



Proudly Pittsburgh Public

# PITTSBURGH COLFAX K-8 HANDBOOK

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

I would like to welcome you to Pittsburgh Colfax K-8. We are committed to providing an opportunity for all children to learn within a safe, caring atmosphere designed to nurture the spirit and stimulate the intellect. With our total commitment to children, we feel we are succeeding in our mission to provide an enriching educational experience preparing our students to achieve academic excellence and strength of character; thereby creating a foundation in which all students succeed in all aspects of life. I look forward to working with you to help ensure the success of your child/children during the school year.

Warm Regards,

Dr. Tamara Sanders-Woods, Colfax K-8 Principal

## MESSAGE FROM THE PTO

As members of the Colfax community—families, teachers, and staff—we will work together to make this school year our best one yet. [colfaxpto.org](http://colfaxpto.org)

## REVISION HISTORY

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>
August 2014	1.0	Initial release	Abbie Campsie, Chuck Cranor, Shannon Ewing, Jenny Ganger, Anne Kurzweg, Jessica Neiss, Jessie Ramey, Marcie Ritter, Sara Segel, Adam Sikorski, Jamie Kinzel-Nath, Cara McKenna, Sarah Sirlin, Sukanya Srinivasan
August 2019	2.0	Updated for 2019-2020 School Year.	Mitch Franzos, Sarah Grubb, Ross Ingram, Jeanine Weiss
August 2020	3.0	Updated for 2020-2021 School Year. Primarily focused on updating tables of “special activities” and “communication and contact information”; also “additional references”	Ross Ingram

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## 2020-21 - EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

\*PTO sponsored—funded and coordinated; \*\*PTO subsidized— (partially) funded; **highlighted** items still need to be determined (events and/or points of contact); **red** fonts indicated events or activities canceled this year due to Covid-19.

Community Events	Point(s) of Contact	Date(s)
Back-to-School Night	Colfax FACE Coordinators; Colfax Principal	Typically Thursday before school starts
Kindergarten Play Date (Virtual)*	Tiffany Stuckey and Ross Ingram	Typically Saturday before school starts
<b>Welcome-Back Teachers Cook-in** (CANCELED)</b>	<b>Colfax Principal and PTO President</b>	<b>Typically first week back for teachers</b>
Fiesta Alternative – Virtual Cookbook*	PTO VP-Special Events, <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	Typically last week of September
Movie Nights Alternative*	PTO VP-Special Events, Co-chair <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	October and April
Teacher/Staff December Luncheon*	PTO VP-Special Events, <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	December
Ice Skating Night Alternative*	PTO VP-Special Events, <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	January or February
Teacher Appreciation Week*	PTO VP-Volunteers, <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	May
Fundraising	Point(s) of Contact	Date(s)
Spiritwear*	PTO VP-Fundraising, Ross Ingram	September
<b>Run Shadyside 5K Run *</b>	Anne Marie Kuchera, <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	October
Ask-Drive*	PTO VP-Fundraising, <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	December
Party-4-Play Alternative*	<b>Chair TBD, Co-chair TBD</b>	February or March
Carnival Alternative*	<b>Chair TBD, Co-chair TBD</b>	June
BoxTops for Education*	Cara Donahue, <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	Ongoing
Corporate Sponsorships*	PTO VP-Fundraising, PTO VP-Communications	Ongoing
<b>Middle-Level Fundraising</b>	<b>Chair TBD, Co-chair TBD</b>	Ongoing
Educational Programs	Point(s) of Contact	Grades
Colfax Garden*	PTO President, Natalia Duarte	K-3
Colfax Playground - Recess	Mary Dorfner Hay, <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	K-5
<b>Frick Environmental Center* (CANCELED)</b>	<b>Melissa Morgano (1<sup>st</sup>) and Amy Mlay (4<sup>th</sup>); PTO President</b>	<b>1, 4</b>
<b>The Frick Pittsburgh* (CANCELED)</b>	<b>Randi Grujich; PTO President</b>	<b>2</b>
Boys Running Club*	Amy Shorkey and Joshua Grate	3-5
Girls on The Run (Spring)	Casey Weiss	3-5
Strong Women Strong Girls	Rachel Short	3-5
Music, Chorus Program	Alyce Edwards	3-8
Sports 4-5** : Basketball, Swimming, Track	April Franklin	4-5
Math Club, "Challenge 24"	Mark Cohen, Stephanie Coles, and Carolina McVeagh	4-8
Ski Club	Tiffany Stuckey and <b>Co-chair TBD</b>	4-8
<b>Dancing Club</b>	Robyn Stefanyak	5
<b>Colfax Musical Alternative* (Spring)</b>	Alyce Edwards	5-8
Music, Instrumental	Elizabeth Hazlette	5-8
<b>"Half-Day" Clubs</b>	All mid-level teachers	6-8
<b>Overnight Trip (Spring)</b>	Jennifer Herr and Ryan Schmiedlin	6-8
Science Competition	Venneasha Davis and Caranina Koloshinsky	6-8
Spoken Word	Venneasha Davis	6-8
Sports** : Basketball, Cross Country, Football (Flag), Soccer, Swimming, Track, Wrestling	April Franklin	6-8
Lunch & Playground Volunteer Coordinator	<b>Chair TBD, Co-chair TBD</b>	All
<b>Chess Club (CANCELED) *</b>	<b>Jitka Bene</b>	<b>All</b>
<b>Field Trips (CANCELED) **</b>	<b>Colfax Homeroom Teachers</b>	<b>All</b>
FOCUS Pittsburgh Backpack Program	Brittany McCann and Casey Weiss	All
Math Kangaroo Program	Jessica Sedgewick	All

## 2020-21 - COMMUNICATION LINKS AND REFERENCES

<b>Communication Mechanisms</b>
<b>Websites</b> <a href="http://colfaxpto.org">colfaxpto.org</a> (Jason Dancisin) <a href="http://pghschools.org">pghschools.org</a>
<b>FaceBook</b> <a href="https://facebook.com/ColfaxK8">facebook.com/ColfaxK8</a> (Colfax) <a href="https://facebook.com/pghcolfax">facebook.com/pghcolfax</a> <a href="https://facebook.com/PittsburghPublicSchools">facebook.com/PittsburghPublicSchools</a> (PPS) <a href="https://facebook.com/PamHarbinPGH">facebook.com/PamHarbinPGH</a> (School Board District 4)
<b>Twitter</b> @PPSColfax, <a href="https://twitter.com/ppscolfax">twitter.com/ppscolfax</a> (Colfax)
<b>Remind App (Colfax Principal)</b> Contact <a href="https://twitter.com/tsanderswoods1">tsanderswoods1 @ pghschools.org</a>
<b>Talking Points App (Colfax Teachers)</b> Contact each specific teacher directly
<b>Calendars</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org">pghschools.org</a> ; also synchronized with Colfax calendar at <a href="http://colfaxpto.org/calendar.html">colfaxpto.org/calendar.html</a> (Jason Dancisin)
<b>Colfax "backpack" mail</b> Distributed by Homeroom Teachers.
<b>Colfax (and PPS) "robo" calls</b> Contact "registration" (412-422-3525) to sign up and update all demographic changes.
<b>Colfax School Tours</b> Sign up by contacting <a href="mailto:tourcolfax@gmail.com">tourcolfax@gmail.com</a>
<b>PTO email list</b> Sign up at <a href="http://colfaxpto.org">colfaxpto.org</a>
<b>PTO Colfax Communicator (newsletter)</b> <a href="http://colfaxpto.org/newsletters.html">colfaxpto.org/newsletters.html</a>
<b>PTO Colfax Directory</b> Sign up at <a href="http://colfaxpto.org">colfaxpto.org</a> (Leslie Grodin)
<b>E-Learning Resources</b>
<b>Colfax Virtual Learning Parent HUB</b> (go to <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/PPSColfaxHub">www.tinyurl.com/PPSColfaxHub</a> ) <b>Colfax K-8 Cobra's Cooling Corner 2020</b> ( <a href="#">link</a> in Additional Resources) <b>"Let's Talk" Help Desk</b> at <a href="http://pghschools.org/LetsTalk">pghschools.org/LetsTalk</a> <b>"All In" Plan</b> at <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/5474">pghschools.org/Page/5474</a> <b>E-Learning</b> at <a href="http://pghschools.org/remoteteaching">pghschools.org/remoteteaching</a>
<b>COVID-19 Information</b>
<b>District updates</b> at <a href="http://pghschools.org/coronavirus">pghschools.org/coronavirus</a> <b>United Way PA 2-1-1</b> (PPS partner): <a href="http://pa211sw.org">pa211sw.org</a>
<b>PPS Operations</b>
<b>Parent Fact Sheets.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/5271">pghschools.org/Page/5271</a> <b>Transportation information.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/Domain/39">pghschools.org/Domain/39</a> , <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/398">pghschools.org/Page/398</a>

<b>PPS Human and Family Services</b>	
<b>Grab'N Go Meals.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/5356">pghschools.org/Page/5356</a> <b>Allegheny Child Care (PPS referred).</b> <a href="http://tryingtogether.org/find-child-care">tryingtogether.org/find-child-care</a> <b>Family Care &amp; Education Forum (PPS referred).</b> <a href="http://tryingtogether.org/community-resources/family-care-education-forum">tryingtogether.org/community-resources/family-care-education-forum</a> <b>Early Learning Resource Center (PPS referred).</b> <a href="http://elrc5.alleghenycounty.us">elrc5.alleghenycounty.us</a>	
<b>Community Meetings</b>	
<b>Parent School Community Council (PSCC)</b> Second Wednesday each month, 5:30-6:30pm – "zoom"	
<b>PTO meeting</b> Second Wednesday each month, 6:30-7:30pm – "zoom"	
<b>PTO Officers</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
President	Ross Ingram president @ colfaxpto.org
Vice President	Mitch Franzos vicepresident @ colfaxpto.org
Communications	Jeanine Weiss communications @ colfaxpto.org
Fundraising	Lisa Zur fundraising @ colfaxpto.org
Special Events	Stephanie Livshin events @ colfaxpto.org
Volunteers	Tiffany Stuckey volunteers @ colfaxpto.org
Secretary	Karey Jo Kluesner secretary @ colfaxpto.org
Treasurer	Mitch Franzos treasurer @ colfaxpto.org
Treasurer, Assistant	Natalia Duarte treasurer @ colfaxpto.org
<b>Colfax Staff</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Principal	Dr. Tamara Sanders-Woods
FACE Coordinators	Amanda Olshenske, Rebecca Bachman
Mid-Level Teacher Representative	Jennifer Herr
Food Services	Mary Drawn
Counselors	Erin Montgomery
Custodial Services	Jeff Henderson
ESL	Jonathan Covel
Nurse	Rachel Short
Office Staff	Sandra Moore
Registration	Josette Brighenti
Special Education	Amber Dean

## 2020-21 - E-LEARNING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### How will e-learning during 2020-21 school year differ from remote learning during Spring 2020?

- Students will log on to a computer for instruction and attend class on a daily basis during their assigned classroom time.
- Teachers will provide regular live-teaching, feedback on assignments, assessment of assignments, and grades following the district's grading guidelines.

### Is my child eligible for an electronic device (laptop, Chromebook, or iPad)?

- Yes. Each child will be issued a device.
- Take note that previously issued devices from Spring 2020 – July 2020 **will not work** for the upcoming school year. Families must return these devices and exchange them for an updated device.
- For device exchange and distribution schedule, go to [pghschools.org/Page/5490](https://pghschools.org/Page/5490)
- For any questions, concerns, and support needs contact the district through PPS Let's Talk at [pghschools.org/LetsTalk](https://pghschools.org/LetsTalk)

### What if a parent and student does not know how to utilize Schoology and Microsoft Teams?

- The first few weeks of e-learning will include a focus on helping students learn how to use effectively use all of the tools available to them for a successful e-learning experience.
- Additional resources can also be found at [pghschools.org/remotelearning](https://pghschools.org/remotelearning) and [pghschools.org/Page/5410](https://pghschools.org/Page/5410)

### Is my child eligible for free breakfast and lunch?

- Yes. All PPS students are entitled to a free breakfast and lunch.
- When not attending school in-person, Grab'N pickup locations and times are here: [pghschools.org/Page/5356](https://pghschools.org/Page/5356)

### Is there an before/during/after-school child care program available?

- As per the PPS website ([pghschools.org](https://pghschools.org)): PPS is working with external partners to establish support for PPS families during the 2020-21 school year.
  - Allegheny Child Care. [tryingtogether.org/find-child-care](https://tryingtogether.org/find-child-care)
  - Allegheny County Community Learning HUBS. [tryingtogether.org/community-learning-hubs](https://tryingtogether.org/community-learning-hubs)
  - Family Care & Education Forum. [tryingtogether.org/community-resources/family-care-education-forum](https://tryingtogether.org/community-resources/family-care-education-forum)
  - Early Learning Resource Center. [elrc5.alleghenycounty.us](https://elrc5.alleghenycounty.us)
- Other nearby options include the JCC (must be a member), Boys & Girls Clubs, and Brightside Academy.
- Complete the PPS survey to communicate your needs. [pghboe.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_1BTEXk6HyqEiCUt](https://pghboe.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1BTEXk6HyqEiCUt)

### How will the school communicate with me during e-learning?

- Robo-call system (telephone or cell phone), Remind (text messages), Talking Points (smart phone app), email, and postal mail.
- For Remind notifications: contact Dr. Woods directly at [tsanderswoods1 @ pghschools.org](mailto:tsanderswoods1@pghschools.org) to with your name, your child's name, your email address, and your cell phone number.
- For robo-call system, emails, and postal mail: contact "registration" at the Colfax main office (412-422-3625) to update your information (e.g., any changes over the summer).
- For Talking Points: contact your child's teachers directly.

### What other relevant FAQs might be relevant to my child and me?

- "All In to Reopen Our Schools" – state, district, and teacher plan: [pghschools.org/Page/5474](https://pghschools.org/Page/5474)
- PPS Parent Fact Sheets – academics, enrichment, and other services: [pghschools.org/Page/5271](https://pghschools.org/Page/5271)
- PPS Transportation: [pghschools.org/Page/398](https://pghschools.org/Page/398)
- PPS Gifted and Talented. [pghschools.org/Page/828](https://pghschools.org/Page/828), [pghschools.org/Page/5392](https://pghschools.org/Page/5392)

## INTRODUCTION

This handbook serves as a reference for Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 families. Although the handbook focuses on Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)-sponsored activities, non-PTO sponsored activities are also captured here with external references provided as appropriate. For questions and concerns outside of the scope of this handbook, each Colfax family should leverage other resources within the Colfax community, especially their child's homeroom teacher, Colfax staff, and other Colfax families. Families can also email the PTO President and other officers (contact information on the PTO website) with any specific questions or concerns. Revisions to this handbook will be posted on the PTO website. Please send your feedback and corrections to the PTO Vice President (VP)-Communications and PTO President.

The enrichment, fundraising, and community activities presented herein are expected to change from year-to-year. Members of the Colfax Community are encouraged to share, discuss, and implement new ideas. In particular, members of Colfax community can request the addition, elimination, and modification of PTO-sponsored activities at the monthly PTO meetings either directly or, if unable to attend the meetings, through the PTO President or any other member of the PTO Board. For activities sponsored outside of the PTO, Colfax community members must work with the corresponding points of contact. The PTO Board will work to update this handbook yearly to reflect these changes.

## Pittsburgh Colfax K-8

Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 is a neighborhood school and part of the Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) with a broad mission that serves families across parts of Squirrel Hill, East Hills, Homewood, Shadyside, and Point Breeze. Each school within the PPS offers a baseline set of programs including

**Academics:** arts, career and technical education, early childhood, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages.

**Enrichment:** Early Childhood Programs, Early Intervention, English as a Second Language (ESL), Gifted and Talented Education Program, Out-of-School Time (OST), Program for Students with Exceptionalities (PSE), and Summer Dreamers Academy.

**Social-Emotional:** Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), restorative practices, and Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

Special to Colfax, students also have access to a school swimming pool that is utilized in grades 3-8 within their physical education classes.

## Parent-Teacher Organization

Parent involvement is an integral part of our school. The Colfax Community has a firmly established and very active PTO. The most recent PTO was established in 2004 as a support organization for Colfax as formalized in its bylaws. In particular, the PTO's mission includes

- the provision of quality educational programs that supplement the baseline Colfax education;
- raising of funds to support these supplementary educational opportunities;
- facilitating collaboration within the Colfax community in support of their common welfare;
- communicating Colfax-related information and issues to the Colfax community.

## EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT

The Colfax community sponsors a variety of educational enrichment opportunities to students in order to supplement the baseline Colfax education. These services are made possible through the donations of time and money from the Colfax community and business sponsors.

## PTO-sponsored Activities

The PTO routinely supports several services each year as described below.

**Chess for Pittsburgh Youth Program:** The Chess for Pittsburgh Youth Program is administered, in conjunction with PPS, by the chess master and scholastic director of the Pittsburgh Chess Club. There are two 6-week sessions each year for students who already know how the pieces move, meeting once each week during lunch/recess. There is also a 6-week novice class for students in 1st and 2nd grades to learn how to play. Students will bring home a letter about the chess program sometime in the fall of 1st grade. After that, only students who have participated in past years are automatically invited to attend.

**Colfax Garden:** The Colfax Garden is an “Edible Schoolyard” garden located on the Phillips Avenue side of Colfax. The Colfax Garden is provided to students as a collaboration between Colfax and “Grow Pittsburgh,” a local non-profit that promotes urban food production. The Garden Coordinator teaches hands-on garden classes to certain grade levels that are integrated with the science curriculum. Students plant seeds in the spring and harvest and eat the vegetables in the fall, thus seeing the process from seed to table. During the summer, families and teachers tend the garden, a rewarding volunteer activity for our community.

**Colfax Musical:** For the 2013-14 school year, Colfax created an after-school drama club for middle-level students culminating in a Spring musical open to the community. Each school year since then, the PTO has supplied funds to facilitate the production.

**Frick Environmental Center:** The Frick Environmental Center is a nature center operated by the City of Pittsburgh’s parks department. The center is within walking distance of Colfax (near the intersection of Shaw Avenue and Beechwood Boulevard).

**The Frick Pittsburgh:** Colfax second-graders visit the Henry Clay Frick house and museum four times during the school year. The students participate in various science and nature activities. Each of these visits focuses on different aspects special to the seasons.

### Grants and Infrastructure

- **Field Trip Grants:** Each year, the PTO contributes \$10 per child (through their respective teachers) to support the availability of field trips offered throughout the year.
- **Classroom Teacher Grants:** Each year, the PTO provides grants of \$100 per teacher for general classroom supplies.
- **PTO Board & Principal Discretionary Fund:** Each year, the PTO sets aside a discretionary budget. These funds are used to support various school needs and community activities. In the past, these funds have been used to augment the “technology and infrastructure” for additional laptops, ipads, and smart boards. These funds have also been used to cover the costs of various teacher and volunteer appreciation events.

Beyond provision of routine expenses, the PTO also has a history of raising funds for larger, one-off projects. For example, Colfax’s Bob O’Connor Community Playground is located on the lower playground next to Philips Avenue. The PTO organized members of the Colfax community to raise nearly \$250,000 to build this playground as well as the soft surface play area near the cafeteria.

## Other Colfax Activities

The Colfax community provides a variety of educational enrichment opportunities to students in addition to those provided by the PTO. Like the PTO-sponsored opportunities, these services are made possible through the donations of time and money from the Colfax community and business sponsors. The Colfax community routinely supports several services each year in addition to those initiated by the PTO and PPS as described below. The programs require the time and support of the Colfax community and so are subject to change based on the availability and interests of the current community members.

### Arts and Music Programs



- **Chorus:** Chorus is offered to students in grades 3-8. Families will be notified directly of student involvement (or request for involvement) and permission must be provided by each student's parent/guardian to approve their participation. Chorus does not meet during lunch nor does it meet after school. It is a pull out program similar to the instrumental program. Chorus also has two performance opportunities a school year, one in the winter and one in the spring.
- **Dance:** Fifth-grade students have opportunity to participate in the dancing program.
- **Instrumental:** Basic instrumental musical is taught to 3rd and 4th grade students during their assigned music period. Colfax provides students in grades 5-8 an opportunity to participate in the instrumental music program with a range of instruments offered. Each week, participating students are pulled from their regular classes to receive instruction. Students typically perform (at least) twice per year during evening concerts performed for the Colfax community. Families will be notified directly of student involvement (or request for involvement) and permission must be provided by each student's parent/guardian to approve their participation. All students are welcome to participate and instruments will be provided by the school. Students are assigned a grade for their performance twice per school year.

**Field Trips:** Colfax staff coordinate field trips for students throughout the year (school funding is supplemented by PTO contributions). Staff member(s) organizing the trip will send permission slips home with each student either in their backpack or mail. Parents/Guardians must sign and the student must return to the appropriate teacher. Often, the school asks that students bring in a small amount of money (usually not more than \$5) to help with the cost of the trip. Accommodations will be made to ensure that all families can cover the costs to participate.

- **Frick Park:** Frick Park is Pittsburgh's largest historic, regional park located across the street from Colfax on Beechwood Blvd. Attractions in Frick Park include the famous Blue Slide Park and the Frick Environmental Center.

#### **Science and Math Programs:**

- **Challenge 24 Program:** Challenge 24 is a math card game in which students use mathematical operations (e.g., multiplication) on the numbers printed on the card to form the number 24 as quickly as possible. Colfax coordinates an after-school club for students play Challenge 24 together as an after-school activity for grades 4-8. Students are encouraged to participate in the annual inter-school Challenge 24 competition. First-in-Math offers an on-line version of the Challenge 24 game.
- **Math Kangaroo Program:** Colfax coordinators an opportunity for all students to develop and apply mathematical problem-solving skills once a week during their lunch/recess period. These students are ultimately prepared to participate in the Math Kangaroo International Competition.

**Ski Club:** During the 2012-13 school year, Colfax families started a Ski Club in which students and chaperones attended Seven Springs Mountain Resort to enjoy the ski slopes. Students must be in grades 4-8 to participate. Trips are planned after school and on non-school days. Participation in the Ski Club is only available to Colfax students.

**Sports Programs:** Colfax offers a variety of sports to its students including basketball, cross-country, flag football, soccer, swimming, track, and wrestling. Interested students will receive relevant information from their teachers for their parents/guardians review and sign. These teams meet after school.

Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 also has a Middle Level Parent/Teacher Advisory Committee (MLPTAC) to focus on programs geared towards Grades six through eight. The middle level students take a yearly end of the year trip which has included Baltimore, Hershey, and Cincinnati.

## **FUNDRAISING**

In order to fund these educational enrichment opportunities, each year the PTO pursues a fundraising strategy equivalent to raising \$100 for each student. The PTO sponsors two major fundraisers that typically account for more than half of the PTO's fundraising goals (more than \$50,000):

**Ask-Drive:** The Ask-Drive is a large donation drive directed toward current families, their extended families, alumni, and community members. This drive is typically run during the Fall.

**Party-4-Play:** Party-4-Play is an adults-only party and auction, typically on a Saturday in the Winter. It consists of a party, a silent auction, a raffle, and a regular auction.

**End of Year Celebration (June):** The Colfax Carnival is major celebration held at the end of each school year. Bounce houses, carnival games, and a dunk-a-teacher water tank are included with the purchase of a wrist band to cover the cost of the event and with all proceeds supporting other PTO-sponsored activities. Cultural tables are also coordinated (with participation from families) to celebrate the diversity of our Colfax community. Food, drinks, and cold desserts are also available for purchase from the PTO.

In addition to the Ask-Drive and Party-4-Play, the PTO also sponsors several other smaller fundraisers (these fundraisers vary from year to year):

**Other Fundraisers:** Other fundraisers include the advertisements (from corporate sponsors; e.g., in the Colfax Communicator newsletter), Spiritwear (t-shirt fundraiser), Run Shadyside (participation as “Team Colfax”), and BoxTops for Education.

Lastly, some of the Community Events (below) are leveraged to raise additional revenue, especially targeted to offset the costs of providing these Community Events.

Colfax raises funds in addition to those PTO-sponsored drives. For example, Colfax provides students in grades 6-8 an opportunity to participate in an end-of-year overnight trip. The cost for the trip varies from year-to-year but has been as much as \$300. To help individual students pay for the trip, parents/guardians and staff help the students raise funds in several ways. In the past, students have sold items from a catalogue or local business; offered coupon books; sold small items during lunch periods; and held bingo games for adults.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

Each year, the PTO holds several events throughout the school year to provide the Colfax community opportunities to come together. The events usually include:

**Kindergarten Play Date (August):** The PTO hosts an informal meet and greet with incoming kindergarten families at the Colfax playground each year a few weeks before the start of the school year. This is a great way for families to get comfortable with the school and other families and for incoming kindergarteners to meet new friends.

**Beginning of Year Pot-Luck (September):** The Colfax Fiesta is a family-friendly potluck dinner to kick-off the new school year held each September. Families bring a dish for all to share. Food celebrating the family’s culture, traditions, and family favorites are encouraged.

**Movie Nights (Fall and Spring):** Movie nights are held once in the Fall and once during the Spring. Families can choose from two movies that are playing. Typically, one movie is shown in the cafeteria and one in the gymnasium. Families bring blankets and pillows to get comfy while enjoying the show and snacks and drinks are available for purchase.

**Ice Skating Night (Winter):** Ice skating night is held each winter at the Schenley Skating Rink, an outdoor ice skating rink located in Schenley Park. The PTO covers the costs for the use of the ice rink. Families are able to rent ice skates from the venue and purchase snacks and beverages from the PTO.

The PTO also sponsors various other teacher appreciation events (e.g., Teacher/Staff Holiday Lunch in December and Teacher Appreciation Week in May).

In addition, Colfax facilitates other community events beyond those sponsored by the PTO:

**Positive Behavioral Incentives and Supports (PBIS):** All students participate in classroom and building wide PBIS system designed to implement a multi-tiered approach to academic, social, emotional, and behavior interventions and supports. PBIS emphasizes setting clear expectations, acknowledging and reinforcing positive behaviors, consistent consequences for problem behavior, collection and review of behavior data to drive decision-making, and ongoing professional development to increase effective practices. Students and classrooms that meet our positive behavior expectations are recognized and eligible to participate in incentives designed by individual teachers and grade level teams.

**Middle-Level Student Ambassador:** *[description to be provided in later revision]*

**Principal's Book of the Month:** A school-wide book club where the principal selects a book each month for the students to read. Teachers build lessons around this book to bring together the Colfax community.

**School dance:** Starting in 2019, Colfax will coordinate a "Snowball Dance" for middle-level students. It is organized by middle-level teachers, student council, and student and parent/guardian volunteers.

## VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers from the Colfax community are needed in order to successfully coordinate these Community Events as well as fundraisers, and communications, and other non-PTO sponsored activities in classrooms, on the playground, during lunchtime, with morning bus arrival, and with the office staff. Members of the Colfax community should contact the PTO VP of Volunteer or PTO President to get started.

PPS requires volunteers who will work directly with students or student information to request clearances (through the Pennsylvania Department of Education), and also the PPS volunteer intake form. The steps for obtaining these clearances is provided on the PPS website. There can be fee to process (for the fingerprinting individuals fail to meet the minimum Pennsylvania residency requirements) the clearance request. It typically takes several weeks to receive clearances by mail after submitting the necessary paperwork. Each prospective volunteer must then submit these forms directly to the Colfax office.

Although these clearances are required for all volunteers working directly with students (e.g., field trip chaperones, in-class teacher helpers, and playground monitors), there are many other volunteer opportunities that do not require clearances. Prospective volunteers should contact the homeroom reps, homeroom teachers, PTO board members for all of these opportunities to get involved.

### Homeroom Representatives

The PTO's primary mechanism for identifying and coordinating volunteers is through Homeroom representatives or "homeroom reps." The PTO Volunteer Coordinator will work with the homeroom teachers to identify these Homeroom Reps. Homeroom Reps' responsibilities vary depending on what the teacher needs, but typically the Homeroom Reps identify a snack calendar coordinator (grades K-2), organize holiday parties, organize teacher gifts for the holidays and teacher appreciation week (held in May), recruit volunteers for field trips and other classroom needs, and facilitate communications and collaborations between families. Two homeroom reps typically share these responsibilities for each classroom.

### Lunch & Recess Volunteers

Parent/guardian volunteers are always needed to help monitor the students during recess periods. Grade levels are rotated through use of the playground. Without these volunteers, this is not possible. Interested people should contact the Colfax front-office or PTO President.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### Communicating with the School

Teachers have a daily responsibility to the children in their classrooms. Parents/guardians desiring to speak to a teacher are asked to leave a message with the main office. In addition, all Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 employees have email and either Dojo or Remind accounts.

### Communicating with the Community

Most school correspondence will be sent home with your child in the form of letters and flyers. Colfax also utilizes an automated phone message system to communicate upcoming events. Please ensure that the school and main office always has updated contact information on file.

**Paper and Phone:** The Colfax administration communicates with families primarily via robo-calls (managed by PPS) and “backpack mail” to students’ homes / parents’ cell phones. For this communication to work, it is critical for the school to have updated contact information for all families. Although the robo-calls are limited to one phone number (the primary one provided during registration) per students, families with multiple students can establish different primary phone numbers for each student. Also, all robo-calls, for PPS and Colfax communications, are managed through the same system: opting out of the robo-calls for one will remove the family from all robo-calls. Colfax families are highly encouraged to opt-in (the default) to robo-calls because this is one of the school’s primary modes of communication to parents/guardians.

**Social Media:** PPS and Colfax both have Twitter handles. PPS and the PTO (for Colfax) host their own Facebook pages.

**Parent School Community Council (PSCC):** Mandated by PPS, this group consists of parents/guardians and school staff that meet monthly to discuss academic and policy issues. Meetings will be announced by PTO email, backpack mail, and robocalls. The primary responsibility of the PSCC is to assist in the development and implementation of the School Plan for Excellence and long-term plan to improve school performance in conjunction with the administration and faculty. PSCC meetings are often the time when our principal shares important school updates and takes questions on school-related matters.

**Directory:** The PTO also coordinates and publishes a Colfax Directory. Parents/guardians must request to have their students’ contact information included in the school directory. Forms are sent home in the mail in August and are also available online. Teachers’ names, room numbers, and emails are also included.

**Emails:** The PTO email list is used to keep the Colfax Community up to date on school news and issues. The PTO email list is used primarily for PTO sponsored events, but also for other Colfax announcements and updates. Only the PTO VP-Communications and PTO President have permission to distribute these informational messages: other PTO officers (and community) cannot post.

**Meetings:** PTO meetings are held once per month on the second Wednesday of each month. Meeting minutes are available online.

**Newsletter:** The PTO publishes a newsletter, Colfax Communicator, four times each year to keep the Colfax community apprised of various PTO sponsored activities as well as some other school activities. The Colfax Communicator is made available online with some hardcopies distributed as well.

## SCHOOL OPERATIONS

**Six-day schedule:** In order to accommodate scheduling of all students in “specials” (e.g., gym, music, art, library), Colfax runs on a rotating schedule that cycles through six numbered days. In each normal week, five of the six days occur (the sixth occurs on the following week). The schedule is suspended for holidays and snow days. See the PTO calendar for the schedule.

### Bell Schedule

- Office Hours: 8:10 – 8:35
- Homeroom: 8:35 – 8:45

- 1<sup>st</sup> Period: 8:45 – 9:28
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Period: 9:30 – 10:13
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Period: 10:15 – 10:58
- 4<sup>th</sup> Period: 11:00 – 11:43
- 5<sup>th</sup> Period: 11:45 – 12:28
- 6<sup>th</sup> Period: 12:30 – 1:13
- 7<sup>th</sup> Period: 1:15 – 1:58
- 8<sup>th</sup> Period: 2:00 – 2:45
- Dismissal: 2:45

**Homerooms and departmentalized grades:** All Colfax students are assigned a homeroom.

- Grades K-2: students remain with their homeroom teacher for all subjects except Related Arts.
- Grades 3-8: students are assigned a homeroom teacher, but also have topic-specific teachers for core subjects (e.g., communications, math, science, and social studies). The students move between classrooms as they change subjects.

## Food and Recess

**Breakfast:** When students are onsite, free breakfast is available in the cafeteria for all children. There is also a “Grab’N Go” option located in the main lobby. Grab’N Go options are provided by the district for all remote learning students as well.

**Lunch and Recess:** There are 3 designated lunch/recess periods. Each period is split into two halves, with students in those halves alternating between lunch and recess. Recess takes place even in cold and hot weather as long as the temperature is 32F or greater. Students should dress appropriately. If the weather is unfavorable, recess takes place in the gym.:

- Grades K-2: 4<sup>th</sup> period
- Grades 3-5: 5<sup>th</sup> period
- Grades 6-8: 6<sup>th</sup> period

**Free lunch is available for all children.** Personal Identification Numbers (PINS) are assigned to each student. The PIN is needed to receive meals at school and to purchase snacks or second meals. If a student forgets his/her PIN, they can still receive a meal. The school office should be contacted to recover PIN.

**Bringing lunch:** It is helpful to send food in containers that children can open themselves; otherwise, they have to wait for an adult to come by and help them and may have trouble finishing their lunch in the very brief time allotted. Children are frequently encouraged to throw away their garbage during the lunch period, and many younger children throw away a great deal of uneaten food because they are not sure what to do with it when they don’t have time to finish. Sporks are available to all in the cafeteria. Students should *never* bring metal forks or knives.

**Lunch snacks:** When students are onsite, various snacks are sold for \$0.50 daily within the cafeteria. The snacks all follow the Health and Wellness policy of the school district.

**Classroom snacks:** In kindergarten classrooms, when onsite, children get a snack every afternoon.

Parents/guardians take turns bringing in healthy snacks for the whole class. Children can opt out of this snack program. Kindergarten teachers and Homeroom Reps coordinate the snack schedule. Students in other grades might also get snacks at the discretion of their teacher.

## Arrival and Dismissal (for onsite learning)

**Bus riders:** For students who are eligible for busing, the PPS Transportation Department is responsible for notifying parents/guardians of bus pick-up and drop-off time and locations. A letter is typically received at the student’s home in August prior to the start of school. Parents/guardians must submit a letter to the school to indicating if their child is not be taking the bus home from school for any reason (e.g., if a caregiver is picking up the child from school on a particular day). Bus routes are color-coded: Each school bus route is given an assigned

color to simplify process of students identifying the correct bus. All students grades K-2 are escorted by an adult to their by bus room locations where they are monitored and supervised leaving the school, entering the bus lane, and boarding the buses. In addition,

- **K-5 students:** dismissed through the back of the old building (towards the bus lane).
- **6-8 students:** dismissed through the grey double doors on the playground and proceed to the bus lane.

**Walkers and Drop-off / Pickup:** Students who walk home or are given a ride by their caregiver are dismissed out the front door on Beechwood Blvd. Families should *not* double park during drop off or dismissal on Beechwood Blvd. Parents/guardians are *not* allowed to escort their children to their classrooms during normal arrival times. Colfax families should *never* jaywalk for the safety of our Colfax students.

**Crossing guards:** Crossing guards provided by the PPS and are stationed at the intersections of Beechwood & Phillips and Shady & Phillips. There is *not* a crossing guard at the intersection of Beechwood and Douglas, so caregivers are asked to be extremely cautious when driving and walking at that intersection.

**Where to park:** During drop-off and pick-up times, parking is *not allowed* on Beechwood Blvd. in front of the school. Caregivers can stop long enough to safely drop their children off and pick them up from this area, but they may not park here. Parking on this block during drop-off and pick-up times creates serious safety concerns and traffic back-ups. Visitors may park on Beechwood outside of drop-off and pick-up times. Visitors must always avoid blocking all driveways. Violators could be ticketed and/or towed. Neighbors would appreciate that drivers refrain from running vehicles idle while waiting to pickup child/ren.

**Driveway & parking lot:** Visitors to Colfax are *not* permitted to use the rear parking lot or driveway during school hours. At no time are cars permitted to drive down the bus lane between the two buildings as this creates serious safety issues.

**Early Dismissal Requests:** Written requests are required for a child's early dismissal, late arrival, or if a child will be traveling to/from school in a manner different from their regularly established manner. All early dismissal notes are to be turned into the homeroom teachers with your student or submitted to the main office by 10:00AM. This will ensure that all the appropriate staff are made aware of a change in a student's dismissal routine. No early dismissals will be granted after 2:15 PM. Students can only be dismissed through the main office.

### School Visitation (restrictions will be in place to ensure safety during COVID-19 pandemic)

Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 welcomes all visitors. People interested in a tour of the school and/or visit a classroom should contact a school counselor or administrator to schedule a visit. Consistent with all PPS, all visitors (including parents/guardians) to the school must check-in with security and report to the main office to sign-in and receive a visitor's badge to wear. For the safety of students:

All visitors are only permitted to enter the building via the main doors on Beechwood Blvd.

All visitors must ring buzzer outside of building, identify who they are, and state the purpose of their visit.

All visitors will be checked in by School Security and go through metal detectors upon entering the building.

All visitors will then report to the main office, sign in and obtain a visitor pass upon entering the school.

All visitors must remain in the visitor's area until to be assisted by a staff member to the desired location.

### Cancellations and Delays

**Inclement Weather:** During inclement weather please check the local news media for information regarding any District school delays or cancellations. If there is a two-hour delay, all schools and buses will operate exactly two hours later than usual. Classes for full-day kindergarten will be conducted on the delayed schedule. Classes for the Gifted Center and all field trips are cancelled on days that there is a delay. If classes are cancelled for the day, all after-school and evening activities are automatically cancelled for that day. They are not cancelled when schools are on the delayed schedule. Breakfast will not be served on delayed snow days.

## Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

All electronic devices are collected from students upon entry to the building and returned at dismissal. Students are not permitted to accept or make phone calls or text messages at any time during school hours. This includes phone calls to and from home. In the event that a student needs to speak to a parent directly, they can request permission to do so via any administrator and/or counselor and will be permitted to use an office phone. Students found to be in violation of these rules will result in confiscation of the device and parent contact by the teacher or staff. When an electronic device is confiscated it will be returned to the parent and /or the student. Repeated violations will result in further disciplinary action and students may not be permitted to carry their electronic device during the school day.

## After-School Childcare (for onsite learning)

When students are onsite, various after-school services are available for the Colfax community. The Pittsburgh YMCA operates an in-school before and after care program that utilizes Colfax's gym and the cafeteria.

## Homework

Homework will generally be assigned Monday through Thursday each week with specific grade- level time targets below:

**Kindergarten-Grade 2:** up to 20 minutes of homework per night

**Grades 3- 5:** up to 35 minutes of homework per night

**Grades 6- 8:** up to 60 minutes of homework per night

## Medical Services

A nurse practitioner is assigned to Pittsburgh Colfax each school day. An additional nurse has been assigned for three days per week. The school nurse performs various mandated services such as physical exams and vision/hearing screenings. The nurse is certified to identify contagious school diseases and makes referrals for parental follow-up. The school nurse works closely with school personnel in cases of suspected neglect or abuse.

## Lost and Found

The main lost and found bin is located across from the school office and in the vestibule of the new building (lobby through doors in the back off of the driveway). However, items lost during lunch and recess are left in a bin located inside the cafeteria. The bins are emptied every two weeks and the clothing is donated to Goodwill. Parents/guardians should encourage their children to check the lost-and-found periodically for any misplaced possessions.

## Code of Conduct

Student academic success can only occur in a safe and orderly environment. To meet these expectations, all members of the school community including students, parents, and educators must accept responsibility for sustaining a high level of positive personal behavior. We recognize that students are young people in transition, will make mistakes, and often need adult assistance via positive support and interventions in managing their behavior; repeated infractions will result in leveled consequences. In addition, acts of physical aggression will not be tolerated and will result in an immediate consequence. Students and parents must recognize that we cannot allow one student's behavior to hinder another student from learning, consistently interfere with a teacher from teaching, or cause physical and/or emotional harm to another.

The Pittsburgh Board of Education has established the code of Student conduct as the policy and procedure related to student behavior. All discipline decisions are guided by this code. For more information, please consult the Code of Student Conduct.

## Detention

The purpose of detention is to provide a meaningful alternative to out of school suspension for those students who have violated school rules. Detention will prevent students from losing instructional time, keeping them in school. Refusal to attend or tardiness without an acceptable excuse will result in further disciplinary action.

**Lunch Detention:** Students that do not comply with either classroom expectations or the Student Code of Conduct school expectations can be assigned a lunch detention by either a teacher or an administrator. Whenever possible the student will serve lunch detention on the same day as it was assigned.

**After School Detention:** At the discretion of an administrator after school detention will be used as a disciplinary action option, in lieu of out-of-school suspension, based on the infraction. After School detention is held at Pittsburgh Colfax from 3:00-4:30pm. Students will receive a letter that indicates the date(s) and reason for the detention. Transportation for bus students will be provided. A missed detention will result in further disciplinary action.



## ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

<b>E-Learning Resources</b>
<p><b>Computer Acquisition.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/5490">pghschools.org/Page/5490</a></p> <p><b>Colfax K-8 FAQs.</b> <a href="http://colfaxpto.org/files/Colfax-FAQ-082020.pdf">colfaxpto.org/files/Colfax-FAQ-082020.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Colfax Virtual Learning Parent HUB</b> at <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/PPSColfaxHub">www.tinyurl.com/PPSColfaxHub</a></p> <p><b>Colfax Cobra’s Cooling Corner</b> at <a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vRHVPxfwkY3fxWwa-OZSCz3s-rldlG10X5TJ4Wv_kGVj2sMC8x2uvcguZmn6E7Vy0kwfluXjQTde4UQ/pub?fbclid=IwAR0H37CEy7CbxFkhYA4xzEPHFZwoEi8E57Fm2UCPpBlhBuT55e9CdcW3leU">docs.google.com/document/d/e/2PACX-1vRHVPxfwkY3fxWwa-OZSCz3s-rldlG10X5TJ4Wv_kGVj2sMC8x2uvcguZmn6E7Vy0kwfluXjQTde4UQ/pub?fbclid=IwAR0H37CEy7CbxFkhYA4xzEPHFZwoEi8E57Fm2UCPpBlhBuT55e9CdcW3leU</a></p>
<b>Academics and Enrichment</b>
<p><b>Academic, Social-Emotional, and Enrichment Programs.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/domain/1298">pghschools.org/domain/1298</a></p> <p><b>English as a Second Language (ESL) Support</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/645">pghschools.org/Page/645</a></p> <p><b>PPS Gifted and Talented.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/828">pghschools.org/Page/828</a>, <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/5392">pghschools.org/Page/5392</a></p> <p><b>Special Education Support</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/4550">pghschools.org/Page/4550</a></p> <p><b>Assessment and Accountability.</b> <a href="http://education.pa.gov/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/Pages/default.aspx">education.pa.gov/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/Pages/default.aspx</a></p>
<b>Communication &amp; Social Media</b>
<p><a href="http://education.pa.gov">education.pa.gov</a></p> <p><a href="http://discoverpps.org/colfax">discoverpps.org/colfax</a></p> <p><a href="https://facebook.com/pittsburghgiftedcenter">facebook.com/pittsburghgiftedcenter</a></p>
<b>Staff Directories</b>
<p><a href="http://discoverpps.org/pdf">discoverpps.org/pdf</a></p> <p><a href="http://discoverpps.org/colfax/staff">discoverpps.org/colfax/staff</a></p>

<b>PPS Operations</b>
<p><b>General Information, Handbooks, and Procedures</b> <a href="http://discoverpps.org/colfax/resources">discoverpps.org/colfax/resources</a></p> <p><b>Food Services.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/domain/40">pghschools.org/domain/40</a>, <a href="http://fns.usda.gov/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision">fns.usda.gov/school-meals/community-eligibility-provision</a></p> <p><b>Conduct Policies.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/48">pghschools.org/Page/48</a></p> <p><b>Volunteering Procedures.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/Page/3958">pghschools.org/Page/3958</a></p> <p><b>Inclement Weather Procedures.</b> <a href="http://pghschools.org/domain/1284">pghschools.org/domain/1284</a></p>
<b>Other External Links</b>
<a href="http://24game.com">24game.com</a>
<a href="http://edibleschoolyard.org/program/grow-pittsburgh-0">edibleschoolyard.org/program/grow-pittsburgh-0</a>
<a href="http://firstinmath.com">firstinmath.com</a>
<a href="http://growpittsburgh.org">growpittsburgh.org</a>
<a href="http://literacypittsburgh.org/oasis-intergenerational-tutoring">literacypittsburgh.org/oasis-intergenerational-tutoring</a>
<a href="http://mathkangaroo.us">mathkangaroo.us</a>
<a href="http://pittsburghpa.gov/schenley/rink">pittsburghpa.gov/schenley/rink</a>
<a href="http://pittsburghparks.org/frick-environmental-center">pittsburghparks.org/frick-environmental-center</a>
<a href="http://pittsburghparks.org/frick-park">pittsburghparks.org/frick-park</a>
<a href="http://pjas.net">pjas.net</a>
<a href="http://swsg.org">swsg.org</a>
<a href="http://thefrickpittsburgh.org">thefrickpittsburgh.org</a>
<a href="http://youthchess.net">youthchess.net</a>
<b>After-School Programs</b>
<p><a href="http://bgcwpa.org/item/shadyside">bgcwpa.org/item/shadyside</a></p> <p><a href="http://brightsideacademy.com">brightsideacademy.com</a></p> <p><a href="http://jccpgh.org/children-teens-family/children/school-clubhouse">jccpgh.org/children-teens-family/children/school-clubhouse</a></p> <p><a href="http://pittsburghymca.org/belong/programs/childcare/after-school-enrichment-base">pittsburghymca.org/belong/programs/childcare/after-school-enrichment-base</a></p>