October 4, 2020—Issue 7



# The Grizzlies Gazette



# **Inside this issue:**

Pages:

**Human Resources**— 2

Asst. Superintendent —.3

Blueprint — 3

Data Coach — 3

Technology — Page 4

Instructional Technology — 4

Facilities — 5

**Student Support Services**— 5

Communications — Page 6

Business Office — Page 6

Grants — Page 6

Food Service — Page 7

Transportation — Page 7



"The beautiful thing about life, is that we will never reach an age where there is nothing left to learn, see or be; it's magical really."

- Dulce Ruby -

Innovaum | Corpus Christi, TX



### Office of the Superintendent

Hello everyone, I hope that you and your families are well! We are off and running, and you have done an AMAZING job supporting and welcoming our students! Thank you! We understand that many processes and procedures are quite different than in the past, and you have been so terrific in your flexibility!

## **Something Professional**

I would like to remind you that you should be reading your district emails at least twice daily. We know that things are continually changing, and your direct supervisors and administrators will keep you posted as to the changes. Also, Taryn Willis will keep you updated on all district matters. It is essential to read emails from her.

This Wednesday is Count Day! We know that this is also changing from the state. Thank you again for your flexibility! I appreciate your involvement and ensuring that this is done with care. As you know, this directly affects our funding. Thank you for your diligence in this matter!

## **Something Personal**

I have wanted to do more than just my typical work, school, and home routine. As an educator, I believe that we should always be working towards positively influencing others. I recently learned from my two adult children that the way people are doing this in today's world is via social media. I was surprised to learn that so many people have created blogs, vlogs, Instagram posts, and YouTube channels to share information. I have recently started a YouTube channel. I currently have two sections of content. One part includes my sermons from church, and the other part is what I want to tell you about- Life Lessons! These will be lessons I have learned from being an educator, administrator, pastor, mother, daughter, wife, friend, etc. You get it! Life Lessons! I hope to make people laugh, cry, smile, and reflect on the everyday lessons learned daily. I hope you will check me out and subscribe. It should be fun! Check it out here! Alena Zachery-Ross

# Something Profound

I read this from a journal I use daily called The Best Self. They send out a weekly email from The Best Self Co. Team. I found these words and activities profound, and I hope they will be helpful to you as you begin the week!

#### **Weekly Focus**

"Happiness is a direction, not a place."

#### Sydney J. Harris

- It's easy to get pulled along by your to-do list and to get lost in the vast array of things you've got to do.
- ♦ But when was the last time you stopped to notice how you feel?
- Now, more than ever, it's essential to focus on our mental as well as our physical health and there's plenty we can do to lift our mood and feel happier.
- So this week, take some time to think about what you enjoy, then create space for those
  activities in your planner.
- For example, if you get joy from losing yourself in a good book, make more time to read. If you feel connected when you chat with your friends, schedule a Zoom call to catch up. If you feel refreshed after spending time in nature, take a guilt-free walk.
- You deserve to feel good, so make quality time for yourself. Not only will you feel happier, but you could find that you're more productive and creative too!

You've got this!!!

Alena Zachery-Ross — Superintendent of Schools



## **Human Resources**

Staff members really have stepped up to the plate and embraced meaningful work assignments. The dedication and commitment to our YCS students provided by our staff is outstanding. **Meaningful work assignments** will continue to evolve as needed. It is important to remember that you must be available for work during your regular hours of employment. If you are not available during your regular work hours you must submit a

written request to your immediate supervisor. Each request will be handled on an individual basis. Lack of availability may impact compensation. Once again, your unique talents and skills are nothing short of spectacular. Thank you!

**Open Enrollment - MESSA** - Open Enrollment will be **November 2-20, 2020**. This is especially important to those members who have Pak E. **Pak E** members please remember from our earlier communication that Pak E **will not** be available after December 31, 2020. You must make a select from our active Pak options. We have four Pak options available: Pak A, D, C and F. Open enrollment will once again be on-line. Expect to receive information and instructions from Human Resources in late October.

**COVID-19** - Actual or potential COVID-19 exposures must be reported directly to Human Resources at <a href="mailto:smc-carty3@ycschools.us">smc-carty3@ycschools.us</a>. The Washtenaw Community Health Department has partnered with all Washtenaw County Schools to have a universal reporting system for potential or actual cases along other COVID-19 related issues. To further streamline the process each district has two identified points of contact as identified above. Please contact your building administrator or department director <a href="immediately">immediately</a> to report any COVID-19 related issues.

The Emergency Family Medical Leave Expansion Act and Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act requests from staff will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. There is a maximum amount of 12 weeks or 480 eligible hours if you have been employed for a minimum of 30 days. Please remember that the time taken during the March-June shut down counts as part of your total of 12 weeks. Human Resources will be in contact with each individual as some leaves will begin to expire as early October. The legislation that allows the two leave options (EPSLA and EFMLEA) is scheduled to conclude on December 31, 2020. Human Resources will keep everyone posted and informed of any changes or updates.

<u>Criminal Convictions</u> - If you are arrested any time during your employment with YCS, you **must report** any and all convictions to Human Resources. Please remember when you were fingerprinted during your hiring process and that these prints are in the State Police System. Whenever an arrest occurs, the State Police communicate to the Michigan Department of Education. The Michigan Department of Education will report your conviction to the District to take action. The District will review each case individually to determine whether or not further action is necessary. Failure to report convictions may lead to further disciplinary action.

Reporting Absences, Medical Leaves and Substitute Requests - Please remember that you must report all absences in AESOP including daily absences and extended medical leaves. If you need assistance with AESOP please email Lois Nowling at <a href="LNowling5@ycschools.us">LNowling5@ycschools.us</a>. Also, any medical leave must have a doctor's note when submitted for approval and a doctor's note to return back to work prior to reporting. It is imperative that you DO NOT request a substitute unless directed by the building administrator when reporting an absence. The substitute process is new to 2020-21 and is subject to change as we return to school.

You must **check your email** at least 2 times per day; this is a mandatory requirement. If you are experiencing difficulties with your email please contact technology support at <a href="techsupport@ycschools.us">techsupport@ycschools.us</a>.

It has never been more evident that YCS is Stronger Together and together we are saving lives.

"When there is no struggle, there is no strength." — Oprah

Sue McCarty — Human Resources Director







## Office of the Assistant Superintendent

**Count Day - Wednesday, October 7, 2020 -** As you plan for Count Day this week... What FUN Activities will you put in place to ensure that students tune in and be counted on Count Day? What's Your Show Up and be Counted Activity for the Day? Get the word out to your families and students.

**TK-8 NWEA Assessment** - As each of you know...YCS will be administering the NWEA Assessment remotely for most of our students within the next few weeks. Please get familiarized with the entire process and identify ways to support your students and families throughout the administration of this important benchmark assessment. Expect that even though you may request that parents resist from helping their child by providing answers to their questions, expect that many parents will because in reality no parent really wants to see their child struggle or fail. Remember to reach out to families, hold virtual family meetings if possible to go through the testing administration and expectations. Let parents know that their child should have a good night rest, eat well, take breaks, and test in a quiet environment if possible.

**Do this Now! Self-Care Check Activity - Answer this Question:** How Old are you? Now think for a moment and add up how many Summers have you had in your lifetime? (Example, I am going to be 60 this year. I have lived through 60 Summers). Now, here comes the most important question of this activity. How have you spent your Summers? Make a Plan and Commitment now to do better for yourself... You Deserve Better!

Leading from with an Equity Lens: This is not a Test, This is an EMERGENCY: Special Considerations for Assessing and Advancing Equity in School Year 2020-21 - From the Center for Assessment - Team, If you get a change please read this informative report from the Aspen Institute of rethinking assessments from an equity lens. Also, take a look at the Coming Back to Climate document included within the resources. Interesting! Food for Thought.

Carlos Lopez—Assistant Superintendent

# Statewide Field Team (SWFT): Blueprint Installation

This fall session for interactive online courses begins October 7. SCECHs are available. We are excited to offer two new courses:

- Educational Improvement Through Systems
- Teacher Collaborative Routines \*(Previously this was three courses and is now one, updated course)

Three additional courses being offered:

- Mechanics of Building Leadership
- Collaborative Learning Cycle
- Changing Minds to Address Poverty in the Classroom

For more information and/or registration: https://blueprinttoolsandresources.com/events-listing/

Sarah Scott, — SWFT Coordinator of Professional Learning

(Ypsilanti Community Schools) scotts@calhounisd.org

## Office of the Data Coach

Thank you everyone for being patient with the rollout of <u>Clever</u>. Just over 50% of all students are now using Clever and we are over most of the initial issues that were presented! The next challenge is to get all of our non-instructional staff who are supporting students into the system and onto all the various vendors we have connected through Clever.



Clever tip! Teachers did you know you can log your students into a program on their behalf? Check it out here!

The Fall NWEA window is open! Here is the <u>guidance document</u> for approaching NWEA this year. Please make sure to read over the "before the test" considerations as you prepare to rollout NWEA to your students.

As always, I am here to help!

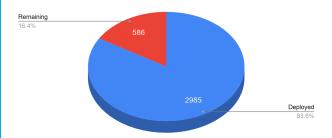
Solomon Zheng — Data Coach

# Technology

Hello YCS, as we look ahead I hope everyone is getting more accustomed to how things are. This year, we are finishing up the wireless project, so when you return to campus, we'll have a new wireless network for you to work on.

Device distribution continues as we are close to 84% of devices assigned to students throughout the district. We continue to schedule pick up days on Tuesdays and Wednesday between 9am to 3pm, and a family can reach us at <a href="mailto:techsupport@ycschools.us">techsupport@ycschools.us</a>.

#### **Ypsilanti Community Schools**



Since we are now a month into school, I'd like to encourage staff to please use the formal <u>ticketing system</u> to request technology help or support. Our techsupport email gets crowded as we use this email for a variety of tech related requests (from device pickup to general tech support for parents) and we could easily overlook a staff member's request. To ensure any problems you might have are properly logged and tracked, to make certain we address your problem in a timely manner. If you have forgotten how to submit a ticket, you can find resources <u>here</u>.

Nik Jackson — Technology Director

# **Instructional Technology**

An instructional technology specialist helps integrate technologies, such as computers, hardware, and software, into educational settings. The Instructional Technology team works with staff members to assist and troubleshoot for different platforms, software, and some hardware issues. We conduct office hours three days a week. Our office hours are:

- ♦ Mondays, 1:00—2:00 pm
- ◆ Tuesdays, 4:00—5:00 pm
- ♦ Wednesdays, 7:30—8:30 am

## During the office hours we do

- ♦ Troubleshooting
- Assist with software and hardware
- Professional Development
- Assist with Google Classroom
- Clever related issues
- Academic platforms (HMH, Imagine, DnA, etc...)
- PowerSchool/PowerTeacher
- Zoom & Google Meet Troubleshooting

#### Our email addresses are:

- ♦ Clark Rodeffer—crodeffer5@ycschools.us
- Solomon Zheng—szheng3@ycschools.us
- ♦ Jerilyn Lynn—<u>jlynn6@ycschools.us</u>





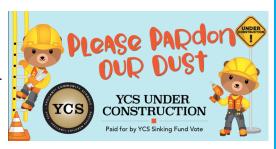
## **Facilities**

Sinking Fund Publicity Project

YCS is a Community based school district. Our community is YCS and they show it through their continued support. Our community recently communicated their support by voting and ultimately approving the YCS Sinking Fund, which provides a tremendous

amount of financial support for our facility improvement projects. As a district, we want to express our appreciation to the community and keep them informed on the ways YCS is utilizing this valuable sinking fund resource.

In partnership with Taryn Reid, YCS Communications Director, we have developed an outward facing communication plan to keep our community informed as well as express our appreciation. Currently, we have two different signs being installed throughout the district. One board is a "Pardon Our Dust" sign that is placed in front of buildings where projects are in progress. In some cases this work is taking place inside the building and residents may not be aware of the improvements that are being made at each location.





Our second set of signs will be installed after the project has been completed and will thank the community for their partnership with YCS and their support of the sinking fund. These signs communicate completed projects and are expandable for any future work. The "Thank You" signs include the logo of the companies responsible for the scope of work at each site. Additionally, these companies are supporting the purchase of signage.

I am YCS, You are YCS, We are YCS!

Aaron Rose — Director of District Operations

# **Student Support Services**

Student Support Services staff are immersed in the new procedures that have them developing contingency learning plans for their students who are learning remotely with very high hopes of returning to face-to-face learning as soon as it is safe to do so. A virtual training was done at the department meeting recently, with the help of the ISD.



This is a new process that lets parents and students know that there have been changes in their IEPs due to COVID-19. However, please be assured that the IEPs are being implemented and services are being provided. We've been visiting all of the classes--both face-to-face and virtual and it is so great to see our students learning and engaged!

We are still looking for two parents to represent the district at the WISD Parent Advisory Committee. If you are interested, please call our office at (734) 221-1952. We will let you know the details and what you need to do to become the representative. We need a parent voice at the county level and would love to hear from you.

E. Ruth Jordan — Student Support Services Director

"Self-Care is giving the world the best of you not what is left of you.

Katie Reed

"I kept always two books in my pocket, one to read, one to write in." - Robert Louis Stevenson





# **Communications Department**

# Remember that October 7th is Count Day!

## We need to ensure that all students are accounted for on this day!

- Grab and Go Food Delivery will begin on October 9th! Please see the new flyer for more information and share with your students! This is a great program for our students and families.
- YCS Community Flu Clinic is on Saturday, October 10th and we have a lot of great partners joining us for the day! We will have food distribution and produce boxes from Food Gathers, voter registration, census forms, mental health information and e-cards from the Ypsilanti District Library!

The Marketing and Communication team is working on a virtual special event for staff! More information is soon to come!

Taryn Willis — Marketing and Communications Coordinator

## **Business Office**

Hot off the press news: The Governor has finally signed the budget for the 2020-2021on September 30, 2020, for the fiscal budget year of October 1 through September 30, 2021. We will be able to confirm what it means for YCS when we get our first payment of State Aid on



Business office will present these updates to the Board in the next board meeting after October 20 as we get onfirmations.

We have received multiple grants to support the current COVID situations. We will keep you informed on each of those grants as well.

Business office has submitted all the financial data to our auditors and now we are waiting for the review to be completed. This will be presented to the Board at the next meeting as well.

"Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful." - Joshua J. Marine.

Priya Nayak — Director of Business and Finance

#### **Grants**



We have submitted our Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) -**GRANTS** Education Equity Fund grant to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). This grant is known as the Equity grant. Many individuals had input on the grant. Our allocation is about \$363,000.

Here are the highlights of items that we intend to fund:

- A new platform called Panorama (https://www.panoramaed.com/) to help with SEL, Social and Emotional support, and MTSS;
- Oasis rooms (students and staff),
- 300 chromebooks,
- 200 Wi-Fi hotspots,
- Seesaw, which is an on-line platform that supports younger students remote learning (https://web.seesaw.me/),
- a Walking/Running club for students, staff, and community members.

We should hear from MDE by the middle of October regarding the status of this grant.

Mark Coscarella — Director of State and Federal Grant Programs



## Food Service

Food Service and Transportation are excited to offer meal delivery services on our bus routes. Kim

(transportation) has created a route schedule that will cover the four cor-

ners of town. Each bus will stop at the designated location for 30 before proceeding to the next stop. We will begin services on Friday, October 9, and every Friday after.

The foodservice department is proud of our partnership with Food Gatherers. Starting the week of Oct 5, we will offer non-perishable food boxes and combo boxes (produce, dairy and meat) at our distribution sites.

Please check the YCS website for more detailed information. Apple Crunch Day will be celebrated on Wednesday, Oct 7. All students at Estabrook will receive a goody bag that contains apple treats and gifts.

GREAT LAKES

Apple Crunch Day will be celebrated on Wednesday, Oct 7. All students at Estabrook will receive a

goody bag that contains apple treats and gifts.

We Are YCS!!!!!

Tiffany Houston — Director of Food Services



# **Transportation**

Special reminder for transportation drivers. All school transportation departments must adhere to standards set forth by the federal government {FMCSA~Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration} to ensure individuals performing safety sensitive work such as a school bus driver must pass a pre-employment drug screen, then be added and participate in quarterly random drug testing.



Last week we had transportation staff begin work as COVID Facilitators with the Elementary F2F students. Also last week other transportation staff help to build supply kits for YCS students and look forward to assisting with this project again in the future. Future projects include transportation partnering with the food department to provide bus routes where families will be able to get healthy food for their school age children in addition to the school sites also offered. This will begin on Friday, October 9, 2020 and continue through the end of the year (as funding is available). The bus routes and times will be available on the district website.

Thank you to the dedicated staff here at YCS. Your cooperation and commitment to our school district is greatly appreciated.

Take care and stay safe.

Kim Searcy — Director of Transportation I am YCS, YOU are YCS, WE ARE YCS!!!

