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THE COLFAX COMMUNICATOR

THE MAGAZINE OF THE COLFAX K-8 PTO



IN THIS ISSUE

- Chess Club
- In the Garden
- Community Spotlights
- Playground Fun
- Half-Day Clubs
- And Much More...

President's Note



Hope you all had a lovely spring break and have been enjoying spring in Pittsburgh. I love seeing the flowers and blossoming trees in the neighborhood on my walk to school, and especially love seeing our Colfax garden come alive!

I would like to offer thanks to the contributors to this issue, including teachers, Colfax parents and grandparents, students, and community members. I hope you have all noticed and appreciated the expansion of this publication this year. If you have an idea for our next issue, please let us know! We are looking for someone to lead the *Communicator* as editor for next year and continue to make it even better.

Saturday, April 20 will be our adult-only fundraising party at the Mattress Factory. Read more on page 8, arrange your babysitter, and get your tickets – you do not want to miss this night.

Teacher Appreciation Week is coming up, May 6-10. Our teachers work so hard – please help us show them our love! Ghazal Tajdini is coordinating the week this year. (Thank you, Ghazal!) We hope to do something special for our teachers each day that week, but we will need volunteers to pull it off. Please pencil us in on your schedules now, and we will have details to share soon!

As PTO president, I am already starting to plan for next year. I'm working on the PTO budget for the 24/25 school year, and I am also looking to fill the four open seats on the PTO board before our May 8 meeting. I really need your help! Read more about the positions on page 22. Two years ago, I was not involved with the PTO at all – so don't worry that you don't have the right experience to get involved.

Finally, I want to say thank you to YOU! For reading this magazine, attending PTO events, buying Colfax gear, volunteering your time to help the school, and for being part of this awesome Colfax community. I hope to see you at some of our remaining events this year!

Sincerely,
Kelly Anderson
PTO President



2023-2024 PTO BOARD

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Kelly Anderson
president@colfaxpto.org

Treasurer

Ross Ingram
treasurer@colfaxpto.org

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Principal

Dr. Tamara Sanders-Woods
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PTO Events

TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK PREVIEW

BY GHAZAL TAJDINI, COLFAX PTO

Mark your calendars—Teacher Appreciation Week is coming up soon! We'll be celebrating our wonderful Colfax teachers and staff the week of May 6-10. We'll be doing something special for them every day that week, including serving breakfast, lunches, and midday treats delivered to their rooms and more! Want to show your appreciation? Volunteer to help with any of the above, or have students show their love in their own special way! Also, in the coming weeks homeroom reps will be in touch with information on how your child's classroom can organize for their teachers.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact Ghazal Tajdini at Ghazal.Tajdini@gmail.com.



LOVE PTO EVENTS?
TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE
TO READ ABOUT
OUR OPEN VP OF EVENTS
POSITION.

UPCOMING SPRING PTO & COLFAX EVENTS!!

Spring Fundraiser Party
Saturday, April 20

Playground Meetups
April 27, May 11, June 2

Teacher Appreciation Week
May 6-10

Art Show
Tuesday, May 7

PTO Meeting
Wednesday, May 8

Musical - The Little Mermaid
May 16, 18, and 19

Carnival
Tuesday, June 4

Stay Informed

PTO WEBSITE & EMAIL SIGN-UP
<http://www.colfaxpto.org>

COLFAX FACEBOOK
facebook.com/ColfaxK8

COLFAX TWITTER & PPS TWITTER
[@PPSColfax](https://twitter.com/PPSColfax) [@PPSNews](https://twitter.com/PPSNews)

PTO FACEBOOK
facebook.com/pghcolfax

PPS FACEBOOK
facebook.com/PittsburghPublicSchools

PPS CALENDAR
<http://pghschools.org>

Q&A WITH OUTGOING VP OF EVENTS: SARAH GRUBB

Q: What made you sign up to be VP of Events initially?

A: When my oldest son was in kindergarten, I realized that I wanted to feel more connected with the school. I loved all of the events that were organized that year, and I thought that it would be a great way to get involved the next year and to build my personal community and help to strengthen the school community. And I love a good party. Growing up my mom did a lot of catering, and I worked with her occasionally in the summers so I felt comfortable in an events role. I also really wanted to find a way to reduce the cost of some of the events for families when I first got involved, and I am happy that post-COVID as a board we were able to make that happen.

Q: What is your favorite event you've organized?

A: I really enjoyed organizing the Art Show last year, and I'm looking forward to it again this year. It was nice to see a large group of kids and families that haven't attended many other events enthusiastically participate in a new event.

Q: What is the most challenging part of the role?

A: The most challenging thing that I have found is often the logistics of figuring out dates, times, and locations for the events. And calling to confirm that vendors, etc. will actually be at an event (but that's only challenging because I hate the phone). The vast majority of the events have been held for many, many years at this point and are well documented for what works and doesn't work so the planning on that end isn't too difficult. Finding dates and times that work for volunteers and don't conflict with other things happening at school can sometimes be tricky.

Q: How do you find the fun things for our events?

A: Most of the things that are done were happening long before my time, and there are binders full of old info. The newer ideas or activities have come from talking to friends that have kids in other PPS schools to see what fun things they do there and trying to see how we can incorporate them into our events. Also PTO Today has a very active Facebook group with lots of fun ideas and suggestions, and there's always Pinterest.

Q: Have you ever had an event not go as planned?

A: I'm pretty sure every single event I've organized has had at least something go wrong. Small things like running out of popcorn because we had an unexpectedly large crowd or larger things like streets not being closed for a Fun Run even though they were supposed to be. But for every event things have ended up going just fine because the community is unbelievably helpful. There are so many people that are willing to jump in at the drop of a hat to help fix whatever problem is occurring. I think that everyone realizes that these are supposed to be fun things for the kids and knows that everyone is trying their best.

Q: What would be your top tip for the new VP of Events?

A: Know the parts of events that bring you joy and the parts that don't. If you don't like trying to figure out food on a budget, don't. Order pizza or have food trucks come. If you don't like planning or organizing crafts and activities, find someone that does enjoy that to be in charge of that part or take the event in a different direction that works for you. Just because things have been done a certain way before does not mean that it is set in stone that they must be done that way. And ask for help when you need it!

Q: This all sounds like a lot - could the role be shared by two or more people?

A: Absolutely, it would be great to have a team of people doing events. Or even several people that each had one thing that they wanted to be in charge of (movies, ice skating, fall event, spring event, etc.) There are lots of ways that the role could be divided up if people wanted to be involved.



**THANK YOU, SARAH, FOR PLANNING
SO MANY GREAT COLFAX EVENTS!**

Spring Playground Meetups

BY SOFIA VINES, COLFAX 3RD GRADER

This is why I liked the Colfax meetup. The first one was at BLUE SLIDE PARK!!!!

I got out of the car and crossed the road then I saw my best friend, her name is Addison, so I went and jumped on her back, and she was so happy to see me. Next to her was another one of my friends, Hazel. We walked up the hill and found ANOTHER one of my friends, Francesca. We were just running around, then I saw one of our friends, Greg, and he showed me this weird pig he knew would annoy me. I chased him and tackled him to the ground. I found Hazel, and I told her what happened. We were going down to the first level, and we found one of our best friends, Zelda. She was climbing a tree and we said hi and we asked her to help us get revenge on Greg, but she said no.

Next, Hazel and I got the sticky name tags, wrote weird things on them, and stuck them on each other's backs. Zelda found us and asked if she could play now, and of course we said yes. Zelda was at war with us and then something unexpected happened, one of the kids in Greg's group stuck one of their own notes on my back! I was so mad, now it was DEFINITELY war. Then my little brothers joined the war, and it just went like that for the rest of the time.

That is why blue slide park was fun!



BY ADDISON KLEIN, COLFAX 3RD GRADER

The playground meet-up at Blue Slide Playground on Sunday was AMAZING and probably the best one yet! It was a great sunny day to be outside in March. We kids loved the playground meet-up. We loved going down the blue slide in groups and playing on the swings. My favorite part is seeing all of my friends there. My little brother also had friends from kindergarten that he was excited to play without outside of school. If you were tired, you could head over and get snacks. They also have lots of great snacks at the meet-ups. Once people were finished with their snacks, they would go back out and play with their friends again. This was a super fun playground meet-up. I hope to see you all there at the next one!



COLFAX PTO

SPRING 2024 PLAYGROUND

MEETUPS

**FUN!
SNACKS!**

**MARK
YOUR
CALENDAR**

**MEET OTHER FAMILIES AND
BUILD COMMUNITY**

**SUN MAR 17
1-2:30
BLUE SLIDE PARK**

**SAT APR 27
11-12:30
MELLON PARK**

**SAT MAY 11
1-2:30
BLUE SLIDE PARK**

**SUN JUN 2
3-4:30
WIGHTMAN PARK**



QUESTIONS?

KELLY ANDERSON
412-613-3816
PRESIDENT@COLFAXPTO.ORG





We are looking forward to our annual spring fundraiser on April 20: "The After Dark Affair". The event is shaping up to be an unforgettable evening you won't want to miss!

Venue: The Mattress Factory - A contemporary art museum with global appeal! We will have access to all the exhibits, and the party will be in the lobby/cafe/garden area. It's a super cool space!

Silent Auction: We have some unique and fun items for the auction this year. Bid on beautiful artworks by our talented students and local artists, sports tickets, Adirondack chairs, a stay in a vacation home, gift cards for family outings, a balance bike, and much more!

Music: Jazzmania - a local band that will keep us swaying with their contemporary jazz

Fun: Enjoy delicious food and drinks, show off your masquerade masks, try your luck in our 50/50 raffle, and strike a pose at our photo booth.

If you haven't bought your tickets yet, head to colfaxfundraiser.org. And let's not forget our wonderful teachers - consider gifting a ticket to show appreciation and ensure they can join in the festivities.

We can't wait to see you there!



Spring Art Show

Tuesday May 7 6:00 - 7:30pm

Enter through the Front of the School

Join the PTO and Ms. Miller for an evening admiring and celebrating student artwork. Light refreshments will be served.



<https://forms.gle/XPPSLBXySLffrcyC6>

We would LOVE to see art that you have made on your own time!

Art created at school throughout the year has been collected and will be showcased. But we want you to show us art that makes you proud! Submissions from home are strongly encouraged!

Art can be submitted to Ms. Miller in the art room from **Mon. April 15 - Fri. May 3**. All artwork **MUST** be labeled with First and Last Name, Grade, and Homeroom

You may use any medium that you wish (paper, pencil, paint, pastel, clay, photography, recycled materials, etc). We love creativity!



Pittsburgh Colfax K-8
Presents



Music by
Alan Menken

Lyrics by
Howard Ashman and Glenn Slater

Book by
Doug Wright

Based on the Hans Christian Andersen story
and the Disney film

Music Adapted and Arranged by
David Weinstein

Directed by
Alyce Edwards

Thursday, May 16, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 18, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 19, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$4 for students; \$8 for adults

Disney's *The Little Mermaid JR.* is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized materials are supplied by Music Theatre International, 421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019
Script, music and all other materials © 2010 iTheatrics
Broadway Junior and MTI's Broadway Junior Collection are trademarks of Music Theatre International. All rights reserved

Save the Date

Colfax Carnival
Tuesday June 4
5:30 - 7:30 pm

Slides and obstacle
courses

Crafts, Games,
Book Give-aways

Sunburst School of
Music

Pittsburgh Parks
Conservancy

2023-2024 SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUE/SCENE COMPETITION

BY ELIZABETH HAZLETT, COLFAX TEACHER

In November, eleven students (five 6th graders and six 8th graders) began working towards the annual Shakespeare Monologue/Scene Competition. Students came once or twice a week to learn their chosen work. The time was spent learning words, their meanings, memorizing the monologue/scene, and acting it out. In January, the students had the opportunity to work with Shakespeare coach Karen Baum to receive notes and improve their performances.



On February 14, the students performed their monologues/scenes in front of three judges at the O'Reilly Theatre downtown. All students performed very well and made Colfax proud! While no one made it to the final round this year, four students did receive honorable mentions for their performances: Laila Heffley (6th grade), Nila Lucchi (6th grade), Currence Bigham (8th grade), and Viviana Zitelli (8th grade).



I am so proud of the commitment and performances of all of the students, and I look forward to what next year brings!

PARTICIPANTS

6TH GRADE

Laila Heffley
Violeta Alcalá Martínez
Rose Sedgewick
Nila Lucchi
Owen Kane

8TH GRADE

Currence Bigham
Vivian Zitelli
Mayalena Maher
Robert DeBenedetti
Peter Hezel
Judah Zimmer

HALF-DAY CLUBS

BY TERESA SHIEH, COLFAX 6TH GRADER

Clubs is an event that is unique to Colfax. On half-days, students go to their selected clubs at 8:50am. There are twelve clubs, Yoga, Move and Groove, Drama, Design, Brain Games, Volleyball, DIY Drafting, Cooking, Coding, Doodle Noodle, Newspaper, and Starbooks.

In my club, Design, we made winter ornaments and handed them out to teachers. Currently, we are working on making t-shirt designs using the Cricut. In Move and Groove, they learn hip-hop routines virtually by Giana Davis, a college student at Morgan State University, an HBCU, located in Baltimore, Maryland. In Drama, they write monologues and analyze Shakespeare. And even newspaper published the Colfax News, where they had many articles, including one about Cats vs. Dogs. And we can't forget the wonderful smells coming from the Cooking Club. This is just a glimpse into the many fun things we do in clubs.

At 10:00am, clubs trickle into the gym to join Community Time. Community Time is when all of the clubs sit down together, and it begins with a time when our teacher shout us out. When we get shouted out, it is for students who go above and beyond the H.I.S.S. Expectation. H.I.S.S. stands for Helpful, Involved, Safe, and Scholarly. These students get a certificate, a Colfax bracelet, and a Star that hangs on the wall with your name. Then, some clubs go up in front of the stage and present what they did in their club that half-day. We've seen performances from Move and Groove and Drama, and products from Design and Coding club.

I'm not the only one who enjoys clubs. Here are some words from other middle-level students: "In cooking, we usually made something that's easy to make at home. We've made pizza with English Muffins and chocolate and vanilla mug cakes. My favorite part about the class is eating it." Addie Blackhurst, 8th grader, says.

"We're in Volleyball Club. We do matches in volleyball and if we win, we get donuts. Mrs. Pop and Mrs. Lavelle are in charge. We love engaging with the 7th and 8th graders in our club," says Marlee Eberhardt and Jaiden Davis, 7th graders.

"I'm in DIY crafting. We use pom-poms, glue, yarn, and we knit. My favorite project was when we glued pom-poms onto a piece of cardboard," says Valerie Chen, 6th grader.

"I am in coding club. We make 3D printers. We're planning to make robots, and our teacher is Mrs. Koloshinsky," says Kareem Alsaidi, 6th grader.

Thank you to all the teachers and administrators, and of course, the PTO, that have helped make this possible!

COLFAX MASQUERADE DANCE

By Sofie Bell

Edited by Currence Bigham

This year's Colfax middle school dance was a black and gold-themed masquerade ball. Students dressed up in showy masks, danced, and had fun with their Colfax friends.

This year's HISS court members included Currence Bigham, Viviana Zitelli, Felicity Aldous, Luke Weldon, Visnu Maldonado, Breasia Noaks, Marcellus Johnson, and Demi Reck. We are all excited to see what they do this year to improve our school and show HISS expectations: helpful, involved, safe, and scholarly. The HISS court will work around school to help other students and represent what Colfax and HISS is all about. The students voted on these students as they represented the HISS expectations in our school.

The dance featured a 360-photo booth, a candy bar, a raffle, and prizes that students could buy with ballroom bucks. Ballroom bucks could be won by showing our HISS expectations at school during classes. The dance's raffle was popular with Colfax's middle school students. "It was so exciting! I put tickets in for almost every prize, and won a few too!" says an anonymous 6th grade student.

The music was great this year, with Ms. Davis, a.k.a. DJ Davis, running the music as always! Songs like "Buddy Holly" by Weezer and the fan favorite, Taylor Swift, were on the playlist. Many students participated in dancing, and pizza and Capri Suns were provided to all attendees.

"The food and the party favors were cool," seventh grader Jordan Davis stated. "I thought the dance was fun because we got to express ourselves formally in front of our friends and teachers, eat pizza, and dance!" said 8th grader Annie Hoffmier. "The dance was really fun! I was amazed by the work put in by the organizers who set it up. The dancing was really fun and created many good memories." said 8th grader Zion Merrell.

The dance is open for 6th to 8th grade students. 5th grade students, feel free to ask questions about the dance and join us next year!

Sincerely,
The Newspaper Club

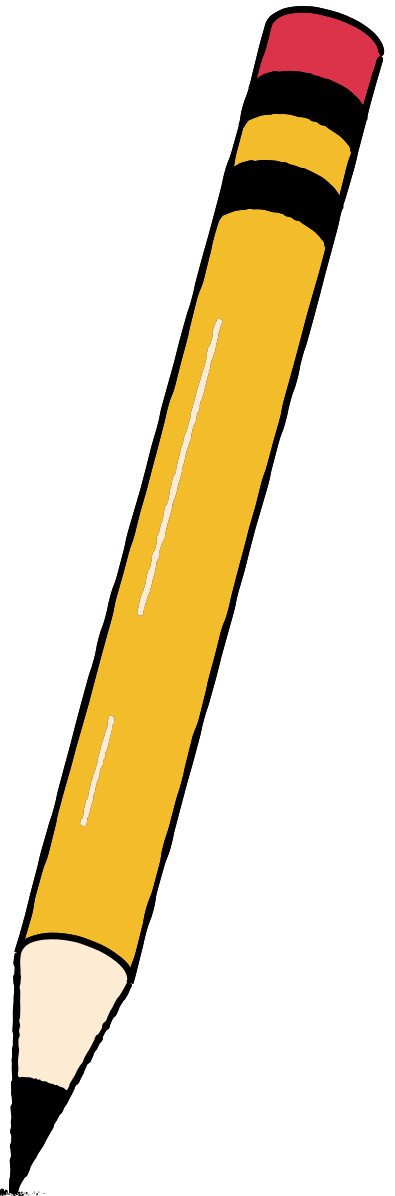


STUDENT WRITERS NEEDED

Colfax PTO is looking for student writers to be featured in the Colfax Communicator quarterly magazine! We welcome fiction and nonfiction.

Please speak with Mrs. King in Room 210 or email communications@colfaxpto.org if you are interested!

We can't wait to hear what you have to say!





SPRING GARDEN UPDATE BY FARMER IAN



Happy Spring to all of our garden friends at Colfax! The fruit trees are beginning to bud out, the daffodils have bloomed, and other perennial plants are starting to send up new growth. We just wrapped up Winter Programming with 2nd grade. Our students tried new foods like sweet potato waffles, noodles made from zucchini and familiar foods like ramen with a special vegetable twist. We also were able to take advantage of the warmer weather and got out into the garden to explore those first signs of spring while adding compost to the garden beds to get our garden year started off right! Soon you will see some of the older beds replaced in the garden using wood sourced locally by our friend Ed Johnson. We are making the beds closest to the hillside a bit narrower to allow for easier walking. Speaking of walking, make sure you keep your wintertime garden exploration and digging in the beds for the mud kitchen. We have had some digging in the walkways, and we want to keep those functional!

One transition happening in the garden this year will be the removal of our plum tree. Unfortunately, this tree succumbed to pests last year and needs to be removed for safety reasons. We hope to make use of some of the wood from this tree to honor this tree's life. One other thing you can do to help keep our other trees healthy is enjoying them from the ground level. While it can seem like a fun thing to do to climb our fruit trees, it can lead to damage that affects the health of the trees. Also, we want everyone to be safe in the garden! Thank you!

We are ready to get back into the garden with Colfax kindergarten students. They have spent all year growing as Colfax's youngest students, and it is always a treat to get them started on their Colfax gardening journey. This spring we will be planting, working on the garden, and learning about plants and how they grow, as well as the other forms of life that share our garden. Of course, this also means that the beautiful row cover tents will be returning. As many of you know our garden shares a neighborhood with a great many deer. Our most successful strategy includes covering most of our planted garden beds with a water-permeable row cover. We are able to peel them back more often after as deer move on to other local food sources, but our abundant spring greens are one of their favorite food stops!

For anyone interested in growing a garden, you will see spring seedlings showing up in local nurseries and grocery stores. Grow Pittsburgh will be hosting a seedling sale at our greenhouse location in Wilkesburg starting on April 12 and going through June 22. Of course, another great source for seedlings is other local farmers who often sell seedlings either through websites, local markets, and farmers markets. If you don't have a lot of space, a couple small containers grown in a windowsill can provide you with fresh herbs to add to your food! We love chives, basil, and other small leafy herbs for this.

I hope you have a wonderful spring season with all of the lovely weather fluctuations, and before long we will be headed into true summertime! Seek joy, spread kindness, and keep growing, but not too fast.



COLFAX FAQ VOLUNTEERS EDITION

What do I need to do to volunteer at Colfax?

Thanks for your interest in supporting Colfax! Before you can volunteer, you will need to complete the following forms:

- [Intake form](#)
- [PA Criminal History Report](#) (free; obtained online)
- [Child Abuse Certification](#) (free; obtained online)
- FBI Criminal History Report



How do I get an FBI Criminal History Report?

If you have lived in PA for ten consecutive years, no fingerprinting is required. Instead, you can fill out the [Waiver of FBI Report](#). If you have not lived in PA for ten consecutive years, you need to get an FBI Criminal History Report. Fingerprinting required and costs \$21.35 paid at the fingerprinting site.

First, fill out the FBI form online at <https://uenroll.identogo.com/>. The PPS service code is 1KG6ZJ. Then, find your closest fingerprinting site. Remember to bring your ID--it's required. There are two fingerprinting sites close by:

- UPS Store (Oakland); 3945 Forbes Ave, 15213
- 8384 Frankstown Ave (rear), 15221

I have completed all my forms. Now what do I do with them?

Submit all four forms to Tracy Clark (school secretary) in the office. Email Ashley Ingram (volunteers@colfaxpto.org) to let her know you have submitted your clearances.

I want to volunteer tomorrow. Am I all set once I submit my forms?

Once you submit your forms, it will take a week or two for them to be processed by the district office. Please plan ahead and submit your forms early. Ms. Clark will contact you when you are cleared to volunteer.

Have more questions about Colfax?

Send them to

communications@colfaxpto.org,

and we'll try to answer them in

a future issue of the Communicator.

**I still have questions about
volunteering. Who should I contact?**

Email Ashley Ingram (Colfax PTO
Volunteer Coordinator) at
volunteers@colfaxpto.org

COLFAX CHESS CLUB GIVES KIDS AN EDGE

BY MARY BETH CARLISLE, COLFAX GRANDPARENT

Chess has certainly seen a revival since the pandemic with people dusting off their chess boards and binge watching, *The Queen's Gambit*. But did you know that playing chess gives kids an edge in the classroom? If you've been thinking about getting in on the craze and introducing your child to chess (or even learning how to play together), here are some reasons why you should totally do it:

- **Chess exercises both sides of the brain.** The left analytical side of the brain looks for the next logical move, while the right creative side seeks out patterns and new possibilities. The game boosts both intelligence and creativity.
- **Chess gives kids an edge in the classroom.** Playing chess is known to increase IQ, promote critical thinking, and teach core math and verbal skills. It helps kids retain info, improve test scores, solve problems, remain calm under pressure, and perform well in school. Chess helps kids speak the same language!
- **Chess teaches sportsmanship.** Win or lose, kids will learn it's fun to play the game of chess with a friend. In the game, they'll grow to understand the consequences of a bad move and how to embrace failure. But at the end of every game, they always give a "good game" handshake.

- **Chess is the ultimate executive coach.** Grit is a powerful driving force and predictor of success in the business world, and an important trait kids can learn by playing chess. The game teaches patience as they work through different scenarios.

Thanks to the PTO and Jules Coulson (aka Mr. Jules), a professional chess teacher from Pittsburgh, the students are enjoying a lunch-and-learn format learning to play chess. Once a week for six weeks the students who signed up in K-3 and 4-8 will play chess, ending with a mini tournament with prizes awarded.

If you missed the sign-ups, it's not too late to get into some chess fun as two Pittsburgh summer chess camps are being hosted by Mr. Jules and Gabriel Petesch, Fide Master. Find more info is available at www.gpchess.net. There are loads of online resources and after-school programs in Pittsburgh if you are interested in learning chess with your



COLFAX CHESS CLUB GIVES KIDS AN EDGE



Community Spotlight



MEET NURSE CHERRI BY KAREN MCNABB, PTO SECRETARY

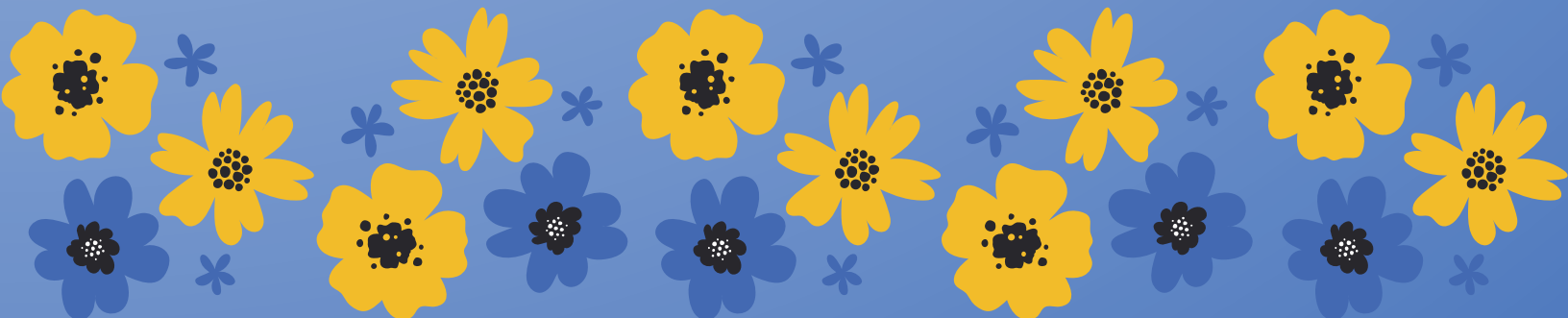
Nurse Cherri grew up in Westmoreland County, just southeast of Allegheny County. When you step into her office, you'll see pictures of her favorite breed of dogs: Dachshunds Doxins! She rescued six and loves living with them and caring for them.

Nurse Cherri is a very experienced nurse with a passion for meeting the health needs of Colfax's

students. In her career, she has traveled extensively to attend nursing conferences and to promote higher education for nurses. She has been involved in an online university and Pittsburgh School of Nursing. She even worked as a prison nurse at one point. She switched to being a school nurse a few years ago, working at both Langley and Clayton Academy before working at Colfax. She loves working with kids but admits that one huge perk of this career change has been getting summers off.

As a believer in education, she is very excited to complete her own doctorate in Education this August! Be sure to congratulate her! It's a huge achievement! As ambitious as that achievement is already, her aspirations don't end there. She is also running for the Pennsylvania State House of Representatives (district 58), where she hopes to champion increased support for health care for students (including mental health care) and increased teacher pay. This is not her first run for political office either. Last year, she tied for a seat on the Scottdale Borough County Council, which had to be settled by drawing a numbered marble.

We are lucky to have such a talented nurse amongst our Colfax staff. Thanks for keeping our kids healthy!



Community Spotlight

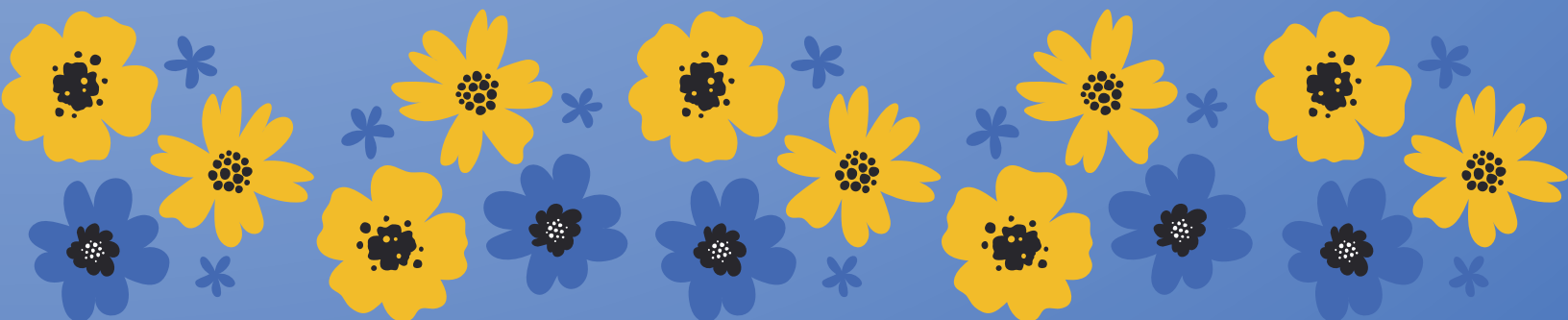
Hello Colfax Families!

My name is Yael Silk, and it is my honor to serve as the new PPS School Director for District 4. I earned a master's degree in education and have dedicated my career to working in public education. In my current role as executive director for Arts Ed Collaborative, I support school districts across southwestern Pennsylvania. I am also a former Colfax parent and eager to help make positive changes for all PPS students and families.

These past few months have been a steep learning curve. As you may know, new board members are sworn in in early December and vote on the district's budget just two weeks later. After the budget, key issues brought to the board have included summary citations, suing the county to trigger a property reassessment process, and a proposed facilities utilization study.

There is an important board meeting on April 3 at 5:30pm (you can always catch the recording and watch at your convenience!). Dr. Walters will be presenting the proposed facilities utilization study to the board and the public at the Education Committee Meeting. This is the beginning of a conversation and set of activities that will help district leadership and the community reimagine what is possible. I am grateful to be serving as chair of the Safety and Operations Committee, where a good deal of this work will take place. Please stay in touch at ysilk1@pghschools.org.

With gratitude,
Yael Silk



TREASURER'S REPORT

BY ROSS INGRAM

Our kids have been hard at work this school year and so have our PTO's dollars. To date, we have received \$40,000 in donations (with company matching) from our very generous Colfax families. We also generated over \$3,000 from our PTO fundraising events. Thank you so much for your support!

Since we last reported in November, we directed

- \$3,200 to support our 1st and 4th grade students participation in an educational program provided by the Frick Environmental Center. The program, aligned with the Colfax science curriculum, consists of three visits to the Frick Environmental Center throughout the school year. Each visit includes a classroom, tour/research, and stewardship component.
- \$3,000 to fund our "Edible Schoolyard" Colfax Garden, located along Phillips Avenue. The garden is made available to our Colfax community (including all of our students!) as a collaboration between Colfax and Grow Pittsburgh, a local non-profit that promotes urban food production. As part of this collaboration, Grow Pittsburgh facilitates 24 garden/classroom lessons (grades K-3).



- \$3,700 to fund our Colfax Musical (open to grades 5-8). This year's musical is *The Little Mermaid* with performances scheduled for May 16, 18, and 19.
- \$4,000 to support our students in other ways, including playground supplies, busing for field trips, supplies for PBIS rewards, supplies for mid-level half-day clubs, and activities and refreshments for the mid-level dance.

Please visit <https://colfaxpto.org/treasury/> for an official record of all of our financial activities.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR NEXT YEAR

The PTO operates only through the hard work of parent volunteers! Please consider filling one of these roles so we can continue to support our Colfax Community!

FOR
NEXT
SCHOOL
YEAR

2024
-25

[tinyurl.com/
ColfaxPTO24Roles](https://tinyurl.com/ColfaxPTO24Roles)

**ASSISTANT TREASURER
(BECOMING TREASURER IN
2025)**

SPECIAL EVENTS PLANNER

VP FUNDRAISING

TEACHER APPRECIATION

**EDITOR OF COMMUNICATOR
MAGAZINE**

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