



Dear D51 Families and Colleagues,

This week was our first full week back since the Winter Break, and both teachers and students are settling back into the rhythm of the new semester. Our focus remains on how to best engage, equip, and empower each and every student during their educational journey. A lot of hard work is put into these plans to ensure our students and staff remain prepared and supported.

I stopped by our elementary school Network Improvement Communities this week to engage with our staff and learn more about how they're working to support and propel our students forward. These convenings create an intentional space for principals and teacher leaders to work alongside each other and our Teaching & Learning Department to plan for better academic, social, and emotional support for our students. They had some fun, too, using the analogy of Taylor Swift's intense preparation for her tours and how we, as educators, have to put the same intensity into planning for success in the classroom. I don't know much about T-Swift (I'm old and lame), but apparently she incorporates friendship bracelets at her concerts, so the staff created their own friendship bracelets as a fun icebreaker activity. I created one [myself!](#) Shoutout to our hard working teachers and school and central office staff, and admin for all that they do to make sure we have Prepared & Supported Students.

As many of you know, January is Board Recognition Month. I want to close my letter this week by expressing our ongoing appreciation for our D51 School Board and thanking them for their continued dedication and commitment to our students, families, and staff. As a token of our gratitude, Mt. Garfield Middle School students created cards for the Board, which were displayed at the Board Business Meeting on Tuesday, and we put together a special [video of appreciation](#) for our D51 School Board. We invite you to watch and join us in celebrating all they do for our educational community.

MLK Day Poster Contest Winners

Congratulations to the winners of the 2024 Martin Luther King Jr. student poster contest! Read more [here](#).

College & Money Night

On Tuesday night, District 51, in partnership with Colorado Mesa University, hosted another successful College & Money Night led by our D51 ICAP and Counselor Alignment Team. This event, open to students who want to learn more about financial aid opportunities available for higher education, was the result of a multi-month endeavor in collaboration with CMU's Financial Aid and Admissions teams. Read more [here](#).

CMEA Performances

This week, several District 51 musical groups performed at the prestigious Colorado Music Educators Association Conference. Read more [here](#).

2024 Middle School CTE Academy

As our staff works hard to continue providing various and diverse opportunities for our students to engage in, we kicked off the second year of our Middle School CTE Academy this week at Bookcliff Middle School. Read more [here](#).

Orchard Avenue Hosts Healthy & Powerful Technology Night

On Thursday night, Orchard Avenue staff and families participated in a fun family night to engage students and families in an open conversation and reflection about technology usage. Read more [here](#).

Clifton Elementary Recognizes Student Growth

In an ongoing effort to recognize and celebrate their outstanding student achievements, Clifton Elementary continues its unique initiative to reward academic growth and student behavior via their Good Deed Drawing! Read more [here](#).

White Iced Celebration

The Annual D51 Foundation White Iced Celebration is fast approaching on February 3. Join us in celebrating our Outstanding Academic Growth Schools and White Iced Award Recipients. There will be a Silent Auction, 360 Photo Booth, S'mores Bar, Appetizers, Signature Drinks, and so much more! Click [here](#) to learn more, and click [here](#) to purchase tickets. **Be sure to buy your tickets before 5 p.m. on January 29, as ticket prices will increase at the door to \$75.**

City of Grand Junction Childcare Facility Openings (STAFF ONLY)

Navigating childcare availability can pose significant challenges in Grand Junction and surrounding areas, and we want to ensure our employees know of childcare options available to them.

The City of Grand Junction has opened childcare spots specifically designated for D51 employees at its childcare facility. Additional details can be found by [clicking here](#). If this opportunity meets your childcare needs, you can contact the facility directly by emailing childcare@gjcity.org or calling 970-254-3817.

Board of Education Recap

On Tuesday, January 23, the Board of Education held a Business Meeting in the Harry Butler Board Room. For highlights from the meeting, click [here](#). To watch the live stream of the meeting, click [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Academic Team Regionals
January 27, 10 a.m., at Grand Junction High School
Region 9 Academic Teams will compete this weekend at the regional competition for a chance to qualify for the Knowledge Bowl State Competition.
- All-State Jazz Band & Orchestra Festivals
Band: January 27, Broadmoor Hotel, Colorado Springs
Orchestra: February 1-3, University Center for the Arts in Fort Collins
Wishing the best of luck to our D51 students, teachers, and directors as they head to the front range in the upcoming weeks to participate in the Colorado All-State Festivals!
- Sophomore Tour Open House at CMU Tech
January 30, 5 - 6:30 p.m. at CMU Tech
D51 Sophomores and Juniors are invited to tour CMU Tech with their families and explore the various course options available to your student for concurrent enrollment.

For more events happening across the district, visit:

- [Fall Athletics Schedule](#)
- [District Upcoming Events](#)

If you have good news to share with us, we'd love to highlight your program, event, story, and more. Please share it with our communications department by emailing communicate@d51schools.org.

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