



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

**Update for June 26, 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).

### **SUPERINTENDENT AND BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DISCUSS OPTIONS FOR REOPENING OF SCHOOL:**

On Tuesday, June 30, Superintendent/CEO Dr. Talisa Dixon and the Columbus Board of Education will provide updates and have an important discussion on the options for reopening school in the fall for the 2020-2021 school year.

Over the past two months, the District's Reopening Task Force has been proactively creating a plan for returning to school buildings that adheres to guidelines and recommendations from local and state health officials while providing equitable academic opportunities for all students.

District leaders have been considering several options for the upcoming school year, including: in-person at-school classes following all health guidelines, including social distancing, hand-washing, and cleaning; completely online learning with Columbus City Schools teachers delivering course content virtually; and a combination of both with students alternating between learning online and physically at school.

### **BOARD TO VOTE ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

In preparation to reopen in the fall, Columbus City Schools has proposed amending the academic calendars for the 2020-2021 school year.

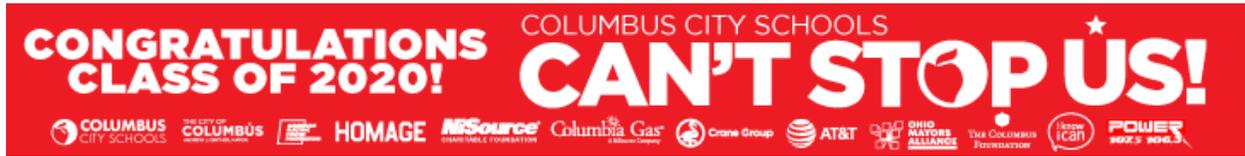
The most significant change is the proposed starting date for students on the traditional calendar. If adopted by the Board, the first day of classes would move to Tuesday, September 8, the day after Labor Day.

Teachers would report to work for two full weeks of professional development prior to the start of classes, with training in health and safety procedures, social and emotional learning, instructional technology, new curriculum in English/Language Arts and Math, and equity training.

Dr. Dixon will present the Reopening Task Force's initial recommendations and additional insight on the reopening of school at Tuesday's meeting, which begins at 5:00 p.m. The Board of Education is also expected to vote on the changes to the academic calendars.

The Board of Education meeting will be streamed live on the Columbus City Schools' Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/ColumbusCitySchools](http://www.facebook.com/ColumbusCitySchools)) which allows the public to attend virtually.

## **CAN'T STOP US! SENIOR CELEBRATION WRAPS UP:**



Our Community-wide Celebration of the Columbus City Schools Class of 2020 has been going strong for nearly a month, echoing the student-powered message: “Can’t Stop Us!” The celebration wraps up this weekend with the final virtual graduation ceremonies.

### **HUNDREDS OF SENIOR CELEBRATION BOXES HANDED OUT**

Throughout the past week, Columbus City Schools and several of our community partners have been handing out Senior Celebration Boxes to the graduating seniors in the Class of 2020.

Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther and City Council President Shannon Hardin (both past graduates of Columbus City Schools) were joined by members of our Board of Education, CCS staff and bus drivers, and volunteers from Columbia Gas, I Know I Can, and the City of Columbus Department of Neighborhoods at each of our high schools to hand out the Senior Celebration Boxes.

Each distinctive box contained a unique CCS Class of 2020 “Can’t Stop Us!” t-shirt, tumbler, journal, and other memorable items. Many of the graduating senior were so excited about the boxes that they jumped out of their cars to try on the one-of-a-kind t-shirts.

The “Can’t Stop Us!” theme of this celebration came out of input from several seniors who said they wanted a message that reflected on how this special graduating class didn’t let the COVID-19 crisis prevent them from achieving success.

### **MONTH LONG CELEBRATION OF OUR SENIORS**

Also this weekend, the Class of 2020 is being recognized with a special City Hall lighting. Both City Hall and the Broad Street Bridge shine bright at night in a CCS red light.

Thanks to our partners in the Franklin County Commissioners, the County Building at 373 South High Street is also decked out in red lights at the top as part of the Senior Celebration.

Large electronic billboards located in high-visibility areas throughout the city also carry the celebratory message, along with hundreds of yard signs placed at students’ homes. And you can still listen for our Senior Celebration messages airing on Power 107.5, Magic 95.5, Joy 107.1, 97.9 WNCI, 92.3 WCOL, Throwback 105.3, and 106.7 The Beat.

The Community-wide Celebration of the Columbus City Schools Class of 2020 is made possible by the generous support of the Columbus Foundation, AT&T, the AEP Foundation, the City of Columbus, Crane Group, Columbia Gas/NiSource Foundation, Homage, the Ohio Mayors Alliance, and I Know I Can.



## **VIRTUAL GRADUATION CEREMONIES: JUNE 22 - 27**

Our Community-wide Celebration of the Columbus City Schools Class of 2020 culminated in the District's first-ever series of virtual graduation and completer ceremonies.

The final ceremonies are on Saturday:

- Columbus Scioto 6-12 (12:00 p.m.)
- Columbus Africentric Early College (1:30 p.m.)
- East High School (3:00 p.m.)
- Centennial High School (4:30 p.m.)

Each high school's virtual graduation ceremony will be streamed on the Columbus City Schools Facebook page and YouTube channel, aired on the Columbus Educational Access Channel, and simulcast on WCBE 90.5 FM ([www.wcbe.org](http://www.wcbe.org)).

You can also go back and watch all of the virtual graduation ceremonies again by logging on the District's Facebook video page at [www.facebook.com/pg/ColumbusCitySchools/videos](https://www.facebook.com/pg/ColumbusCitySchools/videos).

## **ADD YOUR OWN SENIOR CELEBRATION MESSAGE**

Businesses and community leaders all over Columbus are celebrating our graduating seniors, with their own special messages for the CCS Class of 2020.

Check out our Facebook page to see video messages from Congresswoman Joyce Beatty, Crane Group CEO Tanny Crane, the head of the Ohio Mayors Alliance, I Know I Can Board President Tei Street, Columbia Gas/NiSource Chief Financial Officer Donald Brown, and City Council President Shannon Hardin.

The entire Columbus community is encouraged to join in on this senior celebration by sharing photos, words of encouragement, and congratulatory messages on social media using the hashtag **#CCSGrad2020**.

## **COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS HIRES CHIEF EQUITY OFFICER:**

Columbus City Schools has hired its first-ever Chief Equity Officer, welcoming Dr. Dionne Blue to lead the District's efforts to address equity and inclusion for all students, families, employees, and community.

Superintendent/CEO Dr. Talisa Dixon has often shared that equity and cultural competency are priorities for Columbus City Schools and the Board of Education.

Dr. Blue currently serves as the Chief Diversity Officer for the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation, where she implemented a comprehensive and collaborative vision for diversity, equity, and inclusion for the third-largest school district in Indiana.



## **CCS FOOD SITES, SUMMER EXPERIENCE CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY**

With the upcoming 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday, virtual Summer Experience online classes will close at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 2, and all CCS Administrative services will close earlier at 4:00 p.m.

All Columbus City Schools business services will be closed on Friday, July 3 - including all of the 15 CCS Grab-and-Go Food Sites and Community Tables - in observance of the holiday.

All services and virtual Summer Experience classes will resume regular schedules on July 6.

## **PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: LOCAL MATTERS VEGGIE VAN**

One of our District's partners throughout the school year is Local Matters, which has been a true champion in food education, access, and advocacy to families throughout our city.

The Local Matters Veggie Van is a mobile grocer and food education program on wheels, selling fruits, vegetables, and pantry items (like brown rice and pasta) at affordable prices, year-round. You can learn more about the Veggie Van at [www.local-matters.org/veggie-van-about](http://www.local-matters.org/veggie-van-about).

The partners are looking to expand Veggie Van to new market sites around Columbus, specifically in the Linden, Near East Side, and Hilltop areas.

To study their market program and evaluate its effectiveness, Local Matters is looking for 30 people who live, work, or learn near each potential market site to take part in a year-long study. Participants in the study will receive Veggie Van discounts and up to \$90 in gift cards!

In appreciation of the time spent completing the survey, the first 50 fully-completed forms will receive a \$10 Kroger gift card and a recipe to make a meal that feeds four people for \$10. Individuals must be 18 or older to complete the form. To participate in the survey, visit: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd7Yoc7IuhurPcn0-FzTqBkm9zjNk46S-SOdNNxM49suHO>.

## **SHARE YOUR PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION UPDATES:**

**Please share this Community Update with the families and stakeholders you serve.**

It's important we communicate as much as possible to as many people as possible - in as many languages as possible - about the steps being taken in Columbus City Schools to support students and families.

**Our work is far from over, and we want to honor your continued commitment.**  
**Please share your updates with us at [Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us](mailto:Engage@columbus.k12.oh.us).**