



## **COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF ENGAGEMENT DISTRICT UPDATE TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

**Updated as of April 9, 2020**

**PURPOSE:** To provide an update on COVID-19 response efforts in Columbus City Schools related to our Community Partners and learn about additional supports within our community.

New resources and updates can be found at [www.StaySafeCCS.org](http://www.StaySafeCCS.org).  
Email the CCS Department of Engagement at [Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us).

### **LEARNING CONTINUES WITH ONLINE ACADEMY:**

The Columbus City Schools Online Academy launched this week, transforming our district into a virtual learning organization with all of our educational resources and school-related activities online. Teachers can now assign to students academic work that will be accessed through online learning platforms according to grade level and subject area.

**SAFE STUDENT EMAILS:** The District has provided each student with their own school email account, which students can use to connect with their teachers, principals, and school support staff about online assignments, coursework, and other school-related activities. To protect student privacy, students can only send or receive internal email messages (email addresses that end with “@columbus.k12.oh.us”).

**HOMEWORK HELP DESK:** Our partners at the Columbus Metropolitan Library are offering students free help with their homework by way of a new live chat feature. Expert library staff directly respond to students’ questions and refer them to the many free resources available to them. This new digital service is available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on CML’s new Help For Students Learning From Home web page, which also includes dozens of other resources to help students be successful while learning from home. It can all be found at [www.columbuslibrary.org](http://www.columbuslibrary.org).

### **ONGOING ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD:**

The District’s 15 Grab-and-Go food site locations - where students can grab a free, nutritious breakfast and lunch each day - continue to see increased numbers each week. These sites are open to ALL children in Columbus under the age of 18, and we are happy to see a number of non-CCS students and families visiting.

**EXTRA MEALS FOR SPRING BREAK:** The 15 Grab-and-Go locations will be closed on Friday (4/10) and Monday - Tuesday (4/13-4/14) for Spring Break. Students who visited the site on Thursday had the opportunity to receive an additional three breakfasts and three lunches (shelf-stable meals) to cover the short gap in daily service. The 15 sites will all reopen on Wednesday, April 15.



**FREE MOBILE PRODUCE MARKETS:** Our community partners at Mid-Ohio Foodbank and Columbus Recreation and Parks are providing fresh fruits and vegetables at mobile produce markets at our 15 Grab-and-Go sites on a bi-weekly rotation. Free bags of fresh produce will be provided to adults. Below are the dates for the next two weeks (please share):

**Wednesday, April 15**

Buckeye Middle School (2950 S. Parsons Avenue, 43207)  
Independence High School (5175 E. Refugee Road, 43232)  
Sherwood Middle School (400 Shady Lane Road, 43227)

**Thursday, April 16**

Columbus Global Academy (4077 Karl Road, 43224)  
Mifflin High School (3245 Oak Spring Street, 43219)

**Friday, April 17**

East High School (1500 East Broad Street, 43205)  
South High School (1160 Ann Street, 43206)  
Starling Prek-8 (145 S. Central Avenue, 43222)

**Tuesday, April 21**

Wedgewood Middle School (3800 Briggs Road, 43228)  
West High School (179 S. Powell Avenue, 43204)

**Wednesday, April 22**

Columbus Africentric Early College (3223 Allegheny Avenue, 43209)  
Linden-McKinley STEM Academy (1320 Duxberry Avenue, 43211)

**Thursday, April 23**

Centennial High School (1441 Bethel Road, 43220)  
Woodward Park Middle School (5151 Karl Road, 43229)

**Friday, April 24**

Dominion Middle School (330 Dominion Boulevard, 43214)

**PLAY SAFE. LIVE SMART:**

Our partners at Columbus Recreation and Parks remind all students (and their parents) that all public playgrounds are closed during this health emergency. Columbus City Schools is also restricting access to our school playgrounds and basketball courts to help slow the spread of COVID-19. Playgrounds are being roped off with caution tape, and basketball hoops are being blocked with wood. If you see children playing on a playground - or if your organization has playground equipment - please remind our young people to stay off all playgrounds, basketball courts, and other recreational equipment that could transmit the virus. Do not use public picnic tables or benches. Parks and trails are still open for walking and biking; however, proper social distancing protocols must be observed.

## **SERVING AND SUPPORTING ALL OF OUR LANGUAGES:**

As part of our larger Partnership in Action Team efforts, our committee which focused on Supporting our Immigrants & New Americans developed the “C-Bus Village” website, an online repository of information geared specifically to our non-English speaking students, families and business. This website contained translated health information sheets and videos from the Centers for Disease Control, suggestions on ways to prevent misinformation from spreading, and maps to food pantries and local service providers. There’s additional information for CCS students and families on how to access the new Columbus City School Online Academy and several academic online platforms. If your organization serves families in our immigrant and New American communities, please encourage them to visit [www.cbusvillage.org](http://www.cbusvillage.org).

**SOMALI COMMUNITY OUTREACH:** Special thanks to our partners Hodan Mohammed and the Our Helpers organization for inviting the Department of Engagement and members of the Partnership in Action Team to participate in the “Pal Talk” conversations with hundreds in the Somali community. We shared valuable information and answered questions about our food access and academic services for students, all translated by an interpreter. If your organization has information to share, contact Hodan at 614-733-9555 or visit [www.ourhelpers.org](http://www.ourhelpers.org).

**MORE PARTNERS:** We also have three other incredible members of our Partnership in Action Team who are ready to assist in getting important information to our New American and immigrant communities. Please contact them if your organization needs assistance - we want ALL Columbus families to have up-to-date information and access to service to keep their families healthy and safe.

- Community Refugee & Immigration Services (CRIS) - 614-235-5747 or [www.crisohio.org](http://www.crisohio.org)  
Partnership in Action Team member: Jeremy Hollon ([jhollon@cris-ohio.org](mailto:jhollon@cris-ohio.org))
- Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services (ETSS) - 614-252-5362 or [www.ethiotss.org](http://www.ethiotss.org)  
Partnership in Action Team member: Jennifer Drury ([jennifer.drury@ethiotss.org](mailto:jennifer.drury@ethiotss.org))
- Ohio Latino Affairs Commission - 614-728-8344 or [www.ochla.ohio.gov](http://www.ochla.ohio.gov)  
Partnership in Action Team member: Lair Marin ([lair.marin@ohio.gov](mailto:lair.marin@ohio.gov))

## **NEW FAMILY NEEDS SURVEY 2.0**

At the start of this crisis, Columbus City Schools launched an online Family Needs Survey to align our family resource and supports to the true needs of our families. We collected more than 2,500 responses. Our District staff and community partners were able to put in place several resources to address specific needs - including two of the top needs by distributing Chromebooks and launching the Online Academy. However, we know needs at home are changing as this crisis moves into a second month and beyond.

So, we recently reset the survey and added a couple of new questions to find out what our families need now. Please encourage the families you work with to submit new responses, because the Family Needs Survey is critical in aligning and mobilizing our stakeholders.

The Family Needs Survey 2.0 can be found at [www.StaySafeCCS.org](http://www.StaySafeCCS.org).

## **SUPPORT OF OUR SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD:**

On Tuesday, the Columbus Board of Education conducted its first official “virtual business meeting” with all of the members coming together and voting through a Zoom conference call. During this informative meeting, Superintendent Dr. Talisa Dixon led a series of presentations on the new academic and operations changes put in place to address this COVID-19 health emergency.

Chief Engagement Officer Alesia Gillison talked about the efforts of the new Department of Engagement to galvanize the work of more than 100 community partners and local resources to link CCS families with free supports and services. She provided overview of the Family Needs Survey, a new Partnership in Action Team, and what partners could do if they want to help our families at home.

You can watch the Department of Engagement’s presentation at the Board of Education on YouTube by going to this link: <https://youtu.be/Fr4OrlITF2E?t=7480>.

## **FAMILY RESOURCES:**

To link families with the help they need, the Engagement team created an ever-evolving community resource repository. The “Family Resources” section of the StaySafeCCS.org website includes contact information for more than 110 organizations and local businesses which can help families with everything from getting free groceries and free internet service to free educational activities and games to support students. There’s even information on what a family member can do if they are struggling with depression or need help with paying bills during this crisis. And we know that when a family is in crisis, they don’t want to sift through lists... so we’ve tried to sort all of this information in a user friendly, easy-to-access format in which you click on the image of the help you need.

If you have information you think needs shared on our Family Resources page, please email us at [Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us).

**Remember: All updates can be found at [www.StaySafeCCS.org](http://www.StaySafeCCS.org).**