



THE COLFAX COMMUNICATOR

The official newsletter of Colfax K-8 PTO

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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. We've held many great events to bring the Community together, including Fall Fest, Ice Skating Night, and Community meet-ups at local playgrounds on the weekends. We also look forward to the return of the Party4Play on March 18th (mark your calendars!).

I'm also grateful for Barb Warwick, our new City Councilwoman, who made us aware of the Community First Grant. Because of that, we have received \$4000 which we will use for events like Ice Skating Night in the future! One goal of the PTO board is to use grants like this and our fundraising to make these events free for all!

We've accomplished a lot so far this year and I look forward to making even more progress in 2023! I'm also grateful for spending time with family this time of year. I hope you are able to take time to reflect on 2022 and spend time with those you care about over the next several weeks.

Happy Holidays,

Dave Lebel
PTO President



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DR. WOODS'S WINTER MESSAGE

Greetings Colfax friends and families,

I hope this communication finds you mentally and physically well as we enter a season of winter holidays and preparing for winter break. Holiday expectations can cause anxiety in the entire family. Remember to take time for you and your families during the break. Children often feel the stress and exhaustion brought on from the nature and pace of December. You can help to keep their anxiety levels down by keeping a regular bedtime schedule, limiting/monitoring their time on devices, and creating new traditions if the old ones no longer make sense and cause unnecessary stress. Family time is what you make it, and most often children just want the gift of you. Your undivided attention-- making memories that will last a lifetime.

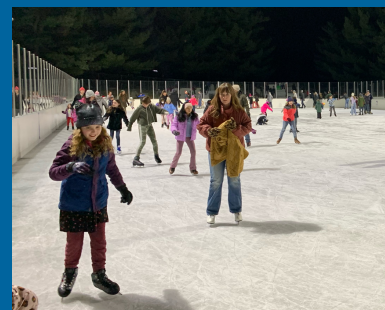
This school year, we have really tried to rethink approaches to prevent conflict and create a healthier school climate by integrating social emotional learning into our restorative practices. Our Monday lessons are designed to help teach crucial life skills, including the ability to understand themselves, develop positive self-images, take responsibility for their actions, and forge relationships with people around them. The focus has been on different patterns of communication, how to respond appropriately to disagreements or differences of opinions, and how to resolve issues that arise with others. Each teacher also created a calming space within their classrooms to support this initiative. Communication is the key. During the holiday break, talk to your child about some of the SEL lessons and/or restorative circles that they may have participated in with others, it is also helpful if you model for them healthy communication and effective ways to resolve conflict.

As a reminder our last school day before winter break is December 23, 2022. School resumes on January 3rd.

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

Best,

Dr. Woods



COLFAX COMMUNITY MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

OFFICER GRATE

Each month, we will spotlight a Colfax community member who goes above and beyond to make Colfax what it is! Nominations may be for teachers, administrators, staff, parents, business owners, or other community members. Please use the QR code to the right or the link that provided in the weekly email to submit your nomination for the next Colfax Community Member Spotlight. This month's nominee is Officer Joshua Grate!



Office Grate has been a wonderful part of our Colfax community! His help in the mornings at the Douglas entrance makes things run more smoothly everyday! He is tireless at greeting all the people who come by, students and parents alike! His cheerful "good morning" and "enjoy your day" greetings are such a wonderful way to begin the day! And that's just the start of each day--the kids adore him for his kindness and attention. He definitely goes the extra mile with the Colfax students. We are certainly going to miss his smiling face everyday, but wish him all the luck in the world in his new endeavor! Good luck and come visit often, Office Grate!



COMMUNITY FIRST GRANT

Thank you to the City of Pittsburgh City Council for the Community First Grant which will help the PTO continue to provide free and low cost events for the Colfax community! We are very appreciative for the City Council's support!

STAY INFORMED

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

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

PTO TWITTER
[@Colfax_8](https://twitter.com/Colfax_8)

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>

WINTER GARDEN UPDATE



The garden has been put to bed for its long winter's nap, our new bulbs planted by First Grade students are awaiting the return of spring. It is hard to imagine that just a short time ago we were outside in the sunshine exploring our garden, tasting fresh fruits and vegetables, making pickles with mouse melons and green tomatoes, making art and mobiles, and gathering seeds to plant again in the spring. First Grade wrapped up their fall classes on a warm day in November planting bulbs and milkweed seeds for our pollinators, and helping pull out some of those hard-working summer plants. Thanks to the family volunteers that worked on watering and weeding over the summer, the garden was in great shape for the return in the fall. A shout out to the amazing first grade teachers who brought their students into the garden classroom ready to learn and explore.

As the winter sets in that doesn't mean that Farmer Ian and Farmer Caroline are hibernating! Often in the winter when plants have gone dormant and our annuals have been transported to the compost, what emerges around us are different shapes that catch our eye. What have you found that caught your eye? Pin your winter find to the "What Did You Find?" bed. Garden visitors will also find the Miniature Woodland Play Space as well as the Mud Kitchen where little hands can build a little house or make a delicious kale and mud muffin! Every other bed is mulched with straw to help maintain soil health and moisture over the winter.

These creative spaces are possible thanks to the tireless support of our Super Volunteer Caroline David, otherwise known as Farmer Caroline!

In January, Farmer Ian will work with Second Grade cooking, experimenting, and digging deeper into garden concepts learned in Kindergarten and First Grade. Our garden may be sleeping, but we are excited to continue our learning and growing indoors until we can get our hands back in the soil!

Remember to keep growing, but not too fast.

Farmer Ian



HAVE GARDENING
QUESTIONS?
INTERESTED IN
VOLUNTEERING?
FEEL FREE TO
REACH OUT TO
FARMER IAN AT


IAN@GROWPITTSBURGH.ORG



TEACHER SUPPLY GRANTS

This year, the PTO once again 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, dry erase markers, folders and lamination
- Speakers, microphones, wireless computer devices, toner, pencil sharpeners, wireless keyboards and mice
- Wipes, sanitizer, cleaning products
- Maps, artifacts, and other visuals for social studies and hands on supplies for geometry
- Rugs for student communal space and calming areas
- Educational games
- Library supplies such as book marks and bean bag chairs for a reading center
- PBIS classroom rewards




ASK DRIVE 2022

BE PROUDLY PITTSBURGH PUBLIC!
 Donations are still being accepted as part of the annual Ask Drive fundraiser.

Many Colfax K-8 programs, benefiting students across all grade levels, are only possible through PTO funds.

Additionally, the PTO hosts many events throughout the year to build community and encourage connections outside of the classroom.

We would love to have the funds next year to make community events free to attend and more accessible for all.



ICE SKATING NIGHT

Thank you to everyone who came out to make this year's ice skating night a success! It was wonderful to see so many families out seeing old friends and making new ones! We can't wait to see you for movie night on January 20!





CX SPORTS



INTRAMURAL SPORTS UPDATE

This winter, basketball and swimming are both being offered for middle level students.

The boys basketball team had the unique experience of attending a University of Pittsburgh basketball game which included time on the basketball court!

Practices for all teams take place after school during school weeks at Colfax.

Thank you, once again, to the Colfax staff for making sports happen this year for our Colfax Cobras!



2022-2023 PTO BOARD

PRESIDENT: David Lebel

TREASURER: Ross Ingram

ASSISTANT TREASURER: Ashley Ingram

COMMUNICATIONS: Robin Taylor

FUNDRAISING: Kelly Anderson & Lisa Guizzetti Zur

SECRETARY: Ross McGowan

SPECIAL EVENTS: Sarah Grubb

VOLUNTEERS: Joe Moore

