



# THE COLFAX COMMUNICATOR

*The official newsletter of Colfax K-8 PTO*

## A MESSAGE FROM DR. WOODS

Greetings Colfax friends and families,

What a great time of year! It's so exciting to see staff and students show their school spirit during the holiday season by participating in our FUN-cember days. Holiday expectations can cause anxiety in the entire family. As adults, we scurry around to prepare for the holiday season. Children often feel the stress and exhaustion brought on from the nature and pace of December. Please continue to support your children by keeping a regular bedtime schedule, limiting/monitoring their time on devices, and reviewing school progress. I encourage you to take moments to pause and disconnect from the busyness of the holidays. Give others especially your children the gift of time. Create and gift your children with I.O.U certificates for a special event or activity. When students are asked about the most memorable event in their lives, it is often not something that money can buy; it is usually a special time or experience they shared with a loved one.

Despite negative reports regarding assessments and academic progress, I have been truly encouraged by the teaching and learning that I have observed during the first half of this school year. I don't like to use the term "learning loss." Students did learn. They learned critically thinking skills, how to reset the rhythms and structures of their days. They learned different patterns of communication. They took on different roles in their homes and how to complete new tasks, engaged in new games and developed or sustain new and different activities. Some students explored the outdoor world on walks and by investigated the outdoors. Some spend more times in their imaginations because it's the only place to they had to go. None of this should ever be considered learning loss. We should celebrate that learning and the "traditional" learning that we are observing during our first half of this school year!

As winter break nears, please remember that winter break begins on December 24. School resumes on January 3rd. Hopefully, you will make lasting memories with your families over the break.

On behalf of our Colfax staff...we wish you a healthy, happy, peaceful, and prosperous year!

Best,  
Dr. Woods

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# PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Dear Colfax K-8 Community,

What are you grateful for this holiday season? One thing I am grateful for is the effort that the PTO Board and Colfax families put into helping the school.

The PTO has prioritized student safety this term, working closely with Dr. Woods, her team, and the teachers. To this end, we've set-up outdoor lunches for the students (weather permitting). A huge thank you to Joe Moore and Sarah Grubb for coordinating volunteers to make this happen. I also appreciate the generosity of our Colfax families who donated supplies such as folding chairs and tables in this effort.

We've also worked hard to ensure that there is an air purification unit and replacement filters in each classroom. A sincere thank-you to Joe Moore and each of the homeroom representatives who spent a lot of time gathering donations and coordinating the effort. This was no small accomplishment!

We also held a successful Food Truck Fiesta in September, celebrating our community with a safe outdoor event attended by over 200 people! It was great to see many of you in-person and I look forward to scheduling events for the Spring that can bring all of us together safely.

I also want to thank Robin Taylor for keeping me on task, putting together the Colfax directory, and working on our weekly communications.

Finally, I hope to see many of you at school and around the neighborhood wearing your new Colfax gear from the Spiritwear Drive! Many thanks to Lisa Zur for making this happen.

We've accomplished a lot so far this year and I look forward to making even more progress in 2022!

Stay safe,  
 Dave Lebel  
 PTO President



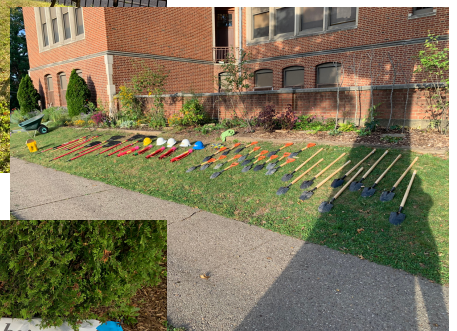
# TREE PLANTING

This fall, middle school students, with the help of Ms. Davis, Nurse Short, One Tree One Child and the Allderdice Garden Club planted 5 new trees at Colfax. The PTO sponsored tree gator watering bags to ensure the longevity of the trees.

# TEACHER GRANTS

This year, the PTO provided grants to teachers at the beginning of the year in the form of e-giftcards. Teachers were able to use the funds to support their classrooms in a multitude of ways. Teachers' feedback was overwhelmingly grateful as they were able to use the PTO grants for items such as:

- Flexible seating, chair bands, hippie sticks, manipulatives and fidgets for brain breaks and students who need more active movement
- Subject specific items such as maps, geometric tools, music supplies, fitness logs, reading intervention supplies and rewards
- Classroom supplies such as crayons, markers, pencils, colored pencils, books, book bins, sharpeners, paper, name tags, visual timers and lamination
- Speakers, microphones, wireless computer devices, toner
- Wipes, sanitizer, cleaning products





## FOOD TRUCK FIESTA

This year's inaugural Food Truck Fiesta was a resounding success! It was terrific having the Colfax community join together for the first time in far too long. Thank you to everyone who joined us and made the event so much fun! Special thanks to Kona Ice for not only providing delicious dessert for the event, but for additionally making a contribution to the PTO!

Looking forward to more in-person social events? So are we! But we need your help: reach out to Dave Lebel ([president@colfaxpto.org](mailto:president@colfaxpto.org)) with ideas for Covid safe events or if you're interested in helping out with events we are looking to plan in 2022!

## SPIRITWEAR SALE

Spiritwear 2021 came to a close and raised over \$1,000! Thank you to all families who purchased spiritwear this fall!



Did you miss out on this fall's sale? Fear not! We plan to run another spiritwear sale this spring.

## COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS

The PTO is once again helping sponsor the collaboration between Colfax and the Frick Environmental Center, the Frick Pittsburgh, and Grow Pittsburgh. Through financial support from the PTO, students in grades K-3 participate in hands on lessons in the Colfax "Edible Schoolyard," students in grade 2 experience field trips to the Frick four times throughout the school year (the January visit this year will be at Colfax due to Covid), and students in grades 1 and 4 are "Habitat Explorers" and "Park Stewards" respectively, enjoying visits to the Frick Environmental Center seasonally three times a year. Each of these collaborations affords all students in these grades opportunities to experience these Pittsburgh gems, furthering equitable educational encounters.

## SAFETY REMINDER

Please remember to drive slowly and carefully around Colfax, especially during drop off and pick up hours. Be aware that many students and families are walking to and from school, so take the time to be aware of your surroundings to keep everyone safe, especially as the weather turns colder and roads may become hazardous!



## NEW STUDENT PLAYDATE

Undeterred by severe thunderstorms, the PTO hosted a rescheduled playdate at the Blue Slide Playground to kick off the school year and introduce new students and families to one another! The weather cooperated beautifully and families were able to get to know other incoming kindergarten and new families. We hope to continue to build community as the year progresses!

### STAY INFORMED

PTO WEBSITE, EMAIL & DIRECTORY SIGN-UPS  
<http://www.colfaxpto.org>

PTO FACEBOOK  
[facebook.com/pghcolfax](https://www.facebook.com/pghcolfax)

PPS FACEBOOK  
[facebook.com/PittsburghPublicSchools](https://www.facebook.com/PittsburghPublicSchools)

COLFAX FACEBOOK  
[facebook.com/ColfaxK8](https://www.facebook.com/ColfaxK8)

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

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

PPS CALENDAR  
<http://pghschools.org>

### STAY TUNED

**Watch for information about upcoming events including:**

- Ski Club
- Skate Nights
- Movie Night

\*\*We are looking for a few volunteers to help us coordinate our upcoming social events. If you're interested in helping out with one of these events, please contact Dave Lebel ([president@colfaxpto.org](mailto:president@colfaxpto.org)).