



COLUMBIA ACADEMY

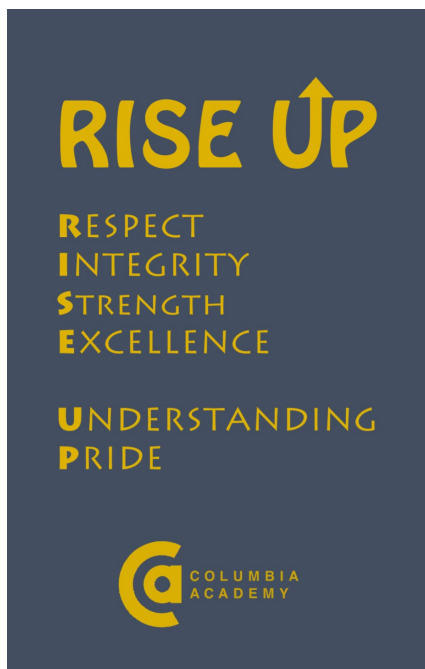
Columbia Academy News

September 2016

Some highlights from the month of September:

- Over 725 students filling our building with sounds and sights of life, laughter, and learning
- Refreshed staff eager to put into place new ideas and to improve on last year's work
- Nearly 300 6th graders, wide eyed on day one, but every day gaining more confidence in themselves and trust in their school
- Classroom activities that are fun and serve an essential role in building the trust and community that enhances learning for all
- Teachers practicing routines with their students so that school is efficient with time and clear in expectations
- Sports teams enjoying the thrill of competition, the camaraderie of being on a team, and the emotions that come with winning and losing
- Conversations with students that reveal interests, needs, and the unexpected
- Lessons that teach students things they never knew and challenge them to think hard because teachers know that they can
- Watching our school become a place where students come together to form a community, a team of learners, a place where we all belong

It is good to know that the daily experiences that are thrilling now will continue every day at CA. I can assure you your child is in a good place, a place where we all belong.



Together we will RISE UP!

Columbia
Academy

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

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.

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CA Robotics up and running with motivated crew!

The CA Robotics team is up and running 5 days a week and even some Saturdays! This is a hard working group of students who work with Coach (and CA math teacher) Mr. Kennedy on designing and building robots that compete in tournaments for the right to go to State. Last year two CA teams made it to state competitions! Students work as teams with roles as varied as creating a mascot, programming the computer, building components of the robot, driving the robot, and more. Robotics is open to students in all three grades.



WEB leaders make sure 6th graders know they belong!

Where Everyone Belongs (WEB) is a student activity for 8th graders who have demonstrated they have strong leadership skills. These 8th grade students are charged with welcoming our 6th graders and any other new students to CA and making sure our newest students know that they are part of our CA team. WEB coach (and Spanish teacher) Marie Nelson also has the WEB leaders fund raise through a variety of activities, participate in a buddy system for United Sports teams, and help provide support to school events throughout the district. Our WEB leaders provided a half day orientation of fun filled activities just before the start of the school year. We are proud to have strong leaders in our 8th grade class who know and value the meaning of community at Columbia Academy.



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Columbia Academy December Musical will be Annie

The Columbia Academy musical is a big event each year. This year's musical will be Annie. Theater teacher Ms. Lorence will once again direct the production. Students in all three grades have the opportunity to try out for parts or to be part of the stage crew. Columbia Academy provides a great opportunity for students to participate in multiple performances to audiences in the District Auditorium at the high school. It is a serious commitment but students also have lots of fun and take great pride in their work. Look for more information in the weeks ahead from CA in your student's planner.



CA sports teams and fans demonstrate CA pride!

CA 7th and 8th graders are participating on many different teams. This year the girls volleyball team has over 30 players under the guidance of Coach (and CA PE teacher) Ms. Anderson. Last week's match vs Brooklyn Center was an exciting win with what may be the loudest cheering ever heard in the CA gym! Boy's soccer came from behind out on the field for a very exciting 4-3 win in the last minutes following being down 3-1 to Brooklyn Center. Coach (and CA PE teacher) Mr. Opatz has another very exciting and undefeated soccer team. The CA football team has provided many exciting moments as well. Coach Howe and Laskowski (both CA social studies teachers) and Assistant Coach Mr. Sheets have a hard working group that truly plays as a team. Finally, CA has bowlers, swimmers, tennis players, and soccer players all participating on JV squads at the high school. Athletics is having a great fall season!



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Five things you can do to help your child succeed

1. Make sure your child is prepared to learn

- **Computer is charged**
- **Binder and planner are checked**
- **Uniform is on**



Bringing their computer fully charged means students can access information and activities for their classes throughout the day. Checking your child's binder and planner and signing for it means you are informed and can hold your child accountable. Coming to school in a uniform means your child can enter class immediately and not have to wait to learn until after they are changed. We add breakfast to this morning checklist if students have not eaten it at home.

2. Set high expectations with your child

- **Academic effort**
- **Behavior**



If we set high expectations and truly believe that students can meet these expectations, then most of the time they will. The opposite unfortunately is also true. Parents help their child succeed when they set academic goals with their child, recognize and reward effort, and establish clear boundaries for behavior. We want to work with you to strengthen the message that your child has great potential that hard work will reveal.

3. Monitor progress

- **Check planner/binder daily**
- **Check that homework is completed**
- **Check grades and missing assignments weekly**



"We inspect what we expect." This makes sense but it is unfortunately too often forgotten. Teachers and administrators enhance learning when they monitor progress on a daily basis. Parents enhance learning when they make weekly checks of their child's grades, look for any missing assignments, and track dates for important assignments. This information is available through ParentVue, emails from teachers, and the student binder.

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4. Provide a time and place for study

Many things happen after school that are good for kids. We want our students to keep doing these. Other things after school are not as helpful. We hope that homework takes priority over social media, video games, TV, or just hanging out. We know that sports, drama, church, and many other activities are healthy and that there is balance in every family of work and play. Helping students learn the balance of getting work done and having fun is a great thing to learn in middle school.



5. Read

What does every subject have in common? The importance of being able to read well. One of the best ways to become a better reader is through reading what one likes to read. Our school library is filled with books that adolescents like to read. Students who learn to find pleasure in reading will become better readers, learn more, and enjoy greater success in whatever career they decide to one day pursue. We believe that reading is so important that we recommend parents continue to have requirements for their child through middle school to spend time reading something they choose for at least 20—30 minutes each day.



Columbia Academy Parent Checklist for Student Success	
Make sure your child is prepared for school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer is fully charged • Binder and planner are checked and signed • In uniform 	
Make sure your child knows you have high expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic effort • Behavior 	
Make sure you set a time and place for learning at home	
Make sure you monitor your child's progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check planner/binder daily • Check that homework is completed • Check grades and missing assignments weekly 	
Make sure your child reads every day	



Thank you

A big thank you to Legion Post 555 for their continued support of our school. Post 555 once again kindly donated school supplies for our students. Thank you!

Reminders

This is a reminder that students need to be in uniform every day. As it gets colder, you may want to send money with your child to purchase either a CA sweatshirt (\$20) or fleece (\$25). Pants need to be tan/khaki or blue twill pants. No jeggings, sweat pants, or jeans are allowed. Thank you for your cooperation in making sure your child is dressed for school. Students who are not in uniform are required to change which leads to valuable time being lost for them.

Computers need to be fully charged each night at home! Chargers should not come to school.

Binders should be checked and planners signed each evening!

Important Dates

CHPS Homecoming Football Game: October 7, 7:00
 Parent/Teacher Conferences: October 12 and 17, 4:00 – 7:30
 District In-service (No school): October 14
 MEA (No school): October 20, 21
 Picture retake day: October 28

Support the Columbia Heights Scholarship Program

You are invited Columbia Heights High School Alumni
 Scholarship Foundation 10th Annual Dinner

Honoring Columbia Medal of Honor Recipient and CHHS Graduate
Pfc. James D. LaBelle

5:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 27, 2016, Jax Café

\$75 per person, \$140 per couple & \$675 for a table of 10

RSVP by Oct. 17, 2016 by calling 763-528-4601
 or by emailing padillai@colheights.k12.mn.us

