

History Day is a project-based competition that takes place across the nation in grades 6-12. Through research, students learn to read and analyze primary and secondary sources, synthesize what they learn in writing, and present historical content. Social Studies teachers Chris Mason, Hannah Student and Paul Geving brought approximately 20 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Columbia Academy to the regional competition in Bloomington, MN. Three separate CA teams were selected to move on to state and another team received honorable mention. We are proud of their success and proud of all of our students who worked very hard on their History Day projects for several months. The hard work showed in their very professional presentations. Students at CA are preparing for college and career and History Day projects are an example of the commitment to excellence and hard work that we believe are so important in life.



## April is MCA month at CA

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in Math and Reading will begin April 18<sup>th</sup> and take place through the end of the month at Columbia Academy. This will be followed by the grade 8 Science MCA in May. Students will take one section of the test per day so most students will take approximately 4 class periods to complete each test. Please emphasize with your child that these tests are the primary indicator of your child's level in reading and math and can be used for placement in classes. The MCAs are also used to determine whether or not your child is on a path to college and career readiness based on correlation with a college entrance score in 11<sup>th</sup> grade on the ACT. We want our students to do their very best so that the score they receive is a true indicator of their current level in reading, math, and science. Getting a good night's rest, a healthy breakfast, and a pep talk from you all ways you can support your child with these very important tests they will take.



# Columbia Academy News

## CA students immersed in Spanish

Twenty-five 8th grade CA students boarded bus on Friday, March 4<sup>th</sup> at noon and traveled to Concordia Language Academy near Brainerd, MN and returned Sunday afternoon. The students spent the weekend speaking and listening to Spanish, participating in many fun activities, and enjoying the relaxed atmosphere of camp life. This was the third annual trip that Spanish Marie Nelson has organized for her Spanish I class. A special thank you to the Boosters for their kind donations that helped make the trip possible. A special thank you to the chaperones including Marie Nelson, Robert TwoBears, Sherry King, and Rhonda Johnson.



## Columbia Academy News

### Columbia Heights 8th graders win State Basketball title

Congratulations to the Columbia Heights 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys' traveling basketball team that won the state championship in their division. We have a large sign in the east hallway congratulating them and plan to display their championship banner in the gym and trophy in our display case. This young group of boys plays hard as a team and will be exciting to watch in the years to come at CHHS! The 6<sup>th</sup> grade boys took fifth place at state after a very successful season. Our other teams made up of boys and girls that attend CA also recorded lots of wins in the traveling league. We are proud of them all!



### CA Band Ensembles rock the cafeteria

The first annual CA Solo/Ensemble cafetorium concert took place on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Over ten different groups performed in front of family and friends on the CA stage in the Cafeteria that was transformed into a café-style musical venue. This was a chance for students to gain confidence in their ability to perform musically in much smaller numbers than in a band. The program included one performance by the CA Jazz Band that included Ms. Rubris-Aakre conducting and Mr. Boyd and Mr. Palmer playing trumpet with the students. The program also had two fine MCs, Aurora Wigley and Peter Heryla, who helped keep the atmosphere light and the program moving as our young musicians set up for each number. According to Mr. Boyd, this may be the start of a new tradition at CA!





# Columbia Academy News

## Special Parent Advisory Council Meeting

Columbia Academy will hold a special Parent Advisory Council Meeting on April 14th to receive feedback on what is and is not working well in our school. If you are interested in attending, please let us know. We are looking for parents are willing to provide honest and fair feedback on what we should continue, end, and improve at Columbia Academy in the areas of academics, social/emotional support, and after school activities. The meeting will take place on April 18th from 5:00—6:30 at Columbia Academy. Please let us know if you would like to attend.



## EXPLORE Test results in April



Eighth graders will receive their EXPLORE test results on April 14th and 15th. These results provide a measure of students' level of college readiness in multiple skill areas. The EXPLORE also provides a list of careers that match with the students' interests and strengths as measured by the test. Counselor Molly Sprouse will go over the results with students in their Social Studies classes and the reports will then be sent home with the students. The Explore is linked to ACT and is a reliable predictor of how a student would score on this college entrance exam as juniors if they continue to perform at a similar level in school.

## CA Parent-Teacher Conferences Data

Here is the data on the number of students whose parents or guardians came to winter conferences. We appreciate each the effort many of you made to come, but the overall percentage of parents who did is much lower than we would like. We welcome your thoughts on how we can increase participation in the future.

Grade	Total Students	Total Conferences	Percent
6	258	154	60%
7	206	94	46%
8	247	103	42%
<b>Total</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>49%</b>

## Columbia Academy News

### Honoring American Indians

David Larson, our liaison to American Indian families, has been working with students and staff. Mr. Larson is brining American Indian families together at the high school to learn and build community. He also presented to staff at our latest staff development day on the rich cultural heritage that is too often unknown to most people in our country. He is also helping organize a POW WOW in April and a celebration of American Indian month in May at Columbia Academy. Our teachers will continue to work to incorporate units of instruction on American Indians, especially the Dakota and Ojibwe. Mr. Larson will provide an expert review of this material as we improve our knowledge of American Indian culture and service to our American Indian students.



# POW WOW



## Honor our Elders ... Honor our Children

### Noon – 4 p.m. Saturday, April 16

### Columbia Heights High School

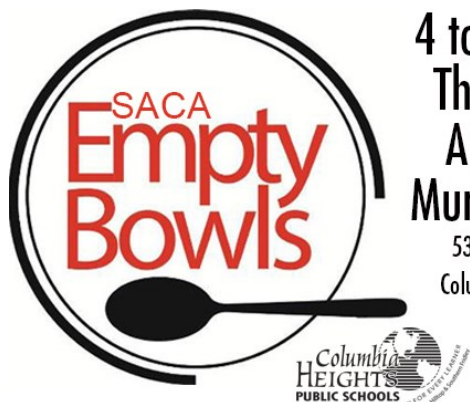
# Celebrating American Indians

For more information go to [www.colheights.k12.mn.us/aie](http://www.colheights.k12.mn.us/aie)

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# Help fight hunger in our community



4 to 7 p.m.,  
Thursday,  
April 14  
Murzyn Hall  
530 Mill Street  
Columbia Heights

## Breakfast with the Principal on April 22

We have resumed the long tradition of breakfast with the principal at Columbia Academy with the new year. Come join our administrative staff on Friday, April 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:

4th Quarter begins	April 4
After school study lab	April 4, 3:30—4:30
CA PCA (PTO) meeting	April 4, 5:30—6:30
RISE UP breakfast	April 5
After school study lab	April 7, 3:30—4:30
After school study lab	April 11, 3:30—4:30
After school study lab	April 14, 3:30—4:30
MCA testing (Reading)	April 18—22
After school study lab	April 18, 3:30—4:30
After school study lab	April 21, 3:30—4:30
MCA testing (Math)	April 25—29
After school study lab	April 25, 3:30—4:30
After school study lab	April 28, 3:30—4:30

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: PART-TIME BUS DRIVERS

Our school district is in immediate need of part-time bus drivers for students in Columbia Heights Public Schools (CHPS).

- Part-time positions of 25 to 35 hours a week
- Training provided
- \$16.50 per hour and up depending on experience
- Transportation to work is available
- Summer work options available

For more information, call 763-201-8879

## College Readiness Opportunities in High School

Did you know that Columbia Heights High School offers multiple ways for students to earn college credits for free while they are in high school? As early as 10th grade, qualifying students can access classes at local universities and technical colleges with no tuition costs. Columbia Heights High School is also partnering with Anoka Ramsey Community College to offer college credit classes within the high school itself. Finally, there are 13 different Advanced Placement (AP) classes at the high school that students can take with final exams that can result in students getting credit for these classes in college. These opportunities can save families lots of money while offering great preparation for successfully completing college. More information is on our website.