



**The Last Word:**

*Work behind the scenes is being done to ensure the Class of 2020 receives an appropriate send-off despite the potential restrictions and changes to the traditional service. Yoryina Myers smiles while recording her address that may be included in a virtual graduation ceremony.*

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*New SIS Training (6)*



**June 2020**

## From Your Superintendent

# How can you help?

How can you help? Seems like a strange way to start an article for the HELM doesn't it? In the next three weeks we will be doing some heavy lifting with some decisions on how and when we start school in the fall.

Many of you will be asked to be part of a sub-committee as part of a larger return to school committee.

Most staff members have been given an opportunity by their building principals to weigh in on three potential options for starting the school year in the fall.

For a lack of calling it something different we are looking at Option A, Option B, and Option C.

■ **Option A** - School starts as scheduled with limited or no directed health measures.

Another consideration to this would be to start the school year two to three weeks later.

■ **Option B** - On-line/Digital/Distance Learning

■ **Option C** - Blended Learning Environment

Which means we can only bring in a portion of students due to directed health measures.

Currently we can only have 25% of capaci-

ty in our buildings

Looking at alternative schedules such as A/B schedules or M/T - Th/F schedules We hope by June 26th we are communicating to all staff, students, parents, and the community our best plan for starting school in the fall. With that being said, it all could change before the end of July one way or the other. However, we need to be prepared for the worst and hope for the best. There are many already

working to plan for instruction, software purchases, implementation, and training to prepare for options B & C.

I have heard many say, "if I only knew then what I know now, I would?"

You can fill in the blanks. Our goal is to fill in those blanks the best we can as we approach the 2020-2021 school year.

So.... How can you help? Please say yes if asked. Please volunteer if volunteers are asked for. We need to do this together. We need to be on the same page.

Have a great summer! Since the pool is closed, maybe we can break out those old sprinklers and run through the sprinklers like the good old days.

Or in my case, set up a lawn chair under the sprinkler.

— Dr. L



## New Building Hours

The Administration Building will be open from

- Monday - Thursday 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Friday from 7:30 - 11:30 a.m.

\*\*Both the middle school and high school will follow the same schedule.

A date when CPS will open up to the public has not been announced. Procedures:

- All visitors are by appointment only.
- All visitors must wear a mask.
- Visitors must use hand sanitizer at the front desk upon arrival.

■ All employees who are working with those outside the CPS system must wear masks. This would include registrations, schedules, etc.

■ CPS employees are always allowed to wear masks and are encouraged to do so if they have underlying health issues.

■ All meetings must keep social distancing in mind at 6ft.

■ The use of hand sanitizer and washing of hands constantly should be the norm.

■ Above all else please follow all universal precautions that have been outlined by the CDC and DHHS.



Columbus Public Schools received \$20,000 from Nebraska Community Foundation and was featured on 10/11 News' Pure Nebraska May 29.

**WATCH HERE**

## Down To The Minute

Review the Board of Education's May's meeting

For agenda items visit: Click [HERE](#) or follow the link via the QR code on the right.



Columbus Public Schools'

## SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM



**STARTS:** June 8, 2020

**ENDS:** July 24, 2020

**TIME:** 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Grab & Go Lunches can be picked up at:

**Columbus Middle School** - Activities Entrance

**Centennial** - Main Parking Lot

**Lost Creek** - East Parking Lot



# Program serves ~120K, switches for summer

The expression, “to feed an army” seemed to fit when the Columbus Public Schools and Lunchtime Solutions tabulated the total distribution of its meal service during the closure.

CPS and Lunchtime Solutions distributed 119,908 meals. That translates to each citizen, not just student, in Columbus to have five meals.

“We’re extremely proud of our staff and volunteers,” CPS superintendent Dr. Troy Loeffelholz said. “We’ve done a tremendous job in continuing an important service to the community and we are happy to help where we can.”

Nearly 4,200 meals were delivered on each of the 29 distribution days.

The elementary schools and the middle school served as primary pickup sites. The district

also selected the Carriage House Estes area and Duncan as additional locations.

Joseph Nielsen works as an English Learners Para Educator at the Middle School but stepped

in to help distribute meals.

“I was asked to see if I could come in and help, and I didn’t

have anything else going on, especially with this,” Nielsen said with a smile.

Nielsen knows that Columbus Public Schools steps up and sees it as a reflection of the community as a whole.

“When something is happening (Columbus) can come together and everyone works together,” Nielsen said. “Columbus has the ability to come together and always seems to solve whatever problem is going on.”

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119,908

Meals served during the school closure (March 19 -May 7)



Food Service staffers at North Park display their shirts that says “I Survived Sack Lunch Days 2020.” Columbus Public Schools and Lunchtime Solutions distributed 119,908 meals during the recent school closure period.

The summer lunch program is set to begin Monday, June 8. Just like the school closure meal service, it will be a grab and go lunch.

However, the locations and hours will be limited.

Lunches can be picked up

outside the activities’ entrance of the Middle School; the main parking lot at Centennial Elementary, and the east parking lot of Lost Creek Elementary.

Each location will distribute from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## Tech & Operations

From Leonard Kwapnioski

### New SIS training begins next month

With the new school year coming upon us quickly, CPS will be moving away from PowerSchool and going live with Edupoint-Synergy the week of July 13.

We will begin training for our new SIS the week of July 20. CPS will utilize the “train the trainer” model. CPS has sent invites out to select staff to attend multiple training sessions during that week.

It is our goal that those individuals be responsible for training others within their buildings.

As we continue down this path, please remember that this program is new to everyone and we will be learning this product together. More information coming in the future.

## CHS staffers see students, share smiles during May check-out days

Who would have ever thought that having students check in items from the school year would be the highlight of the 2019-20 4th quarter?

The task of having the class of 2020 turn in their school owned items on May 13 and 14 took a large amount of planning and coordination to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff.

Being able to see our seniors for the first time since March was a great reminder of why we are in the business of education.

Having students back in the building was exciting and it was evident that facial expressions are a huge part of how we communicate with each other.

The masks that we used for protection were also a hindrance to one on one communication.

If masks are something that staff needs



Val Wallin and Kim Loeffelholz sit ready to assist CHS students during their May check-out period.

to use in the future with students, CHS needs to be aware that the words chosen when working with students are more important than ever.

See “Smiles” Page 4



Columbus Public Schools

## STEM CAMP IN A BAG

These bagged activities are available to purchase through June 12 and will be distributed June 22 from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. at CMS

Click here to register online!





Jaidyn Garrett leaps for joy as she completes her check-out process at CHS. Over two days in May students were able to return to the building and the staff's smiling faces.

## Smiles From Page 3

The interpretation of facial expressions will not be an option. The school closure was difficult for both students and staff. The opportunity to be in the presence of students once again is not something our staff will take for granted.

The CHS Administration want to thank the CHS teaching staff for all of their work during this school year and especially during the 4th quarter.

Our hope is that every staff member is able to find time to recharge over the summer months and prepare for a great 2020-2021 and any challenges we may face.

Go Discoverers!

# Staff shined in these new situations

We know perfect vision is 20-20, however the year 2020 has proven to be anything but perfect!

We know we did not do everything perfectly during our school closure, however the staff at CMS worked very hard to not only meet the academic needs of our students but the social emotional needs as well. Our goal was to contact every CMS family each week during closure. This was no small task.

Each advisory teacher made dozens of phone calls, emails, text messages, etc. weekly along with 4 bilingual paras who divided up the families that needed Spanish translation to make contacts weekly as well.

This weekly contact helped many of our students stay on target for their academic goals as well as continue to be connected socially as well.

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When schools went online,

it became more obvious the important roles educators and schools have in our community. I am very proud we were able to continue serving breakfast and lunch to our students.

We know the connection between nutrition and academic growth. I am also very proud of the CMS staff who went above and beyond to meet our students' needs. There were many staff who did individual zoom meetings for one student and their parents to explain something. We had teams who had group zoom meetings with a parent to provide support.

Counselors and administrators made lots of contacts with kids for social/emotional and academic needs.

Teams created forms to help students with organization needs. Teachers created how to videos when their students needed help. Teachers reached

out to students and parents in need. The list goes on and on.

Teaching is a work of art and work of heart.

The work of heart has been even more obvious during our school closure. Some may have thought the teachers' workload was lessened during this time.

I would disagree and say it just drastically changed and the teachers made the change in a matter of days with little training.

Teachers are driven with the desire for all students to succeed. We may have come up short of every single student being successful, however if the efforts of my teachers and staff could measure success, we would be off the charts this year.

Thank you for all your efforts!

— Amy Haynes, CMS Principal



## Centennial ends year with eyes on 20th anniversary

Next year is the 20th anniversary of Centennial Elementary. We will be having a Centennial Family Night and 20th Anniversary Celebration on Friday, Sept. 11 from 5-8 pm. Food, fun, music, games and bounce houses will be available for all to enjoy.



Above: Ms. Melcher's class enjoy a Zoom session. Left: Teachers load up before a Teacher Parade through the Centennial neighborhoods.

# Flooded with summer construction projects



Thanks goes out to all of our Lost Creek teachers for adapting and impacting the lives of our students throughout the fourth quarter.

Also, a big thanks to our lunch staff, teachers and paras for stepping up and making the Grab and Go Lunches so successful!

We have a lot of construction projects occurring in our building this summer.

We will have a fully updated media center and computer lab, polished concrete in our Great Hall entrance, carpeted hallways, and new ceiling tiles added in most classrooms. We look forward to our new look at Lost Creek!

Please have a safe and healthy summer!



# North Park names Citizenship Award winners in “ceremony”

Every year we hold a 4th grade graduation and awards assembly at the end of the school year.

This year we decided to have a Zoom graduation for our 4th graders.

All staff were invited as well as all the 4th graders and their parents.

We had a very nice turnout of about a dozen staff members and about half of our 4th graders and their parents attended the Zoom. During the Zoom all of the staff present each took a turn to give a farewell message to the 4th graders.

We presented two awards, the Presidential Award for Academic Excellence to those 4th grades who qualified, as well as our annual “Good Citizenship” award.

After this presentation each of the 4th graders had a chance to share their favorite memory about North Park.

It was a very special event, even though we couldn’t be together in person. What we discovered from the students’ favorite memories was that the relationships they made while at North Park was something that almost all students mentioned.

Some talked of the relationships they had made with their teachers and other staff members, while others mentioned the friendships they had made with their classmates.

This is a message that teachers from all levels could learn from.

For a student to have a positive experi-

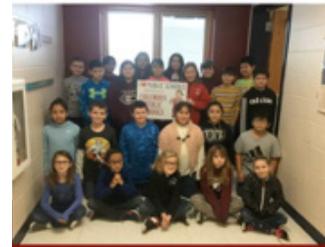
ence in your classroom, school, or as part of a team or group, the most important thing to our students is how you treat them and whether you made them feel cared for and important.



The North Park 4th graders who received the Presidential Award for Academic Excellence were: Jesus Mendez, Treyton Kropatsch, Justin Chen Brandlyn Gentile, Kaia Foulk, Marilyn Lopez-Venancio, Dallas Reyes Malachi Terman, Marvin Estrada-Vasquez, Jack Avis, Alivia Reppert, Lupita Calderon-Escamilla, Luis Morales-Romero, Daniela Abrajan-Gomez, Gian Calderon-Medina Abigail Flores, Alexa Carballo, Cade Gaedeke and Abe Herrera.

The winners of the “Otto and Gertrude Walter Good Citizenship Award” for 2019-20 at North Park were Cade Gaedeke and Brandlyn Gentile

Their names go on a plaque that hangs near the office at North Park.



Mrs. Schutt's  
4th Grade  
2019-2020

## Farewell to Emerson fourth grade class

While we were not able to celebrate the end of the year with an all-school assembly, the fourth-grade teachers put together a presentation for the fourth graders and shared it with them on the last day of school.

The fourth graders have made an impression on us all here at Emerson Elementary. We sent them to Columbus Middle School with a special message from their teachers along with some special well wishes from some of their previous teachers at Emerson!



Mrs. Vering's  
4th Grade  
2019-2020



**Michael Klee**

Columbus Middle School  
**Practice Pads for Percussion Ensemble:** The percussion ensemble provides an opportunity for students to expand their musical knowledge and/or enrich their current musical abilities by playing percussion instruments.



COLUMBUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
FOUNDATION



**Heidi Field**

Columbus High School  
**Weighted Fitness Bars for General Fitness Use:** These bars will be used to teach perfect squat technique, hamstring strength, use of weights above the head and core strength specifically in the general fitness classes.

# 2020 CLASSROOM GRANT WINNERS

Find out more about the grant program and each of the projects here.



**Michelle Purcell**

Centennial, Lost Creek, West Park and Emerson Elementaries

**Preschool Gardening Study:** The preschool gardening study will allow children a hands-on opportunity for exploring the growing process of seeds, plants and flowers.



**Amy Moore**

North Park

**Classroom Library:** The grant will go toward the creation of a classroom library that fits the needs and interests of the students. This will give easier access to the books of high-interest in order to further develop students’ love for reading.



**Francie May**

Columbus Middle School

**What Ya Cookin?:** This project will help increase the cooking skills for students in the Curriculum Life Skills program. The grant will be used to purchase a variety of adapted cooking utensils and various other cooking items that are needed.



Danielle Wacha, third-grade teacher, grabs a quick social-distance selfie with a line of her West Park team members before their reverse parade to celebrate the end of the school year.

## Parade marks end of West Park's school year

West Park Staff hosted a "parade" to celebrate the end of the school year and to say goodbye to students and families for the summer. Staff members made posters and brought noise makers to wish the students a happy summer.



For our parade staff distanced themselves on the sidewalks around the school. Families then drove by honking and waving. We loved seeing our students and their families and for many of us seeing them brought a few tears to our eyes.

### Removing yourself from Swap & Shop email notifications

You can choose to receive a daily summary, receive combined updates, or send an email for every new message that is posted in any of the groups.

If you want a notification with each posting to the discussion group then the best option is to choose "Send me an email for every new Message".

This will put the posting both in the discussion and as an email in your inbox. You will need to set up any changes in EACH group you are a member of. You can have different setting preferences for each group you are a member of.

How to change your personal notifications for each of the groups you belong to:

1. Open your Groups
2. Click on the Group you want to change
3. Click on the Gear/Person tab
4. Go down to membership and email settings.
5. Select your preference of notification.
6. SAVE

**STILL HAVING TROUBLE?**  
Click here for a step-by-step document.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY - JUNE

	Alyssa K	Dillon	Middle School	Teacher
	Regina L	Dohmen	Transportation	Transportation
1-	Alexander M	Hollister	High School	Teacher
	Stephanie	Rodriguez	West Park	Para Educ - EL Fluent
2-	Rosalbina	Jacinto	Emerson	Para Educ - SPED HighNeed
	Victor	Brockhaus	High School	Custodians
3-	Jared P	Johnson	Middle School	Counselor
	Peggy J	Meyer	High School	Teacher
4-	Jill J	Wurdeman	CPS Student Ctr	Teacher
	Jeannette M	Braun	Lost Creek	Para Educators - P.E.
5-	Rayden N	DeLawter	Emerson	Teacher
	Kassie M	Neujahr	Middle School	Teacher
	Barbara S	Olnes	Cassette House	Para Educators - Sped
6-	Maddison P	Louderback	Middle School	Para Educators
	Rachelle L	Riedmiller	Middle School	Para Educators - Reading
	Nelsy O	Magdaleno Rodriguez	Middle School	Para Educ - SPED HighNeed
7-	Linda A	McMullin	Centennial	Teacher
	Bethany L	Seehusen	High School	Counselor
8-	Margaret A	Widtfeldt	High School	Teacher
9-	Samantha J	Forney	Middle School	Teacher
	Carly R	Whitney	Middle School	Psychologist
	Christina	Jareske	North Park	Teacher
10-	Kathryn A	Macken	Middle School	Teacher
	Jane R	Reiners	West Park	Teacher
	Michelle L	Watson	High School	Teacher
	Kandy K	Bos	Lost Creek	Clerical
11-	Judy	Dobbs	Emerson	Teacher
	Kayla R	Heard	Emerson	Teacher
	Joseph R	Krysl	High School	Teacher
13-	Robyn L	Wilcox	Lost Creek	Counselor
14-	Catherine M	Cole	Middle School	Para Educ - SPED HighNeed
	David R	Hiebner	High School	Admin
15-	Eric B	Edzards	CPS Student Ctr	Psychologist
	Susan	Maass	High School	Clerical
16-	Sheila L.	Korth	Centennial	Teacher
	Hunter J	Welch	High School	Custodians
18-	Anne M	Robertson	High School	Teacher
19-	Laurie	Jansen	West Park	Teacher
20-	Mary	Kowalski	Middle School	Food Service MS
	Iris A	Montano	High School	Para Educ - EL Fluent
21-	Fayth E	Ryan	West Park	Teacher
	Danielle N	Wacha	West Park	Teacher
22-	Allyson N	Melcher	Centennial	Teacher
	Andrea Renee	Smejkal	High School	Teacher
25-	Kari	Garrelts	Centennial	Teacher
27-	Tamara L	Lyon	Emerson	Teacher
	Stephanie	Bourek	Middle School	Teacher
28-	Janet M	Felstead Schultz	Lost Creek	Food Service Elem
	Troy	Loeffelholz	Admin Bldg	Admin
	Quenshae U	Love	Centennial	After School Program
	Crystal G	Jindra	Middle School	Temp Food Service
29-	Trudi C	Noonan	High School	Teacher
	Marlene	Silvestre	Middle School	Para Educ - SPED HighNeed
30-	Kristin E	Jones	Emerson	Para Educators - Media

## The 2020 CPS Staff Communication Survey is **STILL AVAILABLE!**

There has been only 193 of 637 completed.  
**WE NEED YOUR INPUT!**



[<< Click here for the 2020 CPS Staff Communication Survey >>](#)