



Superintendent's Report

Submitted by Nick Verhoff

September 14, 2023

Thank You, Church of the Good Shepherd!

We want to express our appreciation to The Church of the Good Shepherd for their monetary donation to our Partners in Education (PIE) group to help students needing school supplies. This donation is extremely helpful in our efforts to support our most vulnerable students. We also appreciate the school supply donation from The Columbus Grove Christian Church a couple weeks ago, as we are grateful of the continued outstanding support of our community!

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) at Columbus Grove Schools

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is an increasingly used term in the world of K-12 education. Essentially, SEL is the process of self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are vital for school, work, and life success. Individuals with strong social-emotional skills are better able to cope with everyday challenges and benefit academically, professionally, and socially. From effective problem-solving to self-discipline, from impulse control to emotion management and more, SEL provides a foundation for positive, long-term effects on students, adults, and communities.

Columbus Grove Schools have developed a number of activities, events, and programs to create a systematic approach to building SEL skills in our students. Here is a sample of these activities:

- **New Student Check-ins** - After the second week of school, school counselors do a one-on-one check in with all new students.
- **Handle with Care** - Information was shared with parents during Open House and put on the school Facebook page about a "Handle with Care" option for parents/guardians. If a family is experiencing difficulties at home, the school counselor could provide additional support at school. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to email or call the school counselor and leave a message "Handle with Care" to let her know that the child is coming to school after a difficult night, morning or weekend. No explanation is needed and this will allow the school counselor to provide some extra time, patience and care if needed during the school day.

- **Character Education** - The elementary school counselor meets once a month with each class and provides a literature-based character education lesson in the library. She tries to incorporate character education topics into her read aloud and then reinforces these throughout the month with students.
- **Staff and Student Spotlight** - Each month a staff member and a student from each grade level are chosen as our CG Staff and Student Spotlights. Each person answers a questionnaire about themselves and their favorites and their picture and information are displayed around the school, on our Facebook page and in the local paper. Many thanks to local businesses who sponsor this incentive and provide the ability to treat our spotlights.
- **Senior in the Spotlight** - The Columbus Grove High School Counseling Department recognizes one senior each month to spotlight. The LEO Club, Student Council, National Honor Society, Quiz Bowl Team, Music Department, Senior Class Adviser and teachers are asked to nominate students in their organizations or classrooms that have stepped up to take a leadership role at Columbus Grove High School. In addition, the students have maintained their grades while participating in their extracurricular activities. Students are awarded a certificate, given a small gift, and recognized at the Senior Academic Awards Night.
- **Lunchtime visits** - The social/emotional counselor is present in the cafeteria and visits with students during lunch and is available during recess for students to chat with.
- **Mental Health Counselors** - School counselors offer one-on-one sessions and collaborate with mental health consultants that are in the building two days a week to provide students with the opportunity to have a one-on-one session with these trained professionals.
- **"At-Risk Students"** - School Counselors make a list of students who are "at risk" for various reasons and check in with these students throughout the year.
- **Student Success Plans (7-12)** - The high school counselor collaborates with students in grades 7-12 to create a student success plan that is monitored through the counselor. Each student has a file stored in the office with their career exploration activities, academic and social/emotional concerns and their graduation plan is updated each year to go over credits & seals to make sure they are on track to graduate.

- **PAWS (PBIS Incentive Program)** - This is an incentive program in grades 7-8 to reinforce skills needed in the workforce and to make these skills relatable to their future job. Students' attendance, effort, work ethic, attitude and capability to work as a team member are important life skills needed throughout their education at Columbus Grove and eventually when they enter the workforce, college or military. Students can earn PAWS (Pride / Attitude / Wise Choices / Safety) for earning A's or showing academic improvement each quarter in mathematics, social studies, science, reading and language arts. Additionally, students can earn PAWS by attending school regularly (95%), turning assignments in on time, meeting deadlines and exhibiting Ohio Means Jobs readiness skills. Students earning PAWS will be entered into a drawing each quarter for small prizes. At the end of the school year, students earning 10 or more PAWS will participate in the incentive day.
- **Visibility-** Counselors are visible both before the day greeting students and at the end of the day to interact with students and make them feel that counselors are approachable.
- **Building Visuals-** Numerous bulletin boards are designed around the building with social-emotional, PBIS, career-advising themes. Building is decorated to celebrate character education projects as well.

Career education activities:

- **College/Career** - EL students begin career exploration with Mrs. Bruce and Mr. Sautter in computer classes throughout the year. Last year 5th and 6th grade students participated in Career March Madness and explored many careers narrowing it down each week to the winner. Students learn about college, career and workforce options throughout the year with various learning and hands-on activities.
- **Character and Career Lessons Grades 7 & 8** – Mrs. Losh collaborates with the PE, IS, Math, English, Science, and Social Studies teachers for school counseling lessons. The lessons focus on teamwork, communication, and creating a positive school culture. Students will be introduced to the work skills needed to earn an Ohio Means Jobs Readiness Seal. Students must demonstrate the following characteristics and traits: a commitment to being drug free, reliability, a strong work ethic, punctuality, discipline, professionalism, learning agility, critical thinking and problem-solving, leadership, creativity and innovation, good oral and written communication skills, an understanding of digital technology, global and cultural fluency, and career management.

- **Character and Career Lessons Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12.** The high school counselor collaborates with English and Social Studies teachers to incorporate soft skills into counseling lessons. Lessons are used from Skills to Pay the Bills and their lessons per grade level are focused as listed: grade 9 - Enthusiasm and Attitude (Build your Bulldog Brand), grade 10 - Problem Solving and Critical Thinking, grade 11 - Networking, and grade 12 - Professionalism.
- **8th Grade Career Fair** - All eighth-grade students during the second semester will research a career and present their tri-fold poster boards to grades 7-12, teachers and community members.
- **Career Exploration @ Apollo Career Center-** All freshmen will tour Apollo Career Center to explore skilled trades.
- **College and Military representatives** - Grades 11 and 12 can visit with representatives to find out more about colleges and military branches.
- **MakerFest** - All Sophomores will be exposed to local companies at a career fair and participate in career related activities.
- **Parent Meetings-** These are scheduled to inform parents about educational opportunities available to their Children. FAFSA Night, 8th grade Scheduling Night, College and Credit Plus Night.
- **College Experience Course (1st semester)** - A class for seniors interested in exploring their options for employment, enrollment in college or enlistment in the military. Students complete college applications and scholarships, discuss reasons to attend college and the costs associated with education, filling out the FAFSA, ordering transcripts, listen to college reps, prepare resumes, etc.
- **Mock Interviews-** All seniors interview with staff/community members in April each year and receive feedback on the job they did.
- **College Fair at Findlay High School** - All juniors and seniors in the College Experience class will go to the Findlay College Fair to collect information about colleges and meet college reps.
- **Job Shadows-** All juniors submit a job shadow request form that is reviewed and approved by the guidance department. After the job shadow day, the students filed a report on their day answering questions related to their experience.
- **Manufacturing Visits-** Student groups participate in field trips to various manufacturers/businesses in the area (GROB, PROTEC, etc.)

Many thanks go to our school counsellors Brenda Bruce and Mindy Losh for coordinating these events which help better prepare our students once they graduate from Columbus Grove Schools. In addition to these activities, students learn various SEL skills through participation in extra-curricular activities as well. The more involved a student is at school, the more likely they will have stronger socialization skills, better attendance, and higher academic performance. If you have any questions regarding these activities, please feel free to contact my office at 659-2639.

Homecoming Parade Planning

The 2023 CGHS Homecoming Parade will take place on Friday, October 6. The parade will begin at 5:30 p.m. and start from the American Legion. Advance planning to coordinate the parade participants has begun. In an effort to make this process as safe and smooth as possible, a number of guidelines have been set for all participants to follow.

- Floats arrive at the American Legion parking lot prior to 4:45 p.m.
- There will be a parade coordinator stationed at the entrance to the American Legion who will direct floats to their designated location.
- Beginning at 4:45 p.m., Plum Street will be blocked off at the intersection with the alley. The traffic will be one way at Plum Street and moving towards the American Legion. Parents with children are asked to enter at Plum Street and drop their children off at the alley intersection before exiting down the alley.
- If children are too small to walk the distance to the American Legion by themselves, a student council representative will be available to walk with them.

A letter to parents, accompanied with a map, will be sent home prior to this parade. Any group or club who is interested in being a part of the parade should email Katie Stechschulte at cg_kstechschulte@cg.noacsc.org or call the office at (419) 659-2156 to be added to the lineup.

Substitute Cafeteria Monitors Needed

We are currently low on substitute cafeteria monitors. Job duties include supervising the lunchroom, taking students out to and in from recess, recess monitoring, and cleaning tables to get the cafeteria ready for the next shift of students. Hours for this job are from approximately 10:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. If you are interested, please contact the superintendent's office at 659-2639.

Lunch Account Management with PaySchools

Columbus Grove moved to a new cafeteria system last spring, and with that came a new place to manage your student account online. Go to <https://payschoolscentral.com> or download the PaySchools Central app on your phone. Click register to create your account and add your students. If you don't have your student's ID you can find it on their schedule, in the information that was sent home from their teacher, in Progress Book at the top right of the page, or by contacting the school office. Once you are registered you can look at transaction history, deposit funds, and transfer funds between students.

Upcoming Events:

Thursday, September 14th

Picture Day

JH Football vs. Crestview – 5:00 p.m.

JH Volleyball @ Kalida – 5:00 p.m.

JV & Varsity Volleyball vs. Allen East – 5:30 p.m.

Friday, September 15th

Varsity Football @ Delphos Jefferson – 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 16th

Cross Country @ Ottawa Blue/Gold Invitational – 9:00 a.m.

JV Football vs. Delphos Jefferson – 10:00 a.m.

Monday, September 18th

Freshman Football vs. Bluffton – 5:00 p.m.

JH Volleyball @ Crestview – 5:00 p.m.

Varsity Soccer @ Ada – 5:00 p.m.

JV & Varsity Volleyball vs. Ottoville – 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, September 19th

Varsity Golf vs. Pandora Gilboa – 4:00 p.m.

Freshman Volleyball vs. Ada – 4:30 p.m.

JV & Varsity Volleyball vs. Ada – 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 20th

JH Volleyball @ Bluffton – 5:00 p.m.