



COLUMBIA ACADEMY

Columbia Academy News

September/October 2017

RISE UP

RESPECT
INTEGRITY
STRENGTH
EXCELLENCE

UNDERSTANDING
PRIDE



Greetings from Columbia Academy,

Thank you reading our newsletter! Our CA newsletter helps provide you with a picture of what it is like to be a CA student as well as to inform you of the things we believe are important. It is also a way to get more information on upcoming events and district news.

We are proud to have your child on our CA team this year. Our uniforms are worn with the same pride that any team puts on their jersey. The CA uniform is an important way we communicate our commitment to being a great place to learn, have fun, and grow.

Our mantra RISE UP is our way to remind students that middle school is about much more than academic subjects. Middle school is an introduction to what it means to be more independent. We believe it is important that students are considering such things as respect, integrity, strength, excellence, understanding, and pride when they make individual choices.

The middle school years are a time of physical and mental growth that is more similar to very young children than any other period in life, except this time they want to do it on their own. Helping students learn to believe in their potential as individuals is perhaps

the greatest lesson we can teach in middle school. We want each student to recognize the wonder we see in who they are and who they can become. It is our privilege to work with your child at CA!

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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

Supporting your child at CA

Parent Teacher Conferences this week!

Come join us for Parent Teacher Conferences this Thursday, October 12th or Monday, October 16th. Conferences are 4:00—7:30 each night. You do not need to sign up. Simply come and check in at our welcome table next to the gym. Your child's teachers will be at a table in either the gym or the cafeteria.

You can also do the following at conferences:

- Speak with an administrator or student support professional.
- Sign up for Parent View.
- Complete lunch forms.



CA Curriculum Night for parents

The first annual Columbia Academy Curriculum Night for parents will take place on October 30th. Come enjoy a walking taco for a light meal and listen to teachers from each department describe our curriculum to you. You will be find answers to the following questions at this event:

- What will my child learn this year in his/her different classes?
- How is my child taught in his/her different classes?
- What are the expectations for my child in class and for homework?
- How can I better support my child to be successful?
- How can I stay informed on the progress of my child?



This event is for parents only. Please come to learn more about your child's education!

Columbia Academy News

November 7 Bond Referendum

The Columbia Heights Public School District has five schools that serve the communities of Hilltop, Southern Fridley and Columbia Heights. Three of these are elementary schools that feed into Columbia Academy (middle school), which then feeds into Columbia Heights High School. Regardless of which school students begin, are in or graduate from, all of our students are Hylanders.

Providing our students the best safe, secure and educational facilities is extremely important to all of us. The District strives to ensure our students are educated in equitable facilities. When those facilities need significant improvements, the District's School Board may ask voters for their help.

In 2017 there are two significant school facility projects that the School Board is asking voters to consider. The School Board voted June 27 to place a Capital Building Bond Referendum question on the Nov. 7 ballot. This will be for a bond referendum not to exceed a total of \$16 million.

The Bond referendum, in summary, calls for major safety, security, educational and staff facility improvements to upgrade North Park consistent with Valley View and Highland elementary schools. An approved bond will also fund improved traffic entrances\exits and parking for bus and vehicles and a new cafeteria at North Park.

Additionally, the Bond will support a near complete upgrade of the high school Performing Arts Center (including student support spaces), create a larger band room and add a stage in the gym for additional school and community performances.

If approved by voters, the bond will result in a tax increase to taxpayers in the Columbia Heights Public School District.

We invite you **to attend the 2017 Bond Referendum Community Forum 7 p.m on Thursday, October 12 at Columbia Heights High School.** The District is inviting you to this Forum so you can learn more about the proposed safety, security and educational renovations, remodeling, upgrading, equipping and constructing at North Park Elementary School and Columbia Heights High School. The Forum will include a presentation, tour and the opportunity to ask questions.

The specifics of the Bond Referendum request is available at colheights.k12.mn.us/2017Bond. For more information, call Director of Technology and Security Services Bryan Hennekens at 763-528-4479.



Columbia Academy News

CA set 2017-2018 academic goals

The CA staff had a week to prepare together for our school year. During this time, we discussed our vision that our students from so many different backgrounds will be united by a school culture of academics. We spent a great deal of time learning, planning, and making commitments to a consistent approach to high classroom expectations, rigorous content, and writing to learn in every classroom everyday.

We will measure our improvement by the four goals stated to the right. We know that the only way we can do this is by working closely together as a school and as a community. We believe that each goal is achievable but will stretch us to be at our best each and every day.

We appreciate your support in setting high expectations and monitoring how your child is doing as we work together for his/her success.

CA Goals 2018

100% of our classrooms will have a strong culture of academics	20% gain in the number of students on the A or B Honor Roll
5% gain in both reading and math proficiency as measured by the MCAs	15 % gain in the number of students who show moderate to high growth on the reading and math MCAs

5 ways to build a culture of academics

Columbia Academy has five techniques that we are committed to using in every class, every day to promote a culture of academics. Here are the five simple but powerful techniques all of our teachers use to create cultures of learning:

Threshold: Teachers greet each child warmly into a room defined by a culture of academics.

Strong start: Students start each class with a short review that requires writing or solving problems. This is part of focusing students and also helps students transfer learning into their long term memory.

From procedures to routines: Teachers establish procedures that are practiced until they become routines in the first weeks of school. These routines increase the efficiency of a classroom creating more time for learning with less disruption.

100%: High expectations are in place for all of our students all of the time. We teach students how to RISE UP the CA Way and we expect them to do so at all times. We try to catch and address little things early so we can prevent disruption of learning.

Strict/Warm: We work to build high structure and strong relationships. We believe the key is to do both. Demanding and caring; strict and warm, the combination of both define our classrooms.

Columbia Academy News

Proud to be a CA Athlete

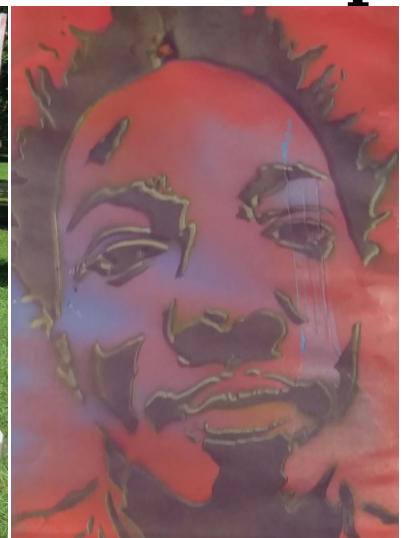
Fridays are Spirit Wear days at CA and it is fun to see the many CA athletes wearing their Heights jerseys. We have many 7th and 8th graders who have been part of fall sports' teams at CA or the High School.

We invite you to our football game on Thursday, October 27th at 4:30 at the high school football field when we will congratulate all of our fall athletes at half-time!



CA student thrives at Summer Graffiti Camp

Columbia Academy eighth grader Arkinzie Richards was selected as a participant in the Minneapolis Institute of Art 2017 Graffiti Camp. Students worked under the guidance of local artist Peyton Scott Russell, and Arkinzie's work is set to be displayed at the renowned art museum this September. The graffiti camps are designed to help participants learn about graffiti as an exciting art form. The focus was on education in history, letter structure, aerosol techniques, and execution of personal and collaborative murals. Arkinzie was able to experiment in three mediums; drawing, paper collage, and aerosol.



Columbia Academy News

Working together for safe streets

Getting your student to and from school **safely** is a top priority. Large numbers of children, cars, and busses maneuver drop offs and pickups with the potential for a tragic accident to occur if we are not all careful. We want to do everything we can to avoid such a tragedy from occurring at our school.

In order to do all we can to keep our students safe, we will begin issuing formal warnings to students who are not using the crosswalks on 49th or on Central. If we have to issue more than two warnings to a student, he or she may be ticketed for jaywalking. **Please remind your student that your expectation and ours is to use the crosswalks.**



In addition, please remind students that once they arrive at school, they are not allowed to leave campus to go to one of the local businesses. Students are to remain at school until the end of the day or when they are picked up or leave on the bus. Following this rule decreases the number of students crossing streets or busy parking lots.

A few reminders for parents dropping off and picking up their child:

- Slow down and obey all traffic laws and speed limits, both in school zones and neighborhoods surrounding our schools. This includes not making U-turns in any school zone.
- Always comply with our school drop-off and pick-up procedures.
- Do not double park or stop on crosswalks to let children out of the car.
- Do not load or unload children at locations across the street from our schools. This forces students to unnecessarily cross busy streets, often mid-block rather than at a crosswalk, which they should always use.
- Prepare to stop for a school bus when overhead yellow lights are flashing.
- Always stop for a school bus with its red overhead lights are flashing, regardless of the direction from which the driver is approaching. Only proceed after the red lights stop flashing and no students are in traffic.
- Know and apply that pedestrians always have the right of way.
- Do not drive, park or stop, even momentarily, in bus drop-off/pick-up areas.
- Always follow the directions of our safety officers or police officers.
- Watch for children walking or bicycling (both on the road and the sidewalk) in areas near our schools.
- Watch for children playing and gathering near bus stops, especially children arriving late for the bus, who may dart into the street without looking for traffic.
- Watch for children walking or biking to school when backing up.

Thank you for helping us keep Columbia Academy students safe on our streets!

Columbia Academy News

\$750,000+ Grant for Afterschool Programs

Columbia Heights Public Schools (CHPS) and the Columbia Heights Recreation Department will expand out-of-school programming for CHPS students and residents who live within the District boundaries thanks to a Minnesota Department of Education 21st-Century Community Learning Center (21CCLC) Grant totaling a minimum of \$750,000.

The 21CCLC grant focuses on students grades 5-12, but due to funding from additional sources CHPS will be able to offer free ENCORE out of school time program for students in grades 1-12 beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.

ENCORE offers extended learning opportunities focused on Technology, Arts, Environmental Studies, Health/Fitness and Academic Support. ENCORE will be available week-ends, before school, after school and through the summer months at each of the District's five schools and through the City of Columbia Heights Recreation Department.

ENCORE students will code their own computer programs, learn water safety and survival, solve complex engineering problems, express themselves artistically by creating pottery and gain an academic boost. All of the offerings are designed to provide students with the skills they will use to be successful in college and careers.

The 21st-Century Community Learning Center Grant is funded at \$250,000 a year with a minimum of three and up to five years. CHPS and the Columbia Heights Recreation Department are also partnering with Computer Explorers, Spark-Y, Northern Clay Center and the St. Paul Conservatory.

Here are the current ENCORE classes we offer at CA:

CA ENCORE Classes	Day
7th/8th Grade Girls Group	Monday
Computer Explorers: Cod-	Monday
CA SWAT Team	Monday
Morning Gym	Wednesday
Northern Clay Ceramics	Wednesday
World Drumming	Wednesday
Girls Lacrosse	Wednesday
Heritage Spanish	Wednesday
Morning Soccer	Thursday
Spoken Work/SLAM Poetry	Thursday
Cribbage Class	Thursday
Yoga	Thursday
Morning Basketball	Friday

ENCORE





Donations to Columbia Academy

We want to thank **Savers for donating over 200 pairs of uniform pants** to Columbia Academy. This is a tremendous help to families in need and to our students who need a loaner for a day. Thank you Savers and **Ms. Rose Szurek** for your kind and thoughtful donation.

Thank you to **VFW Post 555** for their donation of a box full of school supplies. We appreciate their annual visit to our school!

Thank you to our neighbor **Wahlgreen's** for their donation of school supplies at the start of our school year. We appreciate the efforts by their managers to work with us to support our students rising up inside and outside of school.



Important Dates

Oct 12, 16: Parent Teacher Conference (4-7:30)
 October 19, 20: No school (MEA)
 October 27: CA Picture Retake day
 October 27: CA football at high school, (4:30)
 November 7: Voting day
 November 8: End of Quarter 1
 November 9: No school (Grading Day)
 November 10: No school (District In-Service)

