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MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- April 5th—
Facilities Task Force 5:30 PM
- April 15th—
Elections ballots and parent survey due
- April 16th



Spring Fling

- April 22—NO School

REMINDER
Return Spring Pictures or payment to school.



Director's Notes

by
Lynn Gluck Peterson

APRIL 5, 2011

Education Happenings

The topic of education is capturing much attention in the media these days. I would agree that education is a great foundational cornerstone we have in our country and education should be a concern for all citizens. This Director's Newsletter highlights some of the headlines from the past week. I have also given you a great reference tool to contact your elected lawmakers from Minnesota; let your voice be heard.

Education Happenings...Nationally

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama said Monday that students should take fewer standardized tests and school performance should be measured in other ways than just exam results. Too much testing makes education boring for kids, he said.

"Too often what we have been doing is using these tests to punish students or to, in some cases, punish schools," the president told students and parents at a town hall hosted by the Univision Spanish-language television network at Bell Multicultural High School in Washington, D.C.

Obama, who is pushing a rewrite of the nation's education law that would ease some of its rigid measurement tools, *(Obama continued on page 2)*

Education Happenings...Regionally

Study shows charter schools bear unequal burden of state education funding shift

3.14.11 Minneapolis, MN. A study released today by three Twin Cities based nonprofit organizations concluded that Minnesota charter schools bear an "unequal and unfair" burden of the state's education funding shifts, requiring charters to seek private financing that can cost up to 23% for loans versus traditional school districts that can receive financing for 1% or less.

"The current education funding holdback is unequal and unfair to charter schools and really is unsound fiscal policy," *(Funding page 3)*

Education Happenings...Locally

Both the House and Senate have created bills regarding K-12 educational funding. House GOP released its proposed omnibus education bill, H.F. 934. This is a very large document and covers many areas and is a very pro-charter bill. The main charter elements of this bill:

- Maintains overall state education funding. *(Bills page 3)*

Our Vision

To create an environment for K-8 children where rich character development and effective learning create self confident students who are able to achieve their personal best academically. Using advanced curriculum that is based on goal oriented results, parents will work with teachers to produce the highest possible level of academic achievement for each individual student.

Our Mission

To provide students in Cologne and surrounding rural areas with a content-rich education based on a strong foundation of knowledge through the use of the Core Knowledge Sequence and classical curriculum. We are committed to providing a community school with small class sizes where students, parents and teachers work together to achieve accelerated academic achievement and strong character development.

Obama, continued

said policymakers should find a test that "everybody agrees makes sense" and administer it in less pressure-packed atmospheres, potentially every few years instead of annually.

At the same time, Obama said, schools should be judged on criteria other than student test performance, including attendance rate.

"One thing I never want to see happen is schools that are just teaching the test because then you're not learning about the world, you're not learning about different cultures, you're not learning about science, you're not learning about math," the president said. "All you're learning about is how to fill out a little bubble on an exam and little tricks that you need to do in order to take a test and that's not going to make education interesting."

"And young people do well in stuff that they're interested in," Obama said. "They're not going to do as well if it's boring."

The president endorsed the occasional administering of standardized tests to determine a "baseline" of student ability. He said his daughters Sasha, 9, and Malia, 12, recently took a standardized test that didn't require advance preparation. Instead, he said, it was just used as a tool to diagnose their strengths and weaknesses, and show areas where they could use more emphasis from teachers. The girls attend the private Sidwell Friends School in Washington.

Obama, who has been pushing his education agenda all month, has expressed concern that too many schools will be unable to meet annual proficiency standards under the No Child Left Behind law this year. The standards are aimed at getting 100 percent of students proficient in math, reading and science by 2014, a goal now widely seen as unrealistic.

The Obama administration has proposed replacing those standards with a less prescriptive requirement that by 2020 all students graduating from high school should be ready for college or a career.

Obama wants Congress to send him a rewrite of the 2001 law before the start of a new school year this fall. Although his education secretary, Arne Duncan, has been working hard with lawmakers of both parties, the deadline may be unrealistic with Congress focused on the budget and the economy. Congressional Republicans also look unwilling to sign off on Obama's plans to increase spending on education.

Obama also made a plug Monday for the use of technology in classrooms, revealing that he himself has an iPad.

He turned back a plea from one questioner to grant a special protected status to students who are in the country illegally in order to prevent them from getting deported. Obama said it wouldn't be appropriate because that status has traditionally been reserved for immigrants fleeing persecution or disaster.

The president did pledge to keep working to pass the Dream Act, which would give undocumented immigrants brought to the U.S. as children a chance to gain legal status if they enroll in college or the military. The legislation passed the House but failed in the Senate in December; it now faces even longer odds in Congress with the House controlled by Republicans.

Associated Press writer Stacy Anderson contributed to this report.

Funding, continued

said Kate Barr, Executive Director of Nonprofits Assistance Fund.” It is a poor use of state funds to have the state essentially pay prohibitively high interest rates for funding a group of public schools – charter schools.”

The report released today by Nonprofits Assistance Fund, the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools and Charter School Partners entitled *State Education Funding Shift Has a Disparate Impact on Minnesota Charter Schools* stated that “Minnesota charter schools have borne a particularly serious financial burden as a result of the aid payment shift” and that “this has a direct impact in the classrooms and on the overall ability of charter schools to serve children in their communities.”

Please visit www.cologneacademy.org for the entire report entitled *Impact of State Hold-back on Minnesota Charter Schools*

Bills continued

- Maintains current levels of charter funding, including basic funding formulas, lease aid, and compensatory aid.
- Adds up to \$400 per pupil for a new Small Schools Initiative (all charters under 1000 students will receive some additional monies).
- Much of the Integration aid will be eliminated which allows more dollars to go to charter schools.
- Charter school start-up monies maintained.
- New Low Performing School Enrollment Options (voucher) created.

The Minnesota Senate passed a public school funding bill Thursday (3/31/11) that takes a new approach to tackling the state's racial achievement gap, shifting money away from integration aid to several large districts in favor of financial incentives for any district that can improve student literacy.

The bill also freezes state spending on special education, but its lead sponsor said she hoped a new focus on improving literacy would result in fewer students needing to be enrolled in special education programs.

The bill would increase the per-pupil payments to school districts by \$100 over the next two years. It freezes pay for public school employees for the next two years, limits teacher strikes and would tie future teacher pay increases in part to student performance. It also caps or freezes several aid streams to school districts: compensatory aid to districts based on the number of children they have getting free and reduced lunches, as well as aid to isolated rural districts. Click [here](#) to read the entire AP article.

The next seven weeks are a critical time for all to be watchful to see what the House and Senate propose to offset the State's financial disaster in terms of OUR children's future. Stay alert. I have provided both the House and Senate contact information. Let them hear from you! See page 5.

Can Recycling:

Please remember to support the 5th Grade Voyageur Trip by bringing your aluminum cans to the recycling trailer in the parking lot at school. We would like to fill the trailer one last time before the kids head off to camp in May. The dollars raised by recycling offset the cost of the trip for all fifth grade families. Thanks for your generosity!!

April 16th– SPRING FLING

We are in need of many volunteers to make the Spring Fling a success. Please contact pave@cologneacademy.org or <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/cologne>

Cologne Academy Garage Sale– May 14th 7am-1pm

All household items accepted (with the exception of couches, beds, and large electronics.) Items may be dropped off at school on May 13th (after 3:30pm). PAVE is looking for volunteers to help head up the following areas: volunteer coordinating and advertising for the garage sale.

School Uniform Policy

The Uniform Dress Code was created to encourage community spirit and to enhance school pride at Cologne Academy. It provides a means of focusing on the students as unique persons while diminishing the importance of external factors such as clothing. All clothing and appearance choices should uphold the spirit in which the following dress code is written. **ALL CHILDREN MUST BE IN UNIFORM EVERY DAY.** If your child is not in the proper uniform when they come to school, you will be called to bring your child a proper uniform.

As the season changes, we want to remind you of some of our most common uniform violations.

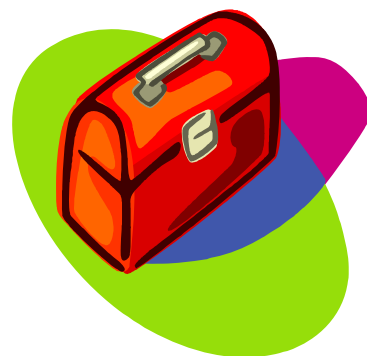
- Navy Blue slacks, shorts, jumpers, or skorts. NO cotton stretch pants, jeggings, sweats, or jeans.
- No sweatshirts unless these are Cologne Academy logo-wear or plain navy, light blue, or white. Zippered hoodies are not uniform. Only crew neck sweatshirts with no logo (or CA apparel) is allowed.
- Plain navy or white tights. No designs, dots, or stripes.

We ask that you adhere to the school's uniform policy, If not, you will see Uniform Violation Forms come home. If in doubt, let the staff see the item in question prior to wearing it or bring a spare outfit, it will save you a trip to school!

You now have two vendor options for Cologne Academy's Plaid. Donald's Plaid #57 and Land's End Classic Navy Plaid. A portion of your purchase from Land's End comes back to the school.

We are in need of Substitutes for our Lunchroom.

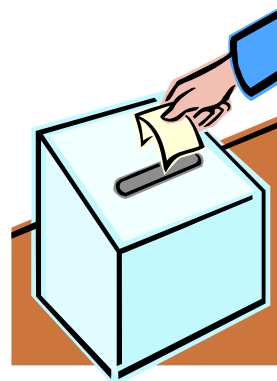
Please consider offering your time to the school on an as-needed basis. Lunchroom assistance is needed between 11-1 PM. We are looking for substitutes and also those who can commit to a regular schedule. Jami Reinitz at jreinitz@cologneacademy.org. We appreciate your help.



Elected Senate and House Contacts

Sen. Gen Olson	651.296.1282	sen.gen.olson@senate.mn
Sen. Carla Nelson	651.296.4848	sen.carla.nelson@senate.mn
Sen. LeRoy Stumpf	651.296.8660	Use Email Form
Sen. Terri Bonoff	651.296.4314	sen.terri.bonoff@senate.mn
Sen. Chamberlain	651.296.1253	sen.roger.chamberlain@senate.mn
Sen. Theodore "Ted" Daley	651.297.8073	sen.ted.daley@senate.mn
Sen. Al DeKruif	651.296.1279	sen.al.dekruif@senate.mn
Sen. David Hann	651.296.1749	Use Email Form
Sen. John Harrington	651.296.5285	sen.john.harrington@senate.mn
Sen. Benjamin Kruse	651.296.4154	sen.benjamin.kruse@senate.mn
Sen. Sean Nienow	651.296.5419	sen.sean.nienow@senate.mn
Sen. Linda Scheid	651.296.8869	Use Email Form
Sen. Katie Sieben	651.297.8060	sen.katie.sieben@senate.mn
Sen. Dave Thompson	651.296.5252	sen.dave.thompson@senate.mn
Sen. Patricia Torres Ray	651.296.4274	sen.patricia.torres.ray@senate.mn
Sen. Charles Wiger	651.296.6820	sen.chuck.wiger@senate.mn
Sen. Pam Wolf	651.296.2556	sen.pam.wolf@senate.mn
Pat Garofalo (R)	651-296-1069	rep.pat.garofalo@house.mn
Tim Kelly (R)	651-296-8635	rep.tim.kelly@house.mn
Mindy Greiling (DFL)	651-296-5387	rep.mindy.greiling@house.mn
Paul Anderson (R)	651-296-4317	rep.paul.anderson@house.mn
Tom Anzelc (DFL)	651-296-4936	rep.tom.anzelc@house.mn
Kurt Bills (R)	651-296-4306	rep.kurt.bills@house.mn
Kathy Brynaert (DFL)	651-296-3248	rep.kathy.brynaert@house.mn
Jim Davnie (DFL)	651-296-0173	rep.jim.davnies@house.mn
Denise Dittrich (DFL)	651-296-5513	rep.denise.dittrich@house.mn
Keith Downey (R)	651-296-4363	rep.keith.downey@house.mn
Sondra Erickson (R)	651-296-6746	rep.sondra.erickson@house.mn
Dan Fabian (R)	651-296-9635	rep.dan.fabian@house.mn
Jenifer Loon (R)	651-296-7449	rep.jenifer.loon@house.mn
Carlos Mariani (DFL)	651-296-9714	rep.carlos.mariani@house.mn
Pam Myhra (R)	651-296-4212	rep.pam.myhra@house.mn
Branden Petersen (R)	651-296-5369	rep.branden.petersen@house.mn
Duane Quam (R)	651-296-9236	rep.duane.quam@house.mn
Linda Slocum (DFL)	651-296-7158	rep.linda.slocum@house.mn
John Ward (DFL)	651-296-4333	rep.john.ward@house.mn
Kelby Woodard (R)	651-296-7065	rep.kelby.woodard@house.mn

School Board Elections



This week, all families will receive a voter's ballot for the School Board Election on April 15. Please read each candidate's profile that was distributed in mid-March and feel free to contact the candidates to ask them questions about their potential role as a Board Member.

Candidate are: Community Member- Megan Ander; Staff Member- Melissa Mase; Parents-Bryan Deutsch, Matt Lein, Cindy May, Scott Pelletier, and Becca Rausenberger.

Also during this election week, will be our annual parent satisfaction survey. You will receive a survey monkey link to complete the survey online. You have the option to come to school on April 15th to complete the survey online and vote at the school, if you prefer.

As we gear up for the MCA's in April we're offering a challenge to our 3rd-7th grade students.

Who can create the largest ice cream sundae?

We need your help at home to make sure students are logging onto Study Island.

Competition Rules: Students will earn parts of an ice-cream sundae each time they log into Study Island, take a strand test of 20 questions or more, and earn at least 85%

*We've started a new competition for April running April 1st to April 30th
Ice cream sundae party will be the first week of May.*



As students head back-to-school, there will be a rise in student illness as we reintroduce ourselves to each other and spread many germs! Can you help us out by keeping your sick student at home? As a reminder, students may not be in school with: communicable diseases, including head lice, temperatures over 99.6° , inflamed or red eyes, draining skin lesions, vomiting, diarrhea, or severe abdominal pain, persistent cough, swollen glands, ear ache, or an acute cold.

Please remember to notify the office (952 466-2276) if your child will be out of school for any reason, including illness.



MCA Testing Season

The MCA (Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment) is quickly approaching. All 3rd - 7th grade students will complete the Math portion of the MCAs the week of April 18th and the Reading portion of the test the week of April 25th. Please be mindful of these testing dates when scheduling appointments. We would appreciate your student's attendance during these testing dates. In addition, please make sure your child has had a good breakfast and is well rested.

Please also encourage your child to do well on these tests by addressing the importance of the tests and by logging in to Study Island to review and refresh learned concepts.



Cologne Academy Spring Fling 5K April 16th, 2011

To register for this event, please completely fill out the entry form below and return it to the Cologne Academy office or mail it with the entry fee to:

**Shelley & Kara
Cologne Academy
1221 South Village Parkway
Cologne, MN 55322**

**Please contact Shelley Gyldenvand at (952) 457-5031 or
Kara Wischnack at (952) 442-4766 with any questions!!*

**Spring Fling Fun Run—Saturday, April 16th, 2011
8am-Race Day Check In/Registration
9am- 5K Race Begins**

(Check in across from Cologne Community Center, 1211 Village Parkway, Cologne, MN)

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell Phone (_____) _____

Email Address _____

Age on 04/16/2011 _____ Male **OR** Female T-Shirt Size _____ (Adult S-M-L-XL)

WAIVER: In consideration of participation in this event, I for myself, my heirs, executor and administrators, waive and release any and all rights and claims against Cologne Academy and Cologne Academy PAVE, volunteers and all sponsors, their representatives, officers, employees, agents and successors as a result of my participation in the Spring Fling 5K Run event to be held April 16th, 2011. I attest and verify that I am physically fit and sufficiently trained for the completion of this event. I also authorize First Aid and/or treatment to be rendered in case of any emergency. I further consent to any photographic recording of myself and the use thereof in connection with this event.

Signature _____ Date _____

(Parent must sign if participant is under age 18)

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Cologne Academy PAVE

Pre-Registration-\$15.00 (If received before 4pm on Friday April 8th)

Race Day Registration-\$20.00 (If received after 4pm-Friday April 8th)

Age Group (Circle one)

<20

20-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60+