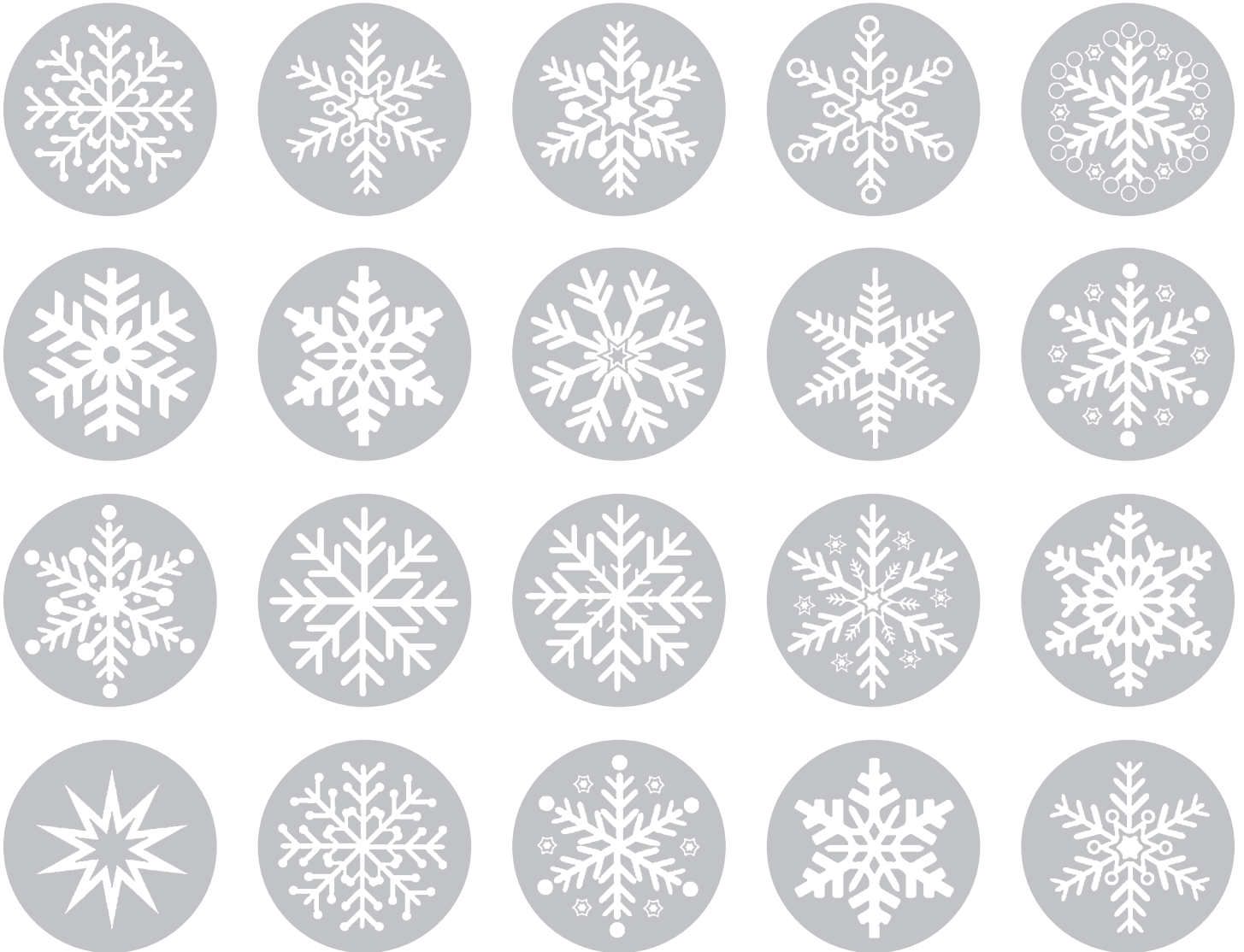


# COLFAX COMMUNICATOR

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PITTSBURGH COLFAX K-8 PTO | VOL 9, NO 3 JANUARY, 2016

## IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome | Elementary Updates | Sports | Ice Skating Pics  
Middle Level Updates | PARTY 4 PLAY | Clubs and more...



### IMPORTANT DATES (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

February 10 - 100th Day of School!

February 15 - Kindergarten Registration Opens

March 21-25 - Spring Vacation

---

# WELCOME NOTES

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS



*Greetings Colfax Families and Happy New Year,*

I hope everyone had a wonderful vacation from school. The weeks leading up to winter break were busy ones for our PTO. We had our annual teacher/staff holiday luncheon, we collected funds for staff and teachers without homerooms, and have continued our ASK DRIVE campaign.

Our VP Events Heather Sendera was in charge of our annual faculty and staff luncheon, which took place on December 22, 2015. Our volunteers did a fabulous job of organizing and decorating. The conference room looked great and we had an amazing turnout of food from our generous parents who brought in the items to share. Seventy people turned out for the luncheon and there were even leftovers for the next day! Thank you, Heather, for organizing the event.

December always feels like the month of generosity with so many holidays and gift giving. It's also the time of year that we remember our dedicated and hardworking teachers. Many homeroom representatives organize classroom gifts for their teachers, and parents respond in kind--often resulting in the teacher receiving something very generous. At Colfax, we have 30 devoted teachers without homerooms, three enthusiastic custodians, and two dedicated secretaries. As a PTO, we like to recognize and say thank you to these folks who might otherwise be forgotten. We collected enough money this year to give everyone on that list a

\$25.00 gift card. I would like to personally say thank you to those of you who donated money to this "non-homeroom" fund. It certainly was appreciated.

Our annual ASK DRIVE campaign is about to close. Many parents and grandparents have donated and we are very close to meeting our goal. This money is important for us to maintain all of the programs and services that we offer our children here at Colfax. Our PTO spends about \$100.00 on every child at Colfax! If you haven't donated yet, there is still time. We will take any amount--large or small. Donation questions should go to VP Fundraising Jenny Ganger at Jennifer.ganger@gmail.com.

Last, I'd like to recognize and congratulate the boys ML basketball team who won the Winter Classic tournament over winter break. The team went 4-0, beating Sterret in the final. You might see their trophy in our new trophy cases located in the new building. All of the ML trophies are now being showcased for the ML students to see and enjoy. The trophies for the younger grades will remain on the main floor outside of the office. Next time you are in the school check them out, we have many to appreciate.

Warm Regards,

***Abbie Campsie-Haber***

PTO President



## PRINCIPAL'S REMARKS

### *Dear Colfax Families,*

Each year, every school within the Pittsburgh Public School District is required to create a School Improvement Plan (SIP). In this document, you will see our End of Year outcomes and strategies to achieve these goals. For the 2015-2016 school year, we have ambitious goals for narrowing the achievement gap in reading, mathematics and science improvement. Our SIP will be reviewed during January's PSCC meeting. However, if you would like to review the entire School Improvement Plan, please contact the school office. Additional documents about our school such as the state report card, school profile, and a link to our Colfax PTO page are also available on the school's website. Take a moment to peruse our district website to see some of the many great things taking place at Colfax!

Also, with our changing weather, be sure to review the information sent home on inclement weather and make arrangements for your child in the event of delays, early dismissals or school closings. Please remember that we have outdoor recess whenever possible so be sure your child is dressed appropriately to play outside.

Lastly, I would like to say that the end of December was an exceptionally difficult time for us all. We had to say goodbye to our beloved librarian Jane McKee. We are putting our heads together to think of ways to honor her memory. Presently, her family has established a Colfax Library fund. We want to thank everyone who contributed via books, checks, and monetary donations to this fund. More information will be provided at a later date for future projects planned in her memory. However, one way that we can all do something right now is to support our local libraries and make every effort to not only get books into the hands of children, but to encourage children to read daily. Our thoughts will continue to be with her family, as they take comfort in knowing that Ms. McKee was loved and will be remembered by all.

Respectfully,

***Dr. Woods***

Principal



# CLASSROOM NEWS

## THIRD GRADE SCIENCE WELCOMES NEW “CLASSMATES”

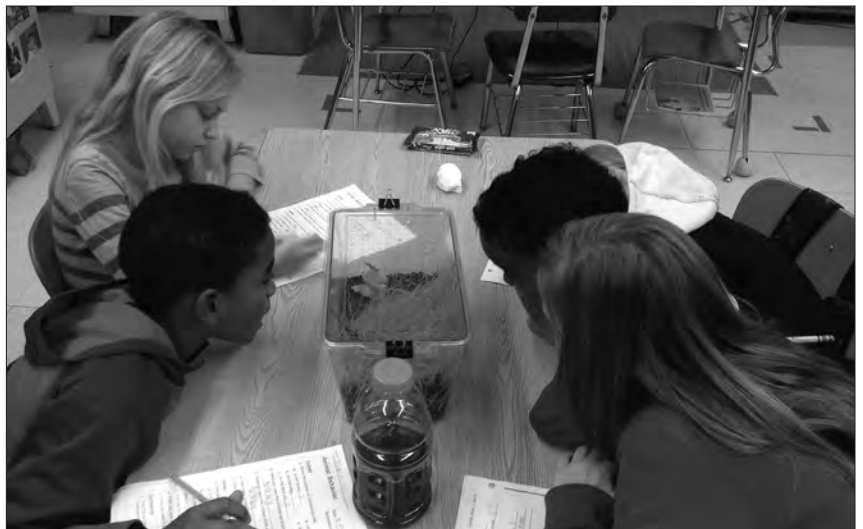
(written by Miss McCann)

In Miss McCann’s 3rd grade science class, we had ten new “students”. These were not like any other student in the class, for they ate crickets, climbed on branches and lived in a terrarium. Yes, we had ten green anoles in our classroom for the month of December!

Before their arrival, students made terrariums, and Mrs. Lasek’s class went outside to gather branches for the anoles to climb on and leaves for them to hide under. On December 3, 2015, during after school tutoring, a box arrived for Miss McCann. Her after-school tutoring students helped put all of the anoles in one terrarium, and we put the crickets in another. The next day, the students were very excited to greet their new “classmates.”

First, we practiced our observation skills with the crickets. Students learned about their body parts and other interesting facts while completing an “Observing Crickets” experiment. Once we had our observation skills mastered, students next worked on their “Observing Anoles” experiment. They had to investigate how many toes on each foot, watch them breathe, and hopefully observe them eating a cricket! Check out our investigation sheets and additional photos on the bulletin board on the second floor by the boys bathroom.

We owe a HUGE THANK YOU to Mrs. Dulak for letting us borrow her beautiful tank to keep the anoles warm while we were not observing them in science class. Also, thank you to the students who volunteered to adopt them: Nasir Hill, Mekhi Hill, Caitlyn Withers, Dagny Haglund, Zachary Shook, Malcolm Brown, Zachary Sprinkle, Michelle Kotov, Stash Alfano-Gordon, and Luke Peralta.





**COOKIES AND MATH**  
(written by Ms. Murdock)

How often do you sit in math class and wonder when you are ever going to use math in your life? My love for math collides with my passion for baking. Every year before winter break we make pizzelle cookies in math class. The 7th graders write and solve linear equations about the expenses, income and profit endured at Ms. Murdock's Mighty Bakery selling cookies. The 6th graders write and solve ratio and fraction problems based on the ingredients in the recipe. Check out the great pictures from our classwork!

I hope each and every one of you has a blessed new year.

**Italian Cookie  
PIZZELLE**

- |                             |                                 |                                  |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>1/2 cup shortening</b>   | <b>2/3 cup sugar</b>            | <b>pinch of salt</b>             |
| <b>2 cups (about) flour</b> | <b>2 teaspoon baking powder</b> | <b>3 eggs (room temperature)</b> |
| <b>1 teaspoon anise oil</b> |                                 |                                  |

Beat shortening and sugar. Add eggs one at a time. Add anise. Mix flour, baking powder, and salt together and add to mixture. Refrigerate for several hours. Drop from teaspoon into pizzelle iron until slightly brown.



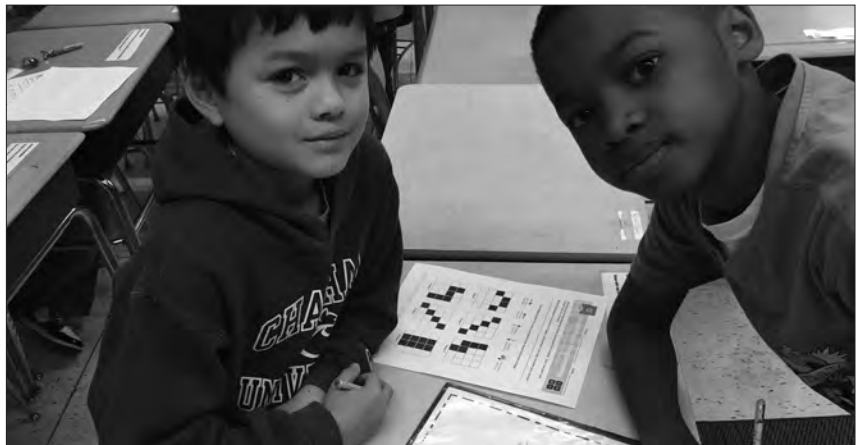
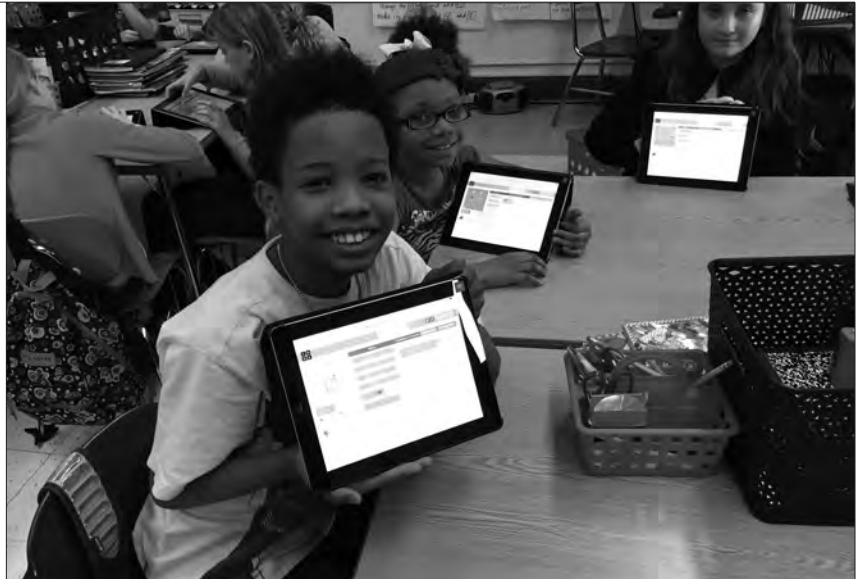
# CLASSROOM NEWS

## HOUR OF CODE

(written by Ms. Ricketts)

The Hour of Code is a one-hour introduction to computer science, designed to demystify programming and show that anybody can learn the basics. Last month, hundreds of Colfax students participated in The Hour of Code as part of Computer Science Education Week (December 7-13, 2015). Students used iPads to work through web-based tutorials that featured settings and characters from favorite games and movies including Minecraft, Star Wars, and Frozen, and got hands-on experience with “unplugged” programming activities that allowed students to explore concepts such as mapping, sequencing, and looping.

Hour of Code is a global movement reaching more than 100 million students in 180+ countries. For more information, check out [Code.org](http://Code.org). All Hour of Code activities and more in-depth (and free!) tutorials are available at [studio.code.org](http://studio.code.org).



**ESL STUDENTS MAKE LIFELONG CONNECTIONS TO COLFAX**

**(written by Ms. Figallo-Adams)**

ESL doesn't end when students return to their home countries. Mary King, our former ESL Teacher (grades 4-8) who retired last year, visited former students in Turkey and provided some wonderful pictures and kind words of her retirement travel.

*Hi, Everyone, Thought you might like seeing this photo from our Colfax-Ankara get together last night in Turkey. Recognize anyone? I'm including the grade they were in during their Colfax year to jog your memories. Jale, Nese,*

*Duran Yucel (7, 2, K), Ayla (4), Boris (4), Deniz Karakas (8), Seher Ozperhiz - in scarf. Seher volunteered daily during my first year in ESL.*

*It was a wonderful, fun evening. The kids and families all have great memories of Colfax and have saved many little mementos. All of them loved their time in Pittsburgh, and many of you contributed to making them feel so comfortable and welcome.*



# COLFAX CLUBS



## COLFAX COBRA CLUBS

(written by Ms. Lucci)

Cobra Clubs are officially up and running! This is the third year we have been able to successfully implement these interest courses into grades K-8. Cobra Clubs are an important part of our school community. They provide students and teachers an opportunity to interact with each other, joined by a common goal or interest. They give students a chance to meet and develop friendships with other students who they might not have had a chance to otherwise meet. Plus our clubs allow teachers a chance to share an interest or talent with the students! Each teacher designs a club; students then have an opportunity to select a club. The PTO generously supports our Cobra Clubs by providing each teacher a \$50 stipend to purchase supplies and materials.

### **BLANKET MAKING CLUB: Mrs. Dulak and Miss McCann**

Miss McCann and Mrs. Dulak's Blanket Making Club has 30 wonderful students. For the first week we watched a video about how to make fleece blankets by cutting the ends and tying them together. Now, we have chosen our colors and

patterns and have begun making our blankets. Students are in the process of brainstorming ideas of where to donate the blankets once they have been made. HUGE shout out to Colfax teachers who have generously offered to let us borrow their sharp scissors for the students to use—it has been a great benefit and helps keep costs down.

### **WALKING CLUB: Ms. Dawson, Mrs. Lavelle and Mr. Cohen**

This is our second year of Walking Club, and it has been such a great hit that we had to add a third teacher for the number of students who signed up. Walking Club is for 6-8th grade students to get out in the community and to see the surroundings and neighborhoods that they go to school in. At the same time, the students are exercising, getting their heart rates up, and getting fresh air to start their day. We track the amount that we walk every time we meet and will add the total up at the end of the year! On average, the students walk about 1.25 plus miles at a time! We walk regardless of temperature so bundle up!

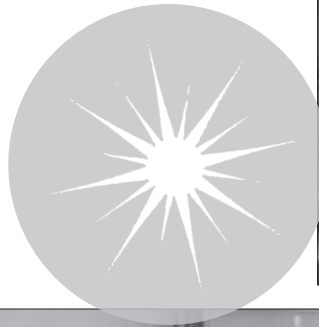






### MAGIC THE GATHERING: Ms. Murdock

Ms. Murdock created a Magic the Gathering Club. The club allows students with a passion for this new card fad to strategize and battle each other with their magic cards. The students teach one another new ways to play and how to work through issues and strategies brought up while playing the game. The club also allows all students with the same interest and passion of playing Magic a chance to hang out together when on a normal school day they may not have. Students are always excited for Cobra Club days to come around so they can go to Ms. Murdock's room and play Magic.



# MIDDLE LEVEL UPDATE

## MIDDLE LEVEL UPDATES

(written by Leslie Grodin and

Sukanya Srinivasan, Middle Level

Parent Committee Co-Chairs)

Happy 2016! The new year is going to be great for the Middle Level after a fun and busy fall.

After hosting a fabulous harvest dance, the Student Council launched their Pennies for Peanut Butter campaign. Each homeroom has a jar for collecting donations for the Pittsburgh Food Bank. Please send in any pennies or other loose change to help student council wrap this up and surpass their goal of \$500.

The ML swim team has had a great season, under the direction of Coach Dominic Woods, one of our new teachers at Colfax this year! They are boasting a fantastic record so far, having competed against Arsenal, Allegheny, Westinghouse and Sci-Tech. The all-citywide public school championships are at 2 p.m. on January 27, 2016 at Allderdice High School, so come out and root for the Cobras!

Speaking of champions, Colfax is hoping to repeat last year's 1st place performance at the Shakespeare Monologue and Scene Contest! Held on Friday, February 5, at 10:00 a.m. at the Public Theater, students in grades 7-8 from Ms. Dawson's Shakespeare enrichment will be performing in this citywide competition.

Last but not least, the Middle Level end-of-the-year trip to Cleveland & Cedar Point is fast approaching (May 19-20, 2016). Thanks to everyone for supporting the ML fundraisers - we know you enjoyed your Sarris candy!

If your ML student has already signed up, the third deposit (\$75) is due February 12, 2016 to hold your spot for the trip. Currently two buses of students are planning to go so don't delay your payment. Please contact Ms. Greco at [rgreco1@pghboe.net](mailto:rgreco1@pghboe.net) or Ms. Herr at [jherr1@pghboe.net](mailto:jherr1@pghboe.net) for more information.

To keep tabs ML happenings, contact Leslie Grodin ([leslie.grodin@verizon.net](mailto:leslie.grodin@verizon.net)) or Sukanya Srinivasan ([dr.sukanya@gmail.com](mailto:dr.sukanya@gmail.com)) to be on our email list!

## COLFAX SPORTS

(written by Ms. Malvin)



The winter sports season is well underway! Both our basketball teams and swim teams are doing wonderfully! The swim championship takes place on January 27, 2016 at 2 p.m. at Allderdice High School. Basketball championships take place on February 3 at 2:45 p.m. for the girls and at 4:15 p.m. for the boys, also at Allderdice High School. Stop by and show your Cobra pride!

The spring sports season will begin in March. If your child is interested in participating in soccer or wrestling, this is the time to sign up! Physical packets are due to Ms. Malvin no later than Friday, February 5, 2016. Your children can pick up packets from Ms. Malvin or in the front of the school where all other forms are located.

Coach Schmiedlin will be working with the wrestlers again this year. Coach Lydon will again head up the boys' soccer team, and Coaches Montgomery and Greco will be heading up the girls' team!

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Ms. Malvin at 412-529-8398 or at [kmalvin1@pghboe.net](mailto:kmalvin1@pghboe.net).

## STUDENT PERSPECTIVES

### GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM

(written by McKenzie Thompson, grade 8)

As we all know Colfax's girls basketball team is undefeated! As Sophia says we are "LIVIN' THE UNDEFEATED LIFE." To date we have only lost ONE game in two years! I contribute our success, first, to the hard work that each player puts in every practice and every game. We are like a family, we all support and respect each other. Secondly, our coach Mr. Cohen is definitely a huge part of our success. He believes in us and teaches us what we need to perform at such a high level each game. Lastly, we owe some of our success to our lucky charm Braylon Green (my little brother), who is in 1st grade here at Colfax. Look out for him in the next few years, as he will be joining the Cobra basketball family. Continue to follow us--we hope to make our Colfax family proud, as we try to bring home the middle school girls championship for the second year in the row!

**SWIMMING**

(written by Ben Godley Fisher,  
grade 7)

Swimming is a new, exciting, and enjoyable experience for me. I had never swam competitively before, and this team was a great place to start! All the kids are super enthusiastic about it, and everyone helps everyone. I am not the best swimmer, and I was scared at first that people would make fun of me. That was definitely not the case. People encouraged me and helped me with anything I needed, and no one made fun of me. Swimming was one of the best experiences I've ever had! We are currently undefeated with one tie. Our team is definitely looking forward to the championship on January 27!

**BOYS' BASKETBALL TEAM**

(written by Sean Graves, grade 8)

The Colfax Christmas tournament was a great success! There were five teams including us that participated in it. The other schools included Sterrett, Obama, Hillel Academy, and Imani Christian Academy. We finished first, Sterrett placed second, and Obama third. Each team had some adversity that they had to overcome. We as a team had to overcome having only 4 of our players for the first 2 days, but we were lucky to have a very skilled 6th grader named Trey play with us from one of Coach Boyce's AAU teams. We struggled from fatigue, because each player had to play all of both 18 minute halves. However, we were able to persevere. During the final day of the tournament our first game was against Hillel Academy, while Sterrett played Obama to determine who would make it to the Championship game. After Sterrett defeated Obama, we knew we had an uphill battle coming our way because our regular season game against Sterrett went into overtime. Sterrett came ready to play, as we suspected, and both of our teams fought hard to win this game. Unfortunately, during the final 2 minutes of the championship game, I got into foul trouble and ended up fouling out. I had to sit on the sidelines and watch as my team fought hard until the buzzer for the win. As an 8th grader who has played 5 years of Colfax basketball, this team has the strongest bond and trust in each other that I have seen. We intend to capitalize on it and win the City League Championship!





## IN MEMORY OF JANE MCKEE, COLFAX LIBRARIAN

(written by Nurse Short)

**Jane McKee**, beloved Colfax librarian, died on the winter solstice. She embodied the magic of books and the rugged spirit of a pirate. She was a fierce defender of public education and school libraries. Ms. McKee loved being a mother, a teacher, and an explorer of Planet Earth.

On Thanksgiving 2015, Ms. McKee wrote “*I am thankful for: My beautiful, insightful, inspiring daughter; a job I love and all the people who support school libraries; my giant mess of a house, which*

*despite its crumbling state still feels like home; my friends near and far, though they may not know it, they influence me daily, my family—though we disagree I know we still love each other; being able to travel and see the world in all of its wonderful and terrible states, and to learn what it means to be human.*”

In honor of Jane McKee, let’s all read books, travel the world, and learn what it means to be human.

## PTO FACULTY & STAFF APPRECIATION LUNCH

(written by Heather Sendera, parent)

The annual PTO Staff Luncheon was held on December 22, 2015. A perfect example of the wonderful Colfax community at work. Thanks to the incredibly generous support of Colfax families, the tables were brimming with a wide variety of scrumptious dishes and tasty treats, along with donated coffee, lemonade and tea. There was so much food provided that our staff was able to enjoy delicious lunches and treats for 2 days! A terrific set of volunteers pitched in throughout the day to help set up, keep the food service running smoothly, and lend a hand with clean up. All of this work was most definitely appreciated by the teachers and staff members, who made a point of expressing their thanks for the lunch and for the families of Colfax, who are part of why they feel the school is so special.



# COLFAX COMMUNITY

## ICE SKATING NIGHT AT SCHENLEY

Thanks to all who were able to join us for the Annual Colfax Ice Skating Event! The Colfax community packed the Schenley Ice Rink on Monday, January 11, 2016, and had a wonderful time skating the night away. It was fun for old and young, experts and novices. We had an estimated 500 people in attendance! What a great turnout for an outstanding event!!



---

# COLFAX COMMUNITY



## COLFAX MENTORING PROGRAM

(written by Taleah Barren, grade 6)

Every Thursday afternoon, several Colfax sixth and seventh graders gather in room 213. These students are part of the district sponsored “Be a 6th Grade Mentor” program. The program started at Colfax last year. Mr. Charles Howell, from the Mt. Ararat Community Activity Center, is the Mentoring Director at Colfax and several other schools in the district.

The mentors are volunteers that choose to set aside their own time to help middle school students throughout Pittsburgh Public Schools. Mentors help students set and achieve their goals. Every week mentors and mentees participate in various planned activities, play games, and

listen to guest speakers. Each week students come to learn lessons about issues like time management, choosing a career, planning for college, going on interviews, etc. At the last December meeting, students discussed colleges and all the mentees received hoodies from various universities.

The program helps students become better people. The best part of the program is that the mentors really listen to the mentees. The volunteers are college students, professionals, and retirees, but they share a common goal- helping students achieve their dreams.

**Ranada Jones, Amaya Johnson Evans, Kaya Regus, Taleah Barren, Jurnee Finney, and Brandon Pezzelle with their mentors.**

**DISCOVERING THE  
WORLD'S INGREDIENTS**  
(written by Farmer Paul)

Colfax's school garden has been switched into winter sleep mode. Bulbs of tulips and garlic have been buried underground, resting dormant until the spring thaw signals it's time to grow. Plants that have reached the end of their life cycle have been removed and taken to a compost bin, where they break down into soil for the next seasons' crops. Even the stalwart kale and collards, which hung around so late into our growing season, have begun to give into the winter freeze. So as the garden shuts down for the winter and the kindergarten harvest lessons are completed, my garden lessons move inside the building and into the second grade classrooms, where our focus becomes cooking and world culture.

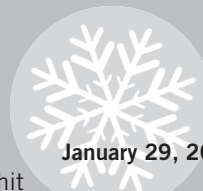
Each week the class studies the world map to learn about where humans live on Earth and how they grow and prepare their food. As they gain a world perspective, I also lead them through a cooking lesson that incorporates ingredients found in the particular area of the world they are studying. As the students gain knowledge about world cultures and food production, they also get to experience their learning with all five senses as they cook and taste a healthy dish. The response to the cooking program has been overall enthusiastic: 95% of the students in second grade tasted each of the prepared dishes, and 90% of those students were tasting a new ingredient for the first time! My goal is that these positive experiences with cooking and tasting new nutritious foods will help guide our students into making healthier eating choices when they are faced with the decision on their own, of what to eat.



**LET IT SNOW!**

(written by Abbie Campsie, PTO President)

The cold temperatures are finally here and snow is starting to fall, which means the Colfax Ski Club members are ready to hit the slopes! This winter, there are three planned Friday evening trips to Seven Springs Ski Resort. Students and chaperones depart from Colfax at 2 p.m. Scheduled trips are on:



January 29, 2016 • February 12, 2016 • February 26, 2016

We have 65 skiers and two buses, so there is room for more.

STAY TUNED FOR SOME AWESOME PICTURES!



# BUILDING EDUCATION

## CMU SCIENCE SQUAD

(written by Mr. Wolfe)

This is a very exciting time for Colfax's CMU Science Squad. We are fielding our largest class of participants, 29 students in 7th and 8th grade. The students are working on projects for the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science Regional competition the first weekend in February. The students are partnered with an undergrad or grad student at CMU to complete a science investigation.

This year's investigations involve: the Specific Heat of Metals, the Specific Heat of Liquids, the Plasma Ball  $\bar{n}$  Magnetism and Electricity, Archimedes Principle on the Density of Liquids, Measuring the Acceleration of Gravity with a Pendulum, Measuring the Spin of the Earth (Foucault's Pendulum), Measuring the Density of Objects using Archimedes Principle, Comparing Material for Same-sized Objects using Archimedes Principle, Loop de Loop (gravity and velocity), Effect of Heat on Magnets, Elastic Collisions, Inelastic Collisions, Citrus Fruit Battery, Double-slit interferometer (light experiment), the Doppler Effect, "Shoot the Monkey" with Angles, "Shoot the Monkey" without Angles (no monkeys are harmed, nor actually used), Gravity and Air Resistance, Horizontal Velocity and Gravity, Surface Tension of Water, Harmonic Spring Period, Standing Waves, Magnets and Metals, Absorption of Light, and Calculating the Speed of Light using a Microwave Oven.

The students attend CMU once a week for 1.5 hours, and have been doing so since early September. At this point, all the data is collected and the students are working on their power point presentation. For the rest of January, we will begin practicing their presentations. If the student earns a 1st place (the competition is based on accrued points), they will then travel to Penn State for 3 days to partake in the state level competition.

Students are learning a lot of science, and working hard. Their commitment to this process should make us all very proud of them. This is our 11th offering this program at Colfax, and we have had over 254 students participating over the years. The success of this program is rooted in Dr. Kisslinger's passion for this program, the dedication of our students, the direct support of their parents, and the support of so many at Colfax from teachers, coaches, and the administrators.

## CHESS CLUB: MEET BEN JOHNSON

(written by Rachel Rosenfeld, parent)



Colfax has a new instructor for our lunch-time chess program. Ben Johnson, who recently moved with his family from New York, finished teaching his first set of classes in November. The students responded very well to him and his teaching style, and Ben was pleased with the quality of the school and the chess program.

Ben loves the game of chess. He was the captain and highest scoring player for 1991 National Junior High School Champion, JR Masterman School in Philadelphia. He's also a former Pennsylvania State Scholastic Chess

Champion. In 1995 he earned the title of USCF National Chess Master.

Ben was trained as an instructor by Chess in the Schools, the largest chess education non-profit in the world. He was the chess coach at National Elementary School Chess Champion CES 70 in the Bronx and he has taught in more than ten schools.

His predecessor Jerry Meyers is advising Ben and helping to oversee the program. On November 14, 2015, Colfax came in first place for all of Pittsburgh at the Future Champions Chess Challenge. Ben looks forward to more successes in the future.

This lunch time chess class is completely free to students, thanks in part to a program called Chess for Pittsburgh Youth ([www.youthchess.net](http://www.youthchess.net)), which is funded by the Buhl Foundation and The Grable Foundation. Chess club is also generously supported by contributions from Colfax School and Colfax PTO.

Ben is starting his next set of chess classes at Colfax on January 20, 2016.



## TAKE NOTE

(written by Ms. Moule)

Please join us for our Annual Winter Concert, on Wednesday, February 3, 2016, at 6 p.m. Students in Grades 4-6 Chorus and Instrumental Music will perform in the Colfax gym.

On Thursday, February 4, a select ensemble will participate in a drumming performance at Carnegie Music Hall!

## CX SHOWCASE

(written by Tashia Terry, parent)

The Colfax Talent Show is now named the CX Showcase. Any student in grades 3-8 who has experience with playing an instrument, singing, dancing, gymnastics, or can perform a monologue is invited to audition on the corresponding dates below. If you are a sibling or 2nd grader with at least one year of experience in your talent, you are also permitted audition. This Showcase is to highlight to our family, friends and community what Colfax has to offer!

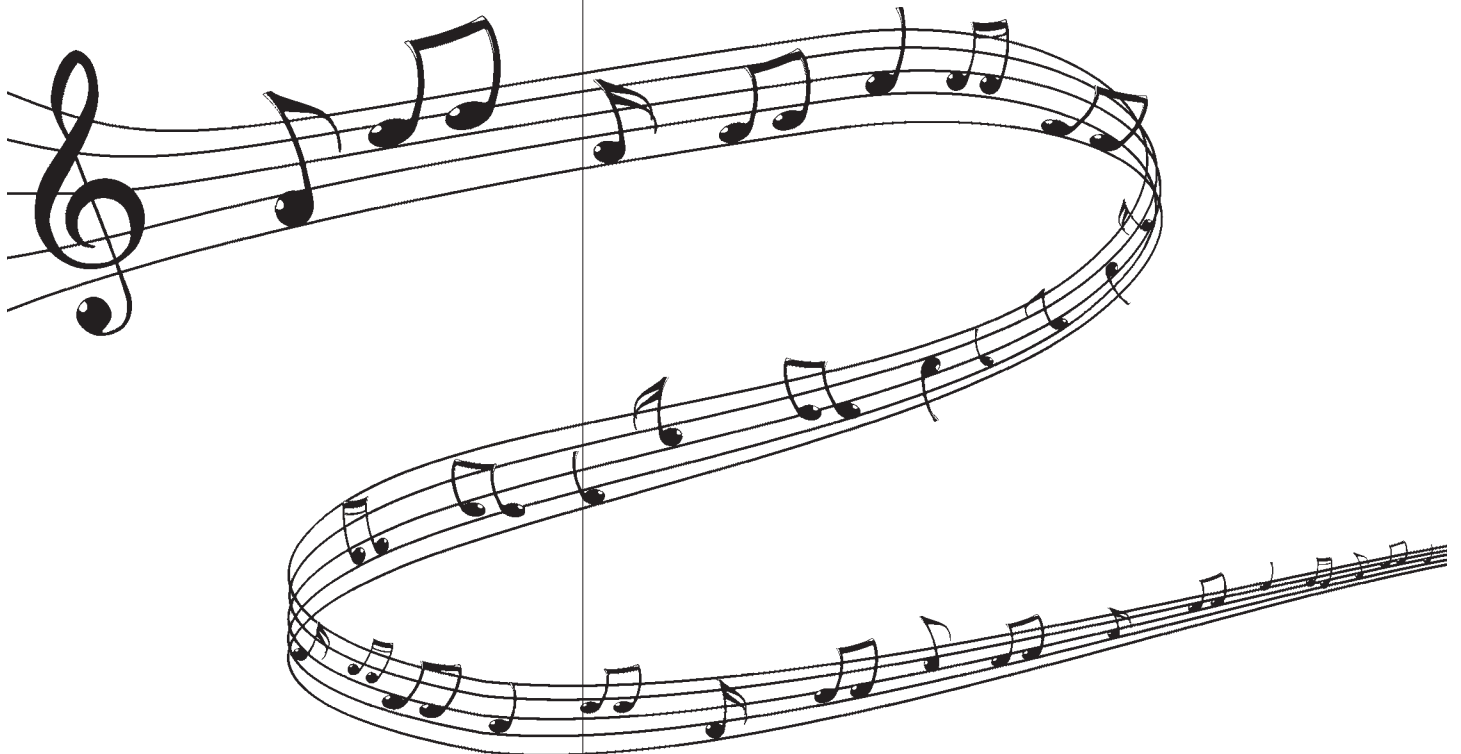
Permission slips will be sent home in early January. Please note if you need any musical accompaniment or if you are bringing someone from outside our school to accompany you.

Audition dates:

Wednesday, February 24 from 3 to 5 p.m.

Thursday, February 25 from 6 to 8 p.m.

And don't forget to mark your calendar! The CX Showcase will be held on Friday, March 11.



---

# PTO UPDATES

## TREASURER REPORT

(written by Ray Obenza, Treasurer, and Marjorie Carlson, Assistant Treasurer)

With the Ask Drive reaching its final days, our attention focuses on Party 4 Play. These two events comprise our largest fundraising efforts, accounting for 75% of our budget. Your generous donations equate to about a \$100.00 per student stipend from the PTO.

Your contributions help support the Enrichment Activities and Field Trips for the year:

<b>ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES:</b>	<b>GRADES</b>	<b>FIELD TRIPS:</b>	<b>GRADES</b>
<b>CHESS CLUB</b>	<b>K-8 (ALL STUDENTS)</b>	<b>CARNEGIE SCIENCE CENTER</b>	<b>K-8</b>
<b>GARDEN CLUB</b>	<b>K-5</b>	<b>PITTSBURGH DUCK TOURS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CHORUS</b>	<b>4-5</b>	<b>LAUREL CAVERNS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SHAKESPEARE</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>PITTSBURGH TROLLEY TOUR</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>BALLROOM DANCING</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>PITT/CMU ARCHITECTURE</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>BBB FARMS</b>	<b>K</b>
<b>CMU SCIENCE SQUAD</b>	<b>7-8</b>	<b>HEINZ HISTORY CENTER</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>STEM</b>	<b>6-8 (GIRLS)</b>	<b>HEINZ HALL</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>HIP HOP CLUB</b>	<b>6-8</b>	<b>PITTSBURGH PLAYHOUSE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>COBRA STORE</b>	<b>3-8</b>	<b>FRICK ENVIRONMENTAL</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>MUSICAL</b>	<b>6-8</b>	<b>PIRATE GAME (STATISTICS)</b>	<b>6-8</b>
<b>SPELLING BEE</b>	<b>3-8</b>	<b>WOMEN'S BASKETBALL (PITT)</b>	<b>6-8</b>
<b>MATH KANGAROO</b>	<b>6-8</b>	<b>MEADOWCROFT-ROCK OVERHANG</b>	<b>6</b>
		<b>SKI CLUB</b>	<b>4,5,6,7 &amp; 8</b>

***THANK YOU FOR GIVING THIS YEAR!***

## ASK DRIVE

Colfax PTO gratefully acknowledges the following donors for contributing to the 2015-2016 Colfax PTO Ask Drive. As January 12, 2016, our total is \$18,256.

---

Aldous Family	Friedlander Family	Cristina Ruggiero and Jon Boyle
Anonymous (15)	Jennifer and Greg Ganger	Salma Salsabila
Anonymous in memory of	Sara Goodkind and Jeff Shook	Will, Cathy, Cole, and Lillian Schaefer
Jane McKee / Colfax Library	Darcy and Mike Gordon	Chad and Johana Schafer
Arunachalam Family	Linda and Jerry Griffin	Marc and Betsy Schwartz
Bain/Elliott Family in honor of	Barbara Griffin	Maxwell Seeley
Jane McKee	Gurvich Family	Segall Family
Jitka Benedikova	Abbie Campsie and Ken Haber	Ken and Sara Segel
Milo Blackhurst	William Harris	Sendera Family
Azi and Ethan Block	Heffley Family	Olena and Maxim Sherbinin
Roman Burton	Jen and Seth Holst	Russ and Amy Shorkey
Marcelo Carattino	Abigail Horn and William Carter	Shorkey Grandparents in honor of
Marjorie and Justin Carlson	Sarah Hultgren-Lund and Joshua Lund	Chloe, Ella, and Jacob
Cauda Family	Jacobs Family	Sarah Sirlin and Brett Yasko
Guangming Chen	Rachel Rosenfeld and Benjamin Rosenthal	Smith Family
Matt Chinman and Sarah Galusha	Kawaratani-Kim Family	Minqing Song
Coffey Family	Neetha Khan	Becca Stallings
Copich/Berman Family	King Family	Mark and Tiffany Stuckey
Connie and Morris Cranor in honor of	Kuchera Family	Naoko Tajima
granddaughter, Nina Cranor	Annie and Matt Kurzweg	Yoshikazu Takeyama
Lorrie and Chuck Cranor	Lauwers Family	James Tew and Sun Woo Park
Aimee Curtright	Pamela and Hochul Lee	Trbovic Family
Christina Dixon and Geoff Webster	Elli and Jo-Jo Monaco	Naoki Wada
Yohei and Kazu Doi	Olmsted-Achilles Family	Weisberg Family
Dubowitz/Aronson Family	Stefani Pashman and Jeremy Feinstein	Steven and Melanie Weisbord
Edwards Family	Kees Polderman	Julie Wilson and Marcio Silva
Farkas Family	Primack Family	Anna Wukich and Dennis O'Boyle
Fossi Family	Kristine Pugliese	Lori Wynn
Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Frank	Ramey/Zimmerman family	Henry Xu
Susan and Joe Freudenberg	Michele Levine and Jim Rosenberg	

---



### ***Hello Colfax Families, Faculty and Staff,***

Jenny has an 8th grader and I (Zauyah "Z") have a 4<sup>th</sup>, a 5<sup>th</sup> and an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at Colfax. We are very thankful for Colfax, as the teachers and staff give their very best every day to care and educate our kids. We know many if not all of you share the same sentiment. Unfortunately, we are also very aware that on-going state budget cuts tend to make their work challenging and it definitely limits enrichment activities for Colfax students. Hence, Jenny and I are humbled and honored to be co-chairing the committee that is executing the 2016 Party4Play, Colfax Parent Teacher Organization's (PTO) largest fundraising program.

Party for Play is scheduled for Saturday, February 20th, 2016, 7:00 p.m. at The Edgewood Club, One Pennwood Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15218. *This is Colfax's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Party4Play and "partying the Mardi Gras way" will be the theme for this year's celebration.*

### **What do funds raised by Colfax Party4Play support?**

Funds raised are used to enrich the lives of Colfax students with programs such as the Edible Schoolyard, field trips, a musical, classroom supplies, technology, playground maintenance and so much more.

### **What is Party4 Play? You can look forward to...**

A night of fun and fundraising! P4P is Colfax's Adults-Only Fundraising Party of the Year. Come all dressed up to enjoy delicious appetizers and a cash bar. Put on your dancin' shoes and dance the night away if that's what you feel like doing, or just enjoy one another's company and make new friends throughout the night. Excellent fundraising activities you can participate in are:

**SILENT AUCTION \* LIVE AUCTION \* COBRA RAFFLE BASKET \* 52 CARD RAFFLE \* KIDS' ART**

Auction and raffle items consist of goods, activities, and professional services donated by Pittsburgh organizations and individuals *such as:*

- \* Professional services such as GoTo Guys Handyman \* Mani-pedi from a premier salon \*
  - \* Tickets! Tickets! Tickets! You name it . . .Children Museum, Pittsburgh CLO, Pittsburgh Symphony, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, and more!
  - \* Did you say GIFT CERTIFICATES?! Eat n Park, Trader Joe's, Hepatica Florist, Pittsburgh Glass Ctr., ORR's, and many more of your favorites.
  - \* East End Vet: Dog Package (Annual Exam, Analysis, 6 month preventive vaccines, etc.)
  - \* STEELERS! STEELERS! STEELERS items and tickets
  - \* Signed Baseball & box seats \* Anything Ice Penguins
  - \* Goodies Cake Making Party at Bella Christies
  - \* Gym Membership and Personal Training at Body Tech \* Personal training session
- THIS IS JUST A SAMPLE! There will be many more items up for grabs at the party.***

### **NOW – COLFAX NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT. HERE'S HOW.**

Donate or solicit items or services for the auction!

Use the attached letter and turn in your donations **by Friday, Feb 12, 2016.**



Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 PTO  
 2332 Beechwood Boulevard  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15217  
 412-422-3525  
 www.ColfaxPTO.org  
 Tax ID # 20-3274732

Dear Friend of Pittsburgh Colfax,

Spring 2016

Nestled in the heart of Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 serves more than 750 children from East End neighborhoods. Colfax has a history of strong principals, wonderful teachers, an active Parent Teacher Org. (PTO), and supporting our students and our neighborhoods. Colfax is one of the gems of the Pittsburgh Public School system. In 2011, Colfax celebrated 100 years of serving Pittsburgh’s children!

One of the keys to our success is **your support**. The major annual fundraiser of the PTO is the *Party for Play* (P4P). The **10<sup>th</sup> Annual P4P – partying the Mardi Gras way**, will be held on Saturday, February 20, 2016, at the Edgewood Club, One Pennwood Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15218. P4P is an evening social event for our parents and guardians, staff members, teachers and community friends. Throughout the evening we hold raffles and auctions that raise important funds for the PTO in order to support our school. **Will you please consider donating an item or service to be included in our auctions and/or raffles?** All donors will be acknowledged in the program book and on special event signage. Our PTO has non-profit status, making your donations tax-deductible. Please complete the commitment form below to help us this year.

Your donation will allow us to fund programs that enrich student life at Colfax and provide positive experiences outside of the curriculum. Ongoing state budget cuts make this source of funding more important than ever. Monies raised by the PTO from the P4P support: after-school tutoring, drama club, field trips, classroom supplies, an Edible Schoolyard, playground maintenance, sports teams, middle school activities, technology acquisition, and much, much more.

For additional information about Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 or the PTO, please feel free to contact our event Co-Chairs directly, Zauyah “Z” Waite ([zwaite@chatham.edu](mailto:zwaite@chatham.edu)) or Jennifer Ganger ([jennifer.ganger@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.ganger@gmail.com))

Thank you for your commitment to our community. We can’t do it without you! Think Party4Play



Sincerely,

Jennifer Ganger and Z. Waite

**Colfax PARTY FOR PLAY February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – RECEIPT FOR DONOR (for your records)**

Donation of \_\_\_\_\_ Valued at \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATION!**

**Colfax PARTY FOR PLAY February 20, 2016 – DONATION INFO (return with donation for committee use)**

Donation of \_\_\_\_\_ Valued at \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Item will be ready by \_\_\_\_\_ Item will be mailed \_\_\_\_\_ delivered \_\_\_\_\_ needs to be picked up \_\_\_\_\_

**Items may be mailed to Zauyah “Z” Waite at 126 Woodland Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15232.  
 To arrange for pick up contact Z at 419-309-7207 / [zwaite@chatham.edu](mailto:zwaite@chatham.edu).**

Merchant/Donor Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (As you would like it to appear in the event program)

---

# GET INVOLVED

## COLFAX PTO BYLAW REVIEW

At the general PTO meeting on February 10, 2016, the PTO membership will vote on the passage of proposed amendments to the Colfax PTO Bylaws. These amendments update the bylaws. Please join us on February 10 at 6:30 p.m. to participate in the vote. Questions? Contact Anne Kurzweg at [salzkurz@gmail.com](mailto:salzkurz@gmail.com), or Julie Wilson at [juliemwilson@gmail.com](mailto:juliemwilson@gmail.com).

## STAY INFORMED ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING AT COLFAX!

(written by Julie Wilson, VP Communications)

Are you on Facebook? Come “like” us on our Facebook Page to receive up-to-the-minute information, connect with other parents, and communicate with your PTO. You can find us at [www.facebook.com/pghcolfax](http://www.facebook.com/pghcolfax).

We are only as successful as our audience. Please encourage others to sign up for the PTO's weekly emails. It's easier than ever! Just go to the Colfax PTO website, at [www.colfaxpto.org](http://www.colfaxpto.org) and click on the big blue “Sign Up” button at the top of screen.

## VOLUNTEER UPDATE

Looking to learn more about Colfax? Want to meet some fun people? Just want to get out of the house? Volunteer!

- Classroom volunteers
- After-school tutors
- Morning bus supervisors
- Breakfast/Recess/Lunch supervisors
- School tours
- Office assistance
- Babysitting cooperative
- Fundraising
- Special Events (Fiesta, Party for Play, etc.)

Contact VP Volunteer Coordinator Tiffany Stuckey at [tcstuckey18@me.com](mailto:tcstuckey18@me.com) for more information. Note that some opportunities require that volunteers have state criminal and child abuse clearances. If your clearance is more than three years old, it must be renewed to be valid. See the PTO website for more information on obtaining a new or renewed clearance.

**REMINDER: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**1. *What is the procedure if my child wants to ride a different bus home with a friend on another bus?***

District wide, all students must ride the bus assigned to them via address verified upon registration and/or change of address processes. Parents must make alternative plans for their child to get to a friend's house after school.

**1. *Are we allowed to bring in cake for our child's birthday?***

No cakes or cupcakes please! We ask that if you want to bring in a snack for your child's birthday that you talk to the teacher beforehand. Once you make contact with the teacher, a store purchased snack with the ingredients on the package is acceptable.

**1. *How long is recess and what happens when the weather prevents kids from going outside?***

Students eat in the cafeteria for 22 minutes and have recess for 22 minutes. When the weather limits outside recess, the gymnasium is utilized.

**1. *What's the best way to reach you?***

You can reach Dr. Woods by dialing 412-529-3525 and leaving a message with the secretary. She can also be reached at [tsanderswoods1@pghboe.net](mailto:tsanderswoods1@pghboe.net). Please give at least 24 hours for a response. If it is an emergency please make that known to the secretary.

Additionally, all teachers at Colfax have been provided with voicemail numbers that are available in the September edition of the Colfax Communicator and may also be reached via email. Again, please allow a 24 hour response for non-emergencies.

**1. *What happens during enrichment period?***

Enrichment time is from 8:18-8:48 each morning. During this time, students are grouped according to their reading needs. Students in grades K-5 are given Dibels assessments to see what reading skill they may need support with. Students in grades 6-8 are given a computer based SRI test which gives teachers. Two Fridays a month students participate in Cobra Clubs during Enrichment period.

**1. *What is your plan to promote diversity at Colfax?***

Colfax is a diverse school, home to over 90 international students! We plan to promote and celebrate countries represented by our newly created international student board (located outside of the office), purposefully incorporating and infusing some curriculum/literature/regarding the traditions and cultures of our students, monthly international feature in our Colfax Communicator, and by collaborating with parents to share learning experiences within classrooms and the school.

**1. *What time is my child considered to be late to school?***

Students eating breakfast are permitted in the cafeteria 7:45. The building opens for all other students, including walkers at 8:10. Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. are considered tardy.

# Colfax Communicator

**Your Ad could be HERE!**

Looking for an affordable way to advertise your business or program?

Reach hundreds of Colfax families and support the Colfax PTO by placing an ad in our newsletter!

Size of Ad	Width x Height	Ready to Print Ads: Price Per Issue <small>(25% discount 4+ issues)</small>
Business Card	3.65" x 2.275"	\$27
Quarter Page	3.65" x 4.84"	\$48
Half Page	7.5" x 4.84"	\$78
Whole Page	7.5" x 9.875"	\$153

Please email a pdf of your ad to [Leslie.Grodin@verizon.net](mailto:Leslie.Grodin@verizon.net) and [sivanearest@hotmail.com](mailto:sivanearest@hotmail.com)

## Advertising Guidelines

- Finalized copy should be emailed or attached in a Word document (all text should be edited, spell-checked, and final)
- Logo or photography files should be should be in .eps, .tiff or jpeg formats, 300 dpi at the usable dimension and sent via email (faxes and images pulled off of web sites are not acceptable as they will not print clearly). Please do not email files larger than 5 megabytes.
- *Communicator* will email the advertiser a pdf proof for final proof-reading purposes.
- All ads created by *Communicator* remain the property of *Communicator* and cannot be used by other organizations.

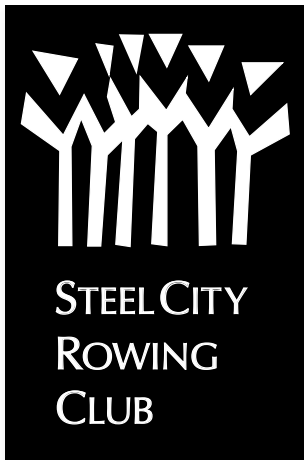


Contact our advertising sales representative for deadlines and more information:

Leslie Grodin

[Leslie.Grodin@verizon.net](mailto:Leslie.Grodin@verizon.net)





**WildLife River  
Camps  
Ages 8-11**

Camps start June 13  
Monday - Friday  
9:30 to 3:30  
extended day  
8:00 -9:30am &  
3:30 - 5:00pm  
Register online:  
[steelcityrowing.org](http://steelcityrowing.org)  
101 Arch Street  
Verona, PA 15147  
412-828-5565



**Learn to Row  
Camps  
Ages 12-18**



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS  
for SATURDAY  
FEBRUARY 20TH**

**DON'T MISS IT!**

***What more  
do you want  
from your house?***

Improve comfort and efficiency. Create more living space.

**AJ Stones**  
Master Green Remodeler

Older houses  
our specialty

Consulting and  
Remodeling

[ajstones.com](http://ajstones.com)  
**412-241-6042**

# LOOKING TO BUY OR SELL REAL ESTATE?

Be sure to get the **COLFAX FRIENDS AND FAMILY** rate



*KNOWING THE MARKET, THE NEIGHBORHOOD...AND YOU*

For over 15 years, Leesa has been trusted by hundreds to buy and sell their Pittsburgh homes. Consistently one of the top 5% of Realtors in the country, Leesa has been designated as a Trulia Top Agent and the Best of the Best in her former brokerage. Learn more about Leesa (proud Mom of Dagny) at [www.pittsburghcityhomes.com](http://www.pittsburghcityhomes.com). And call to ask about the Colfax Friends and Family incentives offered exclusively by Leesa.



**kw**

KELLERWILLIAMS

**LEESA BELT-HAGLUND**

C: 412-952-2458

O: 412-345-7000

[listwithleesa@gmail.com](mailto:listwithleesa@gmail.com)

5425 Baum Boulevard, Pittsburgh 15232

**YOUR**

**AD**

**HERE**





**There's a special experience for every child at the JCC**

## **JCC Clubhouse After-School Program for Kindergarten-Grade 6**

- Homework assistance every day
- Top-quality facilities, including gyms and heated indoor pools
- Trained, caring, creative staff
- Gym games, art projects, cooking, free swim, science, nature and drama
- Staff-supervised walks to JCC after-school classes
- Age-appropriate homerooms
- Healthy snacks
- Visits to the playground and library

**JCC  
PGH**

**For information: Lewis Sohinki, 412-697-3537, or [lsohinki@jccpgh.org](mailto:lsohinki@jccpgh.org)**

Colfax PTO Site: [www.colfaxpto.org](http://www.colfaxpto.org)

Join us on Facebook and Twitter: ColfaxPghPTO

[www.facebook.com/pghcolfax](http://www.facebook.com/pghcolfax)

**The Executive Board:**

**2015-2016 Colfax PTO Executive Board**

President, Abbie Campsie: [president@colfaxpto.org](mailto:president@colfaxpto.org)

VP Fundraising, Heather Sendera: [events@colfaxpto.org](mailto:events@colfaxpto.org)

VP Communications, Julie Wilson: [communications@colfaxpto.org](mailto:communications@colfaxpto.org)

VP Volunteer Coordinator, Tiffany Stuckey: [volunteers@colfaxpto.org](mailto:volunteers@colfaxpto.org)

VP Fundraising, Jenny Ganger: [fundraising@colfaxpto.org](mailto:fundraising@colfaxpto.org)

Treasurer, Ray Obenza: [treasurer@colfaxpto.org](mailto:treasurer@colfaxpto.org)

Assistant Treasurer, Marjorie Carlson: [treasurer@colfaxpto.org](mailto:treasurer@colfaxpto.org)

Secretary, Yolanda Frank: [secretary@colfaxpto.org](mailto:secretary@colfaxpto.org)

Principal, Dr. Sanders-Woods: [tsanderswoods1@pghboe.net](mailto:tsanderswoods1@pghboe.net)



**Newsletter Staff**

Editor: Julie Wilson

Designer: Sivan Earnest

Editorial Board: PTO Executive Board