

THE TRAILBLAZER

Collinsville Middle School's Newsletter



From the Principal's Desk

CMS Families,

Happy Holidays to each of you! 2019 is almost behind us and as I reflect on the year, I am grateful for each of you as well as all of the amazing teachers and staff of Collinsville Middle School. I often say that it takes a village to raise a child, an old cliché that I learned early on in my youth; I have learned throughout my years in education that it also takes a village to educate them.

The job of making sure that our young people grow up to become productive citizens is complicated, and the amazing world that we are preparing them for is not easy to maneuver or understand. The barriers in front of kids today feel huge sometimes, but when we all work together, those barriers can be stepping stones towards their foundation that will help them achieve the things that represent their best self. We have to remember that we are preparing them for a world that many of us cannot even fathom or dream. This means that the way that we prepare them is through helping them to learn how to think through situations and show determination, perseverance, and kindness, even when things are difficult. We need them to know we understand the difficulty of their journey and that we are walking beside them providing guidance, support, and encouragement.

As we head into the holidays, please continue to remember and be sensitive to our young people who are possibly struggling, but please also be gentle with each other knowing that this is a time of remembrance as well as celebration. We continue to offer opportunities for support for our families in need, so if that is you or you are aware of someone that is in need, please feel free to reach out to our school social workers or the main office for further assistance. Happy Holidays to each of you and have a safe and prosperous season!

Sincerely,

Dr. Jackson

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ITEMS TO NOTE @ CMS

- ELL NEWS! Just to give everyone a heads up, the ELL yearly ACCESS test is coming up in January. Please be on the look out for a testing schedule. Thank you for all of your help and patience!
- The Choir will have their Winter Concert on Tuesday, December 17th starting at 7 PM. It will be held at the Webster Elementary Auditorium. Bring a non-perishable item for the community food bank. The Choir contributes the items to a different food bank after each concert. We try to make sure that we are sharing with each of the food banks within the area that the school district services! We hope that you will join us!
- As part of our community outreach, the Choir will also be going on tour December 20th to sing for residents of area nursing homes and assisted living facilities. They also take a few minutes to mingle, chat with, and give hugs (when comfortable) to the residents. This experience enriches the students as much as the elderly for whom they are performing.
- HOOLOOs collected items for the homeless for SOCKTOBER. They collected 25 blankets, 30 pairs of gloves, 47 hats and 33 scarves and over 200 pairs of socks for HOOLOOS. There are also 5 giant bags of coats and shoes that were donated to help the homeless with winter. All items are being donated to "Making a Difference". WAY TO GO!
- Our current Million Word Readers: Brayden Patterson, Hayden Barrera-Kite, Logan Branstetter, Elliott Schusky, Isabel Perez, Alanah McHone, Madeline Mueller, Jim Kruta, Alexis Clair, Kendrick Davis





Veterans were honored at a breakfast on November 8th. NJHS and Blahok students volunteered for the event and served food.



The Blahoks held a "Dine to Donate" event at Culver's to fundraise for their group. Many teachers, students, and families came out to show support.





LET'S TALK READING!

During daily independent reading, students choose a book that is both interesting to them as individuals and appropriately challenging for their ability. Reading aloud provides an opportunity for students to experience a shared text together. When choosing a book to read aloud, I look for books that represent diversity in a way that counters stereotypes and provides opportunities for students to develop compassion and understanding for others. As we read and discuss these powerful topics, students develop common connections and have an opportunity to practice civil discourse. *Blended*, by Sharon Draper, provides an opportunity to discuss code-switching, divorce, racism, police prejudice, and the biracial experience. *Wishtree*, by Katherine Applegate, tells a beautiful story through the eyes of a tree and provides an opportunity to discuss religious tolerance, Islamophobia, and friendship. Scheduling read-aloud time for the last five minutes of class means that students walk out of class talking about the book and wondering what will happen next in the story. The suspense facilitates excitement around reading and engagement in the content for the entire instructional block.

December Snapshot

- 12/2 - Boys Basketball @ Alton
- 12/3 - Girls Basketball @ Mascoutah
Boys Basketball @ Home
- 12/5 - Girls Basketball @ Home
Boys Basketball @ Carriel
NJHS Morning Meeting
- 12/7 - Girls Basketball @ Carterville
- 12/9 - Girls Basketball @ Mascoutah
Boys Basketball @ Home
Wrestling @ Home
- 12/10 - Girls Basketball @ Home
Boys Basketball @ Fulton
8th Grade CAVC Tours
- 12/11 - Wrestling @ Liberty/Lincoln
Boys Basketball @ Home
- 12/12 - Band Concert @ 7 p.m. @ CMS
Boys Basketball @ Triad
- 12/16 - Wrestling @ Home
- 12/17 - Girls Basketball @ Highland
Boys Basketball @ Home
CMS Choir Concert @ Webster @
7 p.m.
- 12/18 - Boys Basketball @ Home
NJHS Holiday Service Party
- 12/19 - Girls Basketball @ Home
NJHS Study Hall Meeting
- 12/20 - End of Quarter 2
- 12/23 - 1/3 - Winter Break (No School)
- 12/28 - Wrestling @ Belleville West

Christmas/Holiday Spirit Week

Monday 12/16: Dress to Impress...Santa! Day- Wear your holiday best and dress like you are headed to work or a fancy party!

Tuesday 12/17: Ugly Sweater Day- Wear a Christmas/Holiday shirt or sweater...the tackier the better!

Wednesday 12/18: Christmas/Holiday Character Day- Wear a Christmas/Holiday character or theme: Santa, elves, reindeer, presents, tree topper, angels, the Grinch, snowmen, etc!

Thursday 12/19: Christmas/Holiday Family Photo- Dress up as twins or in a group, wear a Christmas/Holiday themed outfit!

Friday 12/20: Christmas/Holiday Explosion Day- Wear extreme red, white, and green from head to toe!



Tote Me Home

In collaboration with the Collinsville Food Pantry, CMS is happy to offer families with the Tote Me Home program. Tote Me Home provides families with additional grocery assistance over the weekend. Students involved in the program are given a bag of groceries to take home on Fridays.



For more information please contact our CMS social workers.

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