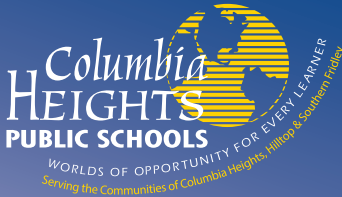




2015 WORLDS BEST WORKFORCE

# ANNUAL REPORT

Creating College  
*and* Career-Ready  
GRADUATES







# Welcome

The Columbia Heights Public Schools “World’s Best Workforce” (WBWF) Annual Report is an overview of the following four components of this School District:

**1. Measures of Performance** includes closing achievement gap(s), helping all students be ready for kindergarten, all third graders achieving grade level literacy, all students attain career and college readiness before graduating and all students graduate from high school.

**2. Strategic Roadmap** that provides guidance to our district in providing worlds of opportunity for every learner.

**3. Communicate Annually** through transparent communication via a published report, websites, newsletters, telecommunication, school and community events, and a public forum.

**4. Community Leadership** through the district advisory committees which include parents, community members and staff that provide recommendations to the school board in the areas of curriculum, assessment, goals and program evaluations.

This World’s Best Workforce Annual Report is but a snapshot of all that is going on in Columbia Heights Public Schools. We invite you to partner with us in creating worlds of opportunity for every learner and college and career-ready graduates who are prepared for the World’s Best Workforce.



# Heights Pride Highlights



## Teacher of the Year Coleman Nemerov

The North Park Elementary School fifth-grade teacher always focuses on student success; he has, a nominator wrote, “innate techniques that foster students to learn.” One of the many ways he helps students and families is through home visits. Coleman, who has taught children for more than 25 years, says to be a successful educator one must be “fearless.”



## Employee of the Year Sarah Durst

The Columbia Academy Principal’s secretary is known for her excellent interpersonal communication skills, being a problem-solver and always representing her school positively. The decade-long employee is a gem to have as a valued member of the Columbia Academy.



## Program of Distinction

Moving the District forward with 21st Century Learning is the top priority of the **Technology and Security Services team**. They are integrating technology, including fully implementing the Personalized Learning Initiative, throughout the curriculum and at every grade level.



## Superintendent’s Above and Beyond Award

**Jill Jungers**, a 37-year Columbia Heights High School Journalism teacher was recognized for having a passion for supporting students and creating worlds of opportunity for every learner and going above and beyond the line of duty in education. Jill, the District’s 2009 Teacher of the Year recipient, says “she loves every one of them (students).”



## Alumni of Distinction

**Vern Hoium**, Class of 1948 and one of the founders of the Columbia Heights High School Alumni Scholarship Foundation, received the highest award presented to a graduate. He continues to be a major influence on raising and presenting more than \$400,000 to Columbia Heights graduates



## College and Career-Readiness and Life Skills

To help prepare every learner in Columbia Heights Public Schools, our District has developed an approach that integrates specific academic checkpoints and life skills to ensure our students are ready for college and careers.

The first is the College and Career-Readiness Pathway, which identifies key benchmarks along the Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade journey. The second is the College and Career-Readiness Life Skills, which presents 11 vital life skills for success in the 21st Century workplace.

We believe it is this combination of strong core academics with positive habits of mind that will lead to worlds of opportunity for our students throughout their lives. Our teachers are deliberately embedding activities that develop important life skills into the content that they teach to truly prepare our students for the future.

## COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS PATHWAY



### 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 HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL

- 3 Earn a GPA of 3.0 or higher each semester.
- 3 Meet college readiness benchmarks on the PLAN test in tenth grade.
- 3 Successfully complete four years of math.
- 3 Earn a score of 22 or higher on the American College Test (ACT).

### COLUMBIA ACADEMY

- 3 Earn a GPA of 3.0 or higher each semester.
- 3 Achieve a Meets or Exceeds on MCA Reading Standards by sixth grade.
- 3 Achieve a Meets or Exceeds on MCA Math Standards in eighth grade.
- 3 Meet college readiness benchmarks on the EXPLORE test in eighth grade.

### HIGHLAND, NORTH PARK & VALLEY VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- 3 Meet quarterly Kindergarten expectations.
- 3 Achieve a Meets or Exceeds on Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) Reading Standards in third grade.
- 3 Achieve a Meets or Exceeds on MCA Math Standards in fifth grade.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD

- 3 Listen and understand stories, conversations and directions.
- 3 Know colors, letters and numbers.

## Creating College and Career-Ready GRADUATES

## COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS LIFE SKILLS

The College and Career Pathway starts in Columbia Heights Public Schools with early childhood and continues through graduation. Columbia Heights Public Schools is committed to helping develop these essential Life Skills for all of our learners.

### 3 PERSISTENCE

*Stick to it.* Be determined when things are challenging. Embrace opportunities and see things through to the end.

### 3 INNOVATION

*Shape ideas into realities.* Act on creative ideas to make tangible, useful contributions.

### 3 COLLABORATION

*Work together.* Work well with others to achieve shared goals.

### 3 CREATIVITY

*Imagine.* Demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

### 3 CRITICAL THINKING

*Pose good questions.* Analyze and evaluate evidence; identify problems, arguments, claims and beliefs.

### 3 PROBLEM SOLVING

*Discover the opportunity.* Use what is known to identify the problem and design a better solution.

### 3 COMMUNICATION

*Seek understanding.* Listen effectively to decipher meaning and clearly share thoughts and ideas in appropriate and meaningful ways.

### 3 SELF-DIRECTION

*Take control of your own learning.* Use time wisely and be able to work independently to achieve goals.

### 3 FLEXIBILITY

*Be adaptable.* Understand, negotiate and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multicultural environments.

### 3 INITIATIVE

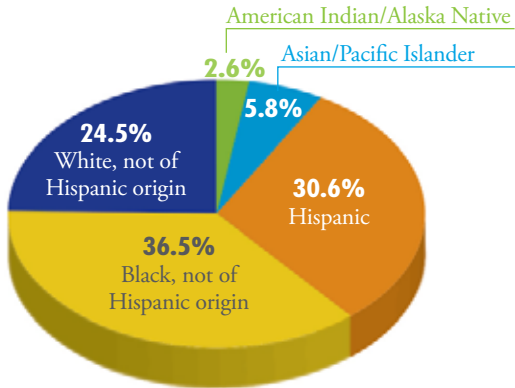
*Do it.* Be a leader and get things done.

### 3 WELLNESS

*Be balanced.* Attend to body, mind and spirit.

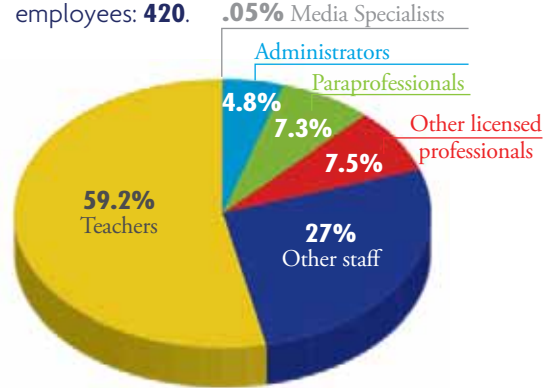
# Facts and Figures

## Students ETHNICITY

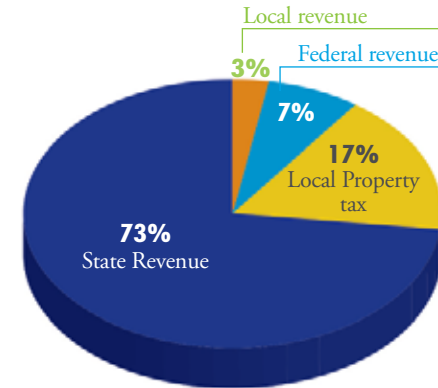


## Staff

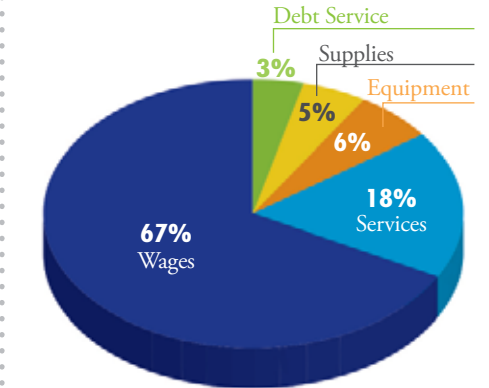
Total number of employees: **420.**



## Finance REVENUES



## Expenditures



## Become Involved

Columbia Heights Public Schools values strong community and family engagement that supports students in achieving academic benchmarks and important life skills.

### Opportunities to become involved and support students include:

- Volunteer at a school
- Serve on a district committee such as:
  - District Family Involvement Committee
  - Early Childhood Parent Advisory Council
  - Columbia Heights Athletic Boosters
  - Columbia Heights Alumni Scholarship Foundation
  - District Calendar Committee
  - World's Best Workforce Advisory Committee
  - School Parent-Teacher Organizations
  - Heighten the Arts
  - Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)



# Early Childhood Programs

## HEIGHTS PRIDE Early Childhood Programs

### Early Childhood

- Our program has earned the highest rating from the Parent Aware organization for preparing children for school and life.
- Early Childhood was featured by the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment consortium for how we use Blooming Heights Edible Schoolyard as a language learning tool for young dual language learners.
- Pre-Kindergarten (PreK) programs expanded to all three elementary schools (PreK 4) and to PreK 3 at the Family Center.
- Age 3 to Grade 3 committee aligned curriculum, instruction and assessments in the areas of Literacy and math.

Parent  
Aware 



### PROGRAMS THAT PREPARE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

- Parent Education
- Home Visits
- Responsive Classroom
- Individualized Learning
- Implementation of Life Skills in Daily Instruction
- Classes Fully Integrated with Early Childhood Special Education





# Our Schools

## HEIGHTS PRIDE Highland Elementary School

- Highland celebrated the third annual World Cultures Day by learning about different cultures from around the world and in our District. Students, community members, including parents, representing many countries participated.
- Our school was the first to start the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program in our District. Each year 15 students are matched with Columbia Heights Police Department official mentors, who engage in weekly activities, including reading together.
- Students benefit from the collaborative partnership with the Columbia Heights Fire and Police Departments. These professionals regularly work in our school teaching children about safety.
- Thanks to voter support, Highland has an expanded and new vehicle entry and exit. Fifth grade student patrols and a traffic guard ensure student safety each morning and afternoon.



## PROGRAMS THAT PREPARE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

- Content-based Spanish K-2
- Gifted and Talented Instruction
- Schoolwide Responsive Classroom
- Science Specialist and Lab
- Technology-supported learning
- Minnesota Reading Corps



## HEIGHTS PRIDE North Park Elementary School

- Our Learning Studio collaborative instructional model expanded to 4th grade. More than 400 educators and elected officials visited to learn more about 21st century teaching and learning.
- Third grade students redesigned the courtyard garden through project based learning. This project was featured by the Jeffers Foundation, which helps youth learn sound principles of environmental stewardship.
- North Park gives back. A student-led food drive resulted in nearly 900 pounds of food donated to the South Anoka Community Assistance (SACA) food shelf.
- Special Education teacher **Scott Larson** was recognized by the Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner, Brenda Cassellius, for modeling best practices in his classroom and engaging students in learning through assistive technology.



### PROGRAMS THAT PREPARE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

- Project Based Learning
- Gifted and Talented Instruction
- Schoolwide Responsive Classroom
- Science Specialist and Lab
- Technology-supported learning
- Engineering







## HEIGHTS PRIDE Valley View Elementary School

- AVID, (Advancement Via Individual Determination) a program geared toward closing the achievement gap and preparing all students for college, expanded to include grades 3, 4 and 5. The AVID regional director visited our school and named it as a model AVID site.
- Students in Kindergarten and first grade learned Spanish language from a specialist teacher in their classroom. The program will expand to second grade in the 2015-2016 school year with an additional teacher.
- In a national Scholastic art contest, first grader, **Mara Ball**, was recognized for her painting of her father entitled, "My Hero."
- The Repeated Oral Assisted Reading (ROAR) program with high school tutors was a big success. Funded by the Minnesota Business Partnership, one student wrote, "This reading program is important because it helped me get ready for college."



### PROGRAMS THAT PREPARE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

- Content-based Spanish K-2
- Gifted and Talented Instruction
- Schoolwide Responsive Classroom
- Science Specialist and Lab
- Technology-supported learning
- Minnesota Reading Corps





## HEIGHTS PRIDE Columbia Academy

- At Columbia Academy, students can take advanced classes in English, Math, Science and Social Studies. The Pre-Advanced and Honors classes are designed for above grade level reading and writing tasks. Students have the opportunity to earn high school credit in some of the courses.
- Our school introduced Water Safety for all sixth grade students as part of the Physical Education curriculum. The students practice water safety strategies in the Hylander Center pool.
- Our Personalized Learning Initiative provides a 21st century learning environment and offers individualized instruction, ongoing formative assessment, and engaging access to our digital learning platform.
- Sixth grade teachers and staff expanded the AVID programming. Our students will work toward college and career readiness by using organizational tools, note-taking strategies and higher levels of questioning.



## PROGRAMS THAT PREPARE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

- Pre-Advanced Placement Classes and Honors Classes
- Engineering
- Media and Visual Arts
- Spanish and Heritage Spanish
- Music (Band and Choir) and Theater
- Personalized Learning Initiative and tablets for learning





## HEIGHTS PRIDE Columbia Heights High School



- Our school partners with Anoka Ramsey Community College to offer our students free on-site college credits (beginning the 2017-2018 school year). Class of 2019 students will be able to earn up to 60 credits and an Associate's degree during their time in our school.
- The Advanced Placement Studio Art/Art History and Concert Band students went to New York City for a week-long arts seminar. Students visited art museums, saw the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, spent time with Broadway professionals and visited colleges to learn about post-secondary music and art programs.
- Class of 2015's **Tyrea Carroll** won a Gold Key for her painting "Blown Away" (right) and two honorable mentions for acrylic paintings at the Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards. A total of 11 Hylanders won 10 awards and nine honorable mentions.
- **Heidi Elmahdy** and **Kirk Henderson** from the Columbia Heights Transition Program, were selected for internships with Project SEARCH at Medtronic. Project SEARCH is a nine-month work-based learning program that provides education experiences through workplace immersion.



### PROGRAMS THAT PREPARE STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREERS

- AVID and College Possible
- Ramp Up to Readiness, a College Readiness advisory program through the U of M
- Genesys Works, a paid work-study program
- Post-Secondary Enrollment Options and Pre and Advanced Placement courses
- "Power of You" scholarship-based program with Minneapolis Community Technical College and St. Paul College
- Local scholarships



## SCHOOL BOARD

John Larkin      Ted Landwehr      Lori Meyer\*  
Ted Landwehr      Laura Palmer      \* Resigned July 2015  
Molly Lewis      Grant Nichols

## SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Kathy L. Kelly

## COLUMBIA HEIGHTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT CENTER

1440 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
District: 763-528-4500  
Placement Center: 763-528-4426 (*Se habla Español*)

## FAMILY CENTER

1460 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
763-528-4500

## Highland Elementary School (Pre-K-5)

1500 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
763-528-4400

## North Park Elementary School (Pre-K-5)

5575 Fillmore Street NE  
Fridley, MN 55432  
763-528-4300

## Valley View Elementary School (Pre-K-5)

800 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
763-528-4200

## Columbia Academy (6-8)

900 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
763-528-4700

## Columbia Heights High School (9-12)

1400 49<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE  
Columbia Heights, MN 55421  
763-528-4600

[www.colheights.k12.mn.us](http://www.colheights.k12.mn.us)

## 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, to unleash their potential and to develop tools for lifelong success.

Be a college and career-ready graduate through  
Columbia Heights Public Schools



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