

December 1, 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As the Winter Break nears, I want to wish our families Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, Happy Las Posadas, Happy Kwanza and a Happy New Year!

Our Winter Break and the end of 2023 is almost here. It's a great time to reflect on our accomplishments so far, celebrate the strength of our community, and look forward to what we can still accomplish together. Reflecting on this first half of the school year, I am so proud of what we have accomplished together. Hats off to our teachers and support staff for all they have done thus far to provide an educational experience that is representative of Carnegie's mission and core values.



Student attendance rates are increasing thanks to you! Currently, our attendance rate for August through November is 95.36% that is nearly a 2% increase from last year. School attendance is a powerful predictor of student outcomes. Students who attend school regularly and on time have been shown to achieve higher levels than students who do not have regular attendance. One of the most powerful ways to prepare a child for success in life is through regular school attendance. Showing up for school has a huge impact on a student's academic success.

During the winter break all Kindergarten-8th grade students will receive Holiday Homework Assignments will be given via hardcopy or on-line (*Nearpod, Discovery Education, IXL, iReady Reading/Math, or Raz-Kids*). The Holiday Homework assignments must be completed by **Monday, January 8th**. Holiday Homework will be graded and input into Gradebook by Friday, January 12th.

We are committed in helping all our students recover both academically and social-emotionally. We remain hopeful that we can continue to address our challenges and make academic progress toward our goals, providing our learners with a nurturing climate and culture and academic supports they deserve.

Please be safe during the winter break and continue to take precautions to reduce the risk of COVID-19. Remember that what happens outside of our school comes back into our classrooms. If you are traveling during the break, please consider masking, physical distancing and being diligent about hand hygiene. If your child is sick or experiencing any COVID- or flu-like symptoms, your child should stay home and not report to school, even if s/he is vaccinated. If your child tests positive for COVID, please reach out to us at www.cps.edu/covidresults to self-report. Your help is the key to keeping our communities safe. **Please Note:** You may obtain a COVID-19 at home testing kit from the main office.

No School Days



There will be no school on **Friday, December 22nd**. It is a School Improvement Day. The Winter Break begins on **Monday, December 25th through Friday, January 5th**. **Classes will resume Monday, January 8, 2024**. From my family to yours, have a joyful and safe holiday and a Happy New Year! See you in 2024.

Student Arrival and Early Dismissal



It is imperative that students arrive to school on time at 8:45 a.m. When students arrive late to school, they miss valuable instructional minutes. If it is necessary for your child to leave school prior to the dismissal time of 3:45 p.m., **please note that: Early Dismissals will not be granted after 3:15 p.m.**

December Attendance Incentive

December Attendance Challenge! Students who have perfect attendance for the period of **December 1st through December 21st** will receive an Attendance Incentive on **Monday, January 8, 2024**. **We need 100% attendance daily!**

PAC Meetings (In-Person)

There will be Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting on **Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.** in the cafeteria. All parents and community members are invited to attend.

Fall/Winter After School Programs

Carnegie's OST Fall After-School Programs ends on **Thursday, December 14, 2023**, with the exception of the Girls & Boys Basketball practice. If you have any questions, you may contact Mrs. Boateng, fnimpson@cps.edu or at (773) 535-0661.

Academic Check-In (5th-8th Grades)

Academic Check-Ins will be held on **Monday, December 11, 2023** for all 5th-8th grade students. Students will receive their Behavior, Attendance & Grade (BAG) Report. The BAG uses real-time data so students understand where and how they are struggling, and which teachers they may need to reach out to for support. It also helps students understand their current status in relation to their goals. For more information, you may contact Mrs. Avery-Jones, School Counselor.

2nd Quarter Report Cards

Report Cards will be sent home with your child on **Thursday, December 21, 2023**. You may sign up, if you have not done so already, for the CPS Parent Portal (Aspen) and check/track your child's grades and assignments 24/7. This is an important way for you to get involved with your child's education. The information on how to sign up and log in to Aspen is here: (<https://www.cps.edu/services-and-supports/parent-and-student-portal/parent-portal/>). For assistance, please email Mrs. Roberson, at <mailto:segriffin@cps.edu>. For additional information and videos on how to access ASPEN Parent Portal, please click <https://cps.edu/Pages/parentresources.aspx>.

Winter Holiday School Assembly

There will be an (in-person) Winter Holiday Assembly for Kindergarten-3rd grades on **Wednesday, December 20, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.** All parents are invited to attend. However, space is limited.

Holiday Classroom Celebration

Teachers may host a classroom Holiday Party on **Thursday, December 21, 2023** from 2:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. This is an OUT-OF-UNIFORM DAY for all students. Students are asked to wear holiday colors.

Cell Phone Policy (Reminder)

Effective August 21, 2023, students are strongly encouraged **not** to bring a cell phone to school. **If students bring their cell phone to school, s/he must adhere to the following:**

- Turn off the cellphone.
- The teacher will collect all cellphones at the beginning of the school day. Teachers will store and secure all cellphones in a lockbox during the day. Cellphones will be returned to students at the end of the day.
- In the event that your child must call home, the child may use the telephone in the main office.
- In the case of a family emergency, the office staff will certainly give your child a message or have him/her return your call. If a student must call home, they can do so in the main office.

Students will not have access to their cell phones at any point during the school day (this includes during lunch/recess periods). To ensure the integrity of assessments, all students are prohibited from having cell phones in a classroom or other location where an assessment is being administered.

We know we are better when we work to support one another. Students are expected to comply with these expectations. If a student is found to be in possession or use of a cell phone, the phone will be confiscated, placed in a labeled envelope, and delivered to the main office. The consequences will be as follows:

1st offense:

- ✓ Cell phone will be confiscated and held in main office until the end of the day.
- ✓ An administrator will review the cellphone policy with the student and the cellphone will be returned to the student at the end of the day.
- ✓ Parent or guardian notified.

2nd offense:

- ✓ Cell phone will be confiscated held in main office until the end of the day.
- ✓ A parent or guardian/student/administrator meeting will be held, where an administrator will review the cellphone policy with the student and parent.
- ✓ The cellphone will be returned to the parent/guardian.

3rd offense:

- ✓ Cell phone will be confiscated held in main office until the end of the day.
- ✓ Parent or guardian notified.
- ✓ A parent or guardian/student/administrator meeting will be held, where an administrator will review the cellphone policy with the student and parent.
- ✓ The student will be subject to a one (1) day in-school suspension.

The cell phone policy letter was emailed to parents in July. The entire parent letter can be found on our school's website. All students must adhere to the cell phone policy.

Local School Council Election

Applications to run in the 2024-2026 Local School Council (LSC) elections are now available and are due by 3:00 p.m. on **Thursday, February 8, 2024**. To apply, download the application forms via <https://www.cps.edu/about/local-school-councils/lsc-elections/> or you can obtain the forms from the Main Office, please see Ms. Hampton-Flagg. You must submit all completed forms and two forms of identification by 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 8th, 2024 to the Main Office. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Hampton-Flagg our Local School Council Liaison at (773) 535-0530 or via email at <mailto:fhampton-flagg@cps.edu>.

IB-MYP Class Trip to Puerto Rico



We are excited to announce the details for the IB-MYP Class Trip to Puerto Rico. Our school has collaborated with Explorica for all the arrangements. The IB-MYP Class Trip is scheduled for April 22nd - 26th, 2024. All 6th-8th grade students are invited to attend. If you would like your child to attend the Class Trip, you must register your child. See below registration information. If you are interested in chaperoning or required to chaperone with your child, you must complete the volunteer online application via <https://chicagopublicschools.civicore.com/index.php?action=english>. All volunteers must apply for Level 1 status. Please check the school's website for more information, or if you have any questions, please contact Mr. Ramirez at <mailto:eramirez262@cps.edu>.



Parent Volunteers

As we return to a more traditional school year, we are welcoming the return of parent volunteers to assist in the classroom, coach a sports team or club, chaperone field trips, and help in the cafeteria and during recess. The district has revised its vaccination requirement. If you would like to volunteer, you must complete the volunteer application for Level 1 via www.cps.volunteers.org. **Once completed, the volunteer must provide the main office with a photo ID for school level approval.** Please Note: If you were an approved parent volunteer last year, you will need to reapply. All parent volunteers must complete this process each year! The application process can take up to 2 to 5 weeks.

School Communication: REMIND APP

Parents may receive important school-wide communications and updates from the school via REMIND (i.e. monthly parent newsletter, district-wide information, etc...) Parents are highly encouraged to sign-up for REMIND. Go to the school's website www.carnegie.cps.edu, go to the top of the page, click "Parents," click "REMIND," and then click the REMIND icon for instructions.



Principal Pollard

