



Dear D51 Families and Colleagues:

Happy Friday! Hopefully y'all have been able to get outside and enjoy the moments of sunshine we have had lately. And what better way to do that, than spending it outside with our students? Over the past few weeks, I have had the pleasure of getting out to watch some of our student athletes & groups compete. I am so impressed by the dedication, strength, and determination of our kiddos. I have also been able to attend some fun family & community-focused events at our schools, like Central High School's Trick or Treat Street event last night. I loved seeing the school hallways and gym packed with families, students, and staff, all dressed up and participating in fun games put on by CHS groups. My son had fun dressing up and participating with his friends from school. Shoutout to CHS for putting on a great event for the D51 Family.

Last weekend, I had the opportunity to travel to Glenwood Springs to watch our D51 student athletes on the Grand Valley Youth Cycling Mountain Bike Team compete in their state competition. It was a great event where hundreds of student athletes from across Colorado came out to compete after qualifying for the event. All of our D51 student athletes did great at the competition, and it was cool seeing the families who came out to support, and the coaches who worked hard to get our students to this point. A huge shoutout to Ben Garmany, a Freshman at Grand Junction High School, who is the first mountain bike state champion out of the Grand Valley. It's exciting to see our students not only excelling in the classroom, but in extracurricular activities, as well.

Last week, I mentioned that I created Superintendent Student Advisory Groups at all 5 of our D51 high schools. I've wrapped up my first meeting with these groups, and I look forward to meeting them, again, in the future. The time spent hearing directly from students has been invaluable for me. I also had a goal, in my 100 Day Plan, of creating a Superintendent Principal Advisory Group and a Superintendent Teacher Advisory Group. I was able to meet with both of those groups this week, as well. The Principal Advisory Group (12 members) and Teacher Advisory Group (33 members) represent schools across the district, and they volunteered time after school to share with me what is working well in D51 and what needs to be addressed. I appreciate these hard working members of the D51 Family for giving their time to help me as we look to move our Strategic Plan forward. They shared a lot of great things that are happening across the district, and things that we can work together on to make the school/work experience better for students, staff, and families. I look forward to future meetings with these groups, too.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT ATHLETE SHOUTOUTS

As our student athletes took to the fields, courts, and trails earlier this fall, they were motivated to make it their best season yet. These kids continue to show amazing grit both on and off the field, and I've thoroughly enjoyed watching our student athletes not only compete this season, but also grow as individuals. It makes me proud and excited to know that our staff is so invested in fostering well-rounded human beings. While sports are not our sole focus, they are a large part of our culture here at D51, and we know that, for many of our students, it helps them stay engaged in their academics. I want to shout out the following teams and individuals who have fought hard and competed at a state level so far this year.

Central High School

- **Cross Country - Boys**
Qualified as a team, will compete 10/29 in Colorado Springs
- **Tennis - Boys**
Canaan Ross and Andrew Kirschenmann

Fruita Monument High School

- **Cross Country - Girls**
Ella Unrein and Mackenzie Black, will compete 10/19 in Colorado Springs
- **Tennis - Boys**
Singles - Jack Fry
Doubles - Evan Prosser/Coltan Getcher
- **Soccer - Boys**
- **Softball**

Grand Junction High School

- **Golf - Boys**
Team qualified and placed #10 in the state
- **Soccer - Boys**
- **Tennis - Boys**
Team qualified

And I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge those standing on the sidelines supporting and cheering on our student athletes...our amazing families, coaches, athletic directors, and staff. Each and every one of y'all are pouring your time and energy into our kiddos. You are truly making a difference!

D51 TEACHER ELECTED PRESIDENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES COUNCIL

The Colorado Council for Social Studies (CCSS), the premier professional learning organization for social studies teachers in Colorado, just elected their new president, and it's one of our own. Central High School Social Studies teacher, Scott Finholm, began his board presidency with the organization earlier this month, and is excited for this new role. During his tenure, Mr. Finholm will take on the strategic vision for the CCSS, executive planning for their annual conference in March at History Colorado, and will represent the Colorado chapter at the National Council for Social Studies.

The important work of a successful social studies program extends well beyond the four walls of Mr. Finholm's classroom, and we look forward to the depth of knowledge and passion for the industry that he will bring to this organization. Please join us in congratulating Mr. Finholm on this achievement, and thank him for his extraordinary representation of our school district and continued effort in making a difference in our educational landscape.

CENTRAL ARTS AND CRAFTS VENDOR FAIR

It's that time of year again, where craft fairs are in full swing all throughout the valley! If you are looking for that perfect holiday gift, or maybe you have a sweet tooth for some homemade treats, the best way to show it is by supporting the D51 Family. The Central High School Craft Fair is happening tomorrow, October 29, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the main gym at CHS. It is open to the general public, and admission is free. Attending the event helps support our students. All proceeds raised at this event will go towards funding for our Warriors cheer team at their national competition in California.

COLORADO BANDMASTERS ASSOCIATION STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

As a reminder, all 4 of our amazing high school marching bands will be competing at the Colorado Bandmasters Association State Championships this weekend. Our high school bands, their band directors & staff, and families have worked hard to get to this place, and we will be cheering them on as they perform and compete. For more information on the competition, visit the CBA website [here](#).

NATURALIZATION CEREMONY

This week, I was able to participate in a naturalization ceremony at Grand Junction High School. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services welcomed eight new U.S. citizens in a ceremony presided over by U.S. Magistrate Judge James Candelaria who administered the Oath of Allegiance. I was joined by members of our Board of Education, along with representatives from different organizations and offices of Colorado elected officials, as well as GJHS students and staff. The ceremony was a celebration of the work it took for the candidates for naturalization to get to that point, and their commitment to the United States of America as they became new citizens of our country.

GJHS students were able to ask questions of the candidates, and they shared why they chose to be citizens in the US, the process they went through, and the challenges they faced along the way. We work hard in D51 to ensure that our students graduate with the skills to be culturally connected by demonstrating teamwork, skilled communication, and global and cultural awareness. By bearing witness to this ceremony, and the steps the candidates took to get there, this helped our students move one step closer to being more culturally connected than they were before, which is a goal in our Strategic Plan Graduate Profile. Thanks to Dr. Justin Whiteford and the rest of the GJHS staff for helping to organize this great learning experience for our students and for inviting me to speak.

CALENDAR STEERING COMMITTEE

The Calendar Steering Committee has been hard at work the last couple of weeks analyzing the data collected from the calendar survey that was recently sent out to D51 parents and staff. The committee, which convenes every year, aims to create a calendar that best serves our children and their education, as well as generating recommendations for long-term changes in the D51 calendar for future years. A presentation of the 2023-24 proposed calendar will be given to the Board of Education in early 2023. Stay tuned as we finalize the calendar so you will be in the know.

BOARD OF EDUCATION IN-DISTRICT CHARTER SCHOOL MEETING

The Board of Education will be holding a Community Meeting November 2 at 5 p.m. in the Harry Butler Board Room in an effort to gather feedback from our community regarding a recently submitted Charter School Application from Wildflower Charter School.

Any time a charter school wants to become an in-district charter in D51, an application process must be completed. This follows our Board of Education policy on the topic. Once that application is complete, it is reviewed by our District Accountability Committee and a team of district admin. In the end, a presentation is given on behalf of the applicant to the Board of Education, and they will vote on whether or not to approve the application. Another step in the process is for the Board of Education to elicit community feedback to gauge the need and reception of adding a new in-district charter school to District 51.

You can learn more about the Wildflower Charter School [here](#).

SNOW DAY 4-1-1

As winter weather approaches, we'd like to remind you how to check for delays, early dismissals, and cancellations within our schools. We ask you to please keep a watchful eye on weather conditions throughout the winter to anticipate potential changes in your schedule. Our goal as district staff is to make decisions about closures or delays as early as possible.

A variety of communications will go out as a way to increase the likelihood of reaching the entire community about changes to our normal operating schedule. These include emails, text messages, and phone calls.

For more information about our district guidelines, FAQs, and helpful weather information, visit our website [here](#).

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