



From the Superintendent Brent Beamish

Hopefully you each had a wonderful winter break and are ready to begin the second half of this academic school year. It is Columbia School District's policy to promote a safe environment for its students and employees. The school district is committed to working toward maintaining a school environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior. While this kind of conduct is not pervasive at our school district, no school district is immune. As we all know, school safety and security are a concern for parents, students, staff and our community. The Columbia Board of Education and I mutually share this concern and wanted to inform you of some of the activities we have implemented at Columbia School District that furthers our preparedness.

- The board periodically reviews policies, which outline the process of implementing the school safety policy among school districts, law enforcement officials and county prosecutors.
- The school district has a Crisis Management Plan that was reviewed and necessary revisions made. The manual charts procedures of what to do in case of medical emergency, violence, bullying, drugs, guns, terrorism, and natural disasters. This procedural manual was given to employees in the Columbia School District during one of the Research and Development workshops, with the charge to review and have the Crisis Manual available at all times.
- We are in an ongoing process of converting the lock system on many of our building doors, which will allow the door to be opened from the inside only.
- The school district currently employs a liaison officer from the Jackson County Sheriff Department who coordinates concerns between the school district and law enforcement.
- Along with our local police, the Jackson County Sheriff Department held a simulated evacuation this past summer and recently practiced *Lock Down* procedures with students and staff.
- The belief is the more informed our students and staff is, the safer they become. Therefore, we also want to continue to build our relationship with the students, staff and our community to keep us informed if they suspect any safety issue to our schools.

Through effective sharing of information and resources, be assured the Columbia School District will continue to focus on school safety. As always, you can reach me at the Administration Office at 592-6641 or at my home 592-6531.

School Board Members:

It's all about our children!

- ✓ Do you have what it takes to make a difference in children's futures?
- ✓ Are you willing to take the time to study current education issues with the same effort and interest you exert in your own business or personal affairs?
- ✓ Will you accept your office as a public trust of the highest order and actively encourage community input and public involvement?
- ✓ Are you willing to pursue the skills and knowledge necessary to become a fully functioning effective board member by attending boardsmanship training?
- ✓ Will you fight the uphill battle to improve education with dwindling resources and escalating costs?
- ✓ Are you prepared to speak up and serve as an advocate for public education?
- ✓ Will you uphold state laws when you exercise the authority of your office at school board meetings?
- ✓ Are you always willing to put learning first and give primacy to what's best for children?
- ✓ Will you rely on the facts, be open-minded and respect others' ideas, suggestions, and criticisms? Will you accept the will of the majority?
- ✓ Are you ready to show courage in thought and action to safeguard good schools for all children?
- ✓ Will you respect district staff and deal with them professionally?
- ✓ Are you ready to advocate openness and democratic processes in all board activities with emphasis on team decision-making and consensus?

IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO THESE QUESTIONS, YOU ARE READY TO SEEK THE TRUST OF YOUR COMMUNITY THROUGH ACTIVE SCHOOL BOARD SERVICE.

How to become a candidate?

This year's annual school election will be held on Tuesday, May 8, 2007. To be eligible, a person must be a registered voter in the Columbia School District; be at least 18 years of age; an U.S. citizen; a resident of Michigan for at least 30 days; and a resident of Columbia. Petitions and Affidavit of Identity are available at Columbia Township Offices located at 8500 Jefferson Road in Brooklyn, and the deadline for filing is Tuesday, February 13, 2007. Petitions should be filed with the Columbia Township Office. For further details on becoming a Columbia School District School Board Candidate, call the school district administration office at 592-6641.

BOARD BRIEFS

from Regular Meetings held from August through December 2006

- Adopted Four Year Old Participation Resolution
- Ratified Teacher and Custodial Contract
- Appointed co-chairpersons of the mandated Sex Education Advisory Board
- Acknowledged the Columbia School District Consolidated School Improvement Plan
- Acknowledged and Received Organizational Flow Chart
- Adopted Resolution to support K-16 School Funding Proposal 5
- Reviewed Non-Union Support Staff Wage Tables
- Approved Wage Application for district administrators and supervisors
- Reviewed and adopted proposed changes on Board Policy Recommendations
- Board appreciation and recognition of Educational Foundation for Columbia School District
- Approval to repair roof at MES
- Adopted resolution to collect summer taxes
- Hired new personnel and coaches
- Accepted Bread and Milk Bids
- Adoption of Code of Conduct
- Approved 2005-2006 Audit Report
- Approved field trips for 2006-2007 school year
- Approved Resolution for Michigan Safe Schools



COLUMBIA BOARD OF EDUCATION 2006-2007

- Mrs. Martha Kelly Spicer, President592-2291
- Mr. Billy White, Vice-President592-6545
- Mr. Jeff Arnett, Secretary592-9359
- Mr. Robert Wahr, Treasurer.....592-6106
- Mr. Doug Schedeler, Trustee.....592-2866
- Mr. Randy Schiel, Trustee.....592-5498
- Mr. Anthony Sinacola, Trustee592-6418

Schedule of Board of Education Meetings

- January 8, 2007 (Held at Columbia Middle School, 7:00 p.m.)
- February 12, 2007 (Held at Brooklyn Elementary School, 7:00 p.m.)
- February 26, 2007*
- March 12, 2007 (Columbia Community Ed building, 7:00 p.m.)
- April 9, 2007 • May 14, 2007 • June 11, 2007

Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month. Also a second meeting (*) in October and February is reserved for board study focus. Meetings will be held in the Columbia Community Room at 7:30 p.m.

Some of the meetings may be held in other buildings in the district. Notice will be published when this takes place. The Administration Offices are located at 11775 Hewitt Road, Brooklyn, MI 49230. The telephone number is (517) 592-6641.

INTRODUCING NEW STAFF...

Ms. Alicia Dickens

is a new kindergarten teacher at Miller Elementary School. She received her degree from Spring Arbor University and holds an Elementary K-5, Early Childhood Endorsement. Ms. Dickens comes to us from the Napoleon Cooperative Preschooler, Inc. where she not only taught, but was also the Program Director.



Ms. Jessica Sexton

is now teaching in the Special Education Cognitively Impaired sixth grade class at our middle school. Ms. Sexton received her specialty degree from Eastern Michigan University and completed her student teaching at Townsend Elementary School in Vandercook Lake.

Ms. Michelle Sexton

teaches Pre-School students at Brooklyn Elementary School. Ms. Sexton received her degree from Siena Heights University and graduated from our own Columbia Central High School. Prior to her new teaching position with us, Ms. Sexton was a Supervisor for the Child Care Center at the YMCA of Lenawee County in Adrian.



Heartfelt Gratitude

The Columbia Board of Education extended their sincere and grateful appreciation to the *Educational Foundation for Columbia Schools* for the mini grants provided to teachers in the Columbia School District. Due to the foundation's efforts, scores of students in the district will experience learning in the areas of graphics, supporting others in helpful ways, understanding flight, speaking in front of groups, life skills and healthy choices, aerodynamics, enhanced learning in science, math, English, social studies, health and technology, experience interactive exhibits related to science and mathematics curriculum at Hands On Museum, and a multi-sensory mathematics program that bridges manipulation and memorization. Teachers submit their applications to the foundation and the district was awarded ten Mini Grants for this academic school year. The Columbia School District Board of Education, Administrators, teaching staff and our students extend our sincere and grateful appreciation to the *Educational Foundation for Columbia School District* for their ongoing financial support promoting education at our schools.

COLUMBIA SCHOOLS CHILD CARE

Brooklyn Elementary School

PRE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Classes held on:

Monday – Wednesday – Friday
9:00 to 11:30 a.m. – 4 Year Old

Tuesday & Thursday
9:00 to 11:30 a.m. – 3 Year Old

Monday- Wednesday -Friday
12:30 to 3:00 p.m. – 4 Year Old

DAY CARE PROGRAM

Monday through Friday - Year Around
6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Ages: 3 to 12 Year Olds

\$25.00 Registration Fee

Call Joann Leupp

Program Director - 592-9753

Miller Elementary School

PRE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Classes held on:

Monday through Thursday
9:15 to 11:45 a.m. – 4 Year Old

Monday – Wednesday – Friday
12:45 to 3:15 p.m. – 4 Year Old

Tuesday & Thursday
12:45 to 3:15 p.m. – 3 & 4 Year Olds

DAY CARE PROGRAM

Monday through Friday - Year Around
6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Ages: 3yrs - 5th Grade

\$25.00 Registration Fee

Call Vicki Heaton

Program Director 592-9135

COLUMBIA SCHOOLS CHILD CARE RATES

RATES ARE PER CHILD, PER DAY

Effective June 12, 2006

\$22.00 for over 5 hours of care
\$15.00 for over 2 -5 hours of care
\$ 6.00 for up to 2 hours of care
\$ 6.00 before school
\$ 6.00 after school

25% additional sibling discount
\$16.50 for over 5 hours of care
\$11.25 for over 2-5 hours of care
\$ 4.50 for up to 2 hours of care
\$ 4.50 before school
\$ 4.50 after school

From the Editor... Ms. Donna Bush

torch@myeagles.org

Peace (n.) Harmonious relations; freedom from disputes - The absence of mental stress or anxiety. Synonyms: Harmony, tranquility, serenity.

"Peace begins with a smile." - Mother Teresa

"It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it." - Eleanor Roosevelt

As the New Year begins, I want to reflect on some of the interviews I did for this issue of the *Torchbearer*. The young people I met and held a dialogue with were not only a delight, but gave me hope for our future. I witnessed creativity, ingenuity, compassion for others, an excitement for learning other cultures and the awakening of the effect each culture has in our global society, as well as the spirit of entrepreneur abound. These students were bubbling over with enthusiasm for their unique experience. I felt comfort as I considered their possible impact in the career of their choosing. Due to life's experiences, generations do not always view situations in the same manner, however after time spent with these students I also felt a keen sense of promise and pride. To paraphrase lyrics written by Richard Page and David Tyson, I further encourage ...

"If we give just a little of our love away, maybe meet in the middle every night and day. If we could hear just a whisper what the heart needs to say, it would sure make a difference in some small way..."
Blessings in 2007.

COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS 2006-2007

- All students will increase writing achievement in the content areas of Math, Science, Social Studies, and English Language Arts.
- All students will be provided a safe learning environment in which to maximize their individual potential.
- All students and teachers will maximize learning opportunities through technology resources.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Columbia School District will provide a positive and safe learning environment, which will prepare ALL students to contribute and compete in a global society.

Failure Is Not An Option

Early indications are that far fewer students are failing classes compared to previous years. Teachers are contacting counselors and parents to provide early intervention when students are struggling academically. Our educators are committed to the extra time required to implement our new program, "Failure Is Not an Option".

COLUMBIA COMMUNITY EDUCATION

COLUMBIA ADULT EDUCATION

CLASSES BEGIN JANUARY 22, 2007 at Columbia Community Education

To register or receive more information, please call CCE at 529-9400

The following classes are available:

ENGLISH

U.S. Literature I & II
Reading Improvement I & II
Writing Skills
Short Stories I & II
Practical Reading I & II

MATH

General Math I & II
Transitional Math I & II
Pre-Algebra
Consumers Math I & II

SOCIAL STUDIES

American Government
U.S. History I & II
World Geography
U.S. Geography I & II
Civics

SCIENCE

Earth Science
Biology
Physical Science
Life Science

GED PREP

Health I & II

Computer

Life Skills I & II

Classes are free to residents of Columbia School District that need a high school diploma!

*NOTE: For all non-residents and high school students the cost is \$100.00 per class.



"Message from the Director"

- Mr. Ralph Piepkow

Happy New Year! Wow, this is the 23rd year Columbia Community Education has been in operation. We provide High School Completion, G.E.D. Prep, Adult Basic Education, Enrichment and Recreation for youth and adults. The present Alternative High School "Columbia Options" has provided educational classes for over 100 students this year. The Adult Education program is providing classes for over 40 students. We also have over 300 students playing youth soccer and over 200 playing youth basketball. If you know of someone that would benefit by our educational or recreational services, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your continued support. Yours for a better community!!!!

OPTIONS HIGH SCHOOL

This program is available to youth, ages 14 through 20 who have had problems with their high school and need a positive change to obtain their high school diploma. Individual instruction is available within a positive atmosphere. Emphasis is on the students to motivate themselves to achieve positive educational objectives.

This program is also available to teenage mothers. Childcare is free during class time. This program is available to students from surrounding school districts. Call Ralph Piepkow to get more information on this unique high school program at 529-9400.

Don't be a dropout. Go to Columbia Options!

Search for Instructors for Community Enrichment Classes

If you have a hobby or a skill you would like to share with others, please contact Columbia Community Education. We will offer a class to the community and you could be the instructor. Please contact Ralph Piepkow @ 529-9400 to share your enrichment class with others.