

Excel Academy Eagle Update

September 1, 2023

UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE

Dear Eagle Families,

As we wrap up the third week of school, I want to take a moment to focus on the importance of consistent student attendance. The start of a new school year can be challenging for some, and getting back into healthy sleep patterns is difficult for some. Please see the information from our School Nurse, Andrea Gansen, below.



Attendance Matters: Did you know that the state expects students to uphold a 95% attendance rate? That translates into being in school all but 8 days over the course of the school year. Of course students who are [too sick for school](#) should remain home for their own health as well as to prevent spreading illness to peers and staff. Otherwise, children should be at school, on time, every day. While teachers can provide make-up work when students return, this truly does not allow students to learn all that was missed. Teachers cannot replicate instruction, interactive activities with peers, or the benefits gleaned from hearing questions, comments, and explanations that happen organically during lessons and work time. In order to support students in their learning, we ask for your help in assuring your child is at school every day.

- **Please arrive by 8:15 each day** so your student has time to get to their homeroom classroom, put their belongings away, and participate in their Morning Meeting starting promptly at 8:20 a.m. While we understand that there are occasionally situations beyond control, but a chronically tardy student misses the opportunity to connect with friends before school starts and disrupts the class when arriving late.
- **Please schedule appointments outside of school days/hours when possible.** If you need to pick your child up early for an appointment, remember to call the attendance line by 8:30 a.m. to let us know so that we can assure the teacher is prepared to dismiss your student when you arrive to pick them up.

- **If your child will not be at school, remember to call the attendance line by 8:30 a.m.** to report their absence and the reason they will be out. Our office staff is required to account for all of our students every morning, which means contacting guardians listed in Infinite Campus for any student who is not at school who was not called out on the attendance line.
- **Those applying for approval of pre-arranged absences should submit the paperwork at least two weeks prior to the first day of the planned absence.** The decision to approve or deny will be made based on the combination of factors listed on the form, and in accordance with state law and district and school policy related to excusable absences. Teachers are not expected to provide work ahead of the absence, so please assure you have a plan to support your student with making up missed work within the allotted time upon their return to school. Please also be aware that once a student reaches thresholds of absences within a semester and year, attendance intervention protocols may be initiated even if some of the absences were pre-approved at the time.

Thank you for helping us assure that every student at Excel receives the best possible benefit from our enriched learning environment by having them at school, on time, every day, for the entire school day. Our entire faculty has dedicated their professional career to supporting learning to enable our next generation to be prepared leaders of their futures.

In Partnership,
Kresta Vuolo
Executive Director



September is Attendance Awareness Month

TIPS FOR GREAT ATTENDANCE

- Establish regular bedtime and morning time schedules
- Avoid vacations and extended trips while school is in session
- Schedule medical appointments after school if possible
- Send children to school unless truly sick
- Arrive to school on time



Order: Individual Student Pictures

Individual Student Pictures will be taken on September 7th starting at 8:30 am. Click [HERE](#) to order your pictures.

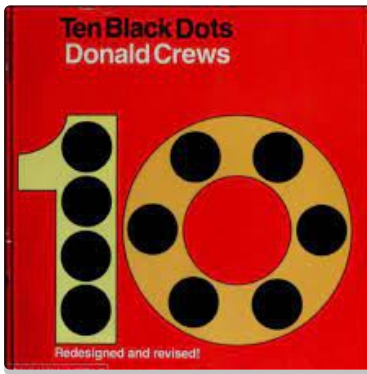
Leadership Coffee Chat Recap

Thank you to all who joined our first Leadership Coffee Chat of the year. We enjoyed an open forum discussion, with those in attendance sharing perspectives, asking questions, and making suggestions. Here's a brief recap of the topics we discussed:



- **DRIVELINE:** While things are going smoothly overall, parents in attendance asked that we remind folks that those making a right-hand turn into the driveline remember to alternate once in the line to the outer and middle lanes. Those turning left into the lot start in the inside/far left, then merge at the dotted lines. There were also concerns about drivers not following posted speed limits, signs for no u-turns, and blocking the crosswalk that goes across 84th Avenue. Let's all work together to assure the safety of our students, families, and neighbors by being conscientious and courteous drivers as well as following the posted signs.
- **EXPLORATIONS:** Mrs. Shelley Smith shared an overview of what will be the same and some things that will be different for our Explorations this year. Our kindergarten and 1st grade students will participate, though they will be remaining with their homeroom classes and following the PETS enrichment thinking skills program. Our 6th and 8th grade students who are registered to attend out-of-state extended field studies trips later this year will have the option of participating in an exploration focused on fundraising to go toward the costs of their field study trip. We will need volunteers to support Explorations, as well as materials for the students. We anticipate holding our Explorations Expo on Wednesday, November 15th from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
- **SECURITY:** We discussed some of the security features that our campus updates brought.
- **MAKERSPACE:** There was a question about use of the makerspace. We shared that the maker space is used for in-house enrichment and lab opportunities facilitated by our own staff or field experts brought in to work with students. Additionally, Ms. Kaschub and Mr. Smales are in the planning stages of facilitating monthly workshops for classes focused on enhancing thinking skills using strategies that support GT students that are also great for all students.
- **STANDARDS-BASED GRADING:** There was a short conversation about reasons for switching to standards-based grading, with contributions from staff and parents in attendance to provide clarifications about how a "3" / meets expectations is the goal.

We plan to host Leadership Coffee Chats on the last school-day Wednesday of each month from 8:30 - 9:15 a.m. in the cafeteria. All guardians are welcome, so come enjoy breakfast refreshments and conversation with members of our leadership team and other parents!



Looking for Books to Borrow

Our K/1 teachers are in need of two specific book titles for our upcoming Explorations program. If you have either of these titles that we could borrow, we would greatly appreciate it! Please send books in to the attention of Shelley Smith and make sure your book is labeled so we can get it back to you. Thanks in advance!

Books Needed:

[Curious George's ABC's](#) by H.A. Rey

[Ten Black Dots](#) by Donald Crews

September Lunch & Breakfast Order Forms

- **Order September meals. Deadline to order is August 27th.**

Yes! This year breakfast and lunch is free for students; however, we do not get unlimited numbers of breakfast & lunch delivered to us. To ensure your student gets breakfast & Lunch at school, you must fill out the forms.

Excel Academy must PRE-ORDER one week in advance of the delivery week, so it is very important to pre-order before our cut off, which is the Monday before the week of delivery.

We recommend ordering the whole month at once, however, if you prefer to order each week, you must place your orders one week before. I know this can be confusing to some, so an example would be, if you only want to order breakfast for your kiddos(s) the week of September 18th, you can do so when the menu forms come out, or by the cut off time, September 10th by midnight. We will turn off the response form Sunday evening before we need to order to ensure our order is processed.

When ordering please be sure to order under your student(s) name and grade. If you have more than one student, please fill out one response form for each student.

Thank you for helping ensure our orders are processed on time.

*PLEASE NOTE: Milk is always offered with both breakfast & lunch**

A confirmation email will be sent to you shortly after you submit your order.

Breakfast Link from September 4th -29th

[Breakfast Sign Up Sept 4th thru 29th](#)

Lunch Link from September 4th-29th

[Lunch Sign up Sept 4th thru 29th](#)

Excel's Athletics Kick-Off the 2023-24 School Year

We would like to congratulate Excel's boys' soccer team on their first game last night. Our team demonstrated exceptional sportsmanship and welcomed substitute players from the other team to join them. Hats off to the Excel team:

Dmitrii B.

Callen B.
Dean C.
Hagen H.
Mason H.
Argjend K.
Daniel K.
Eli Q.
Kaleb R.

A special thanks to our coaches, Coach Copeland and Coach Heintz!

SOAR Winners

Congratulations to this week's SOAR drawing winners!

Self-Discipline
Outstanding Effort
Acceptance of Others
Resilience



K- Madi M
1- Nora M.
2- Veronica W
3- Ellie C
4- Elaina J
5- Emma M
6- Jayden R.
7- Sienna M
8- Ellie M

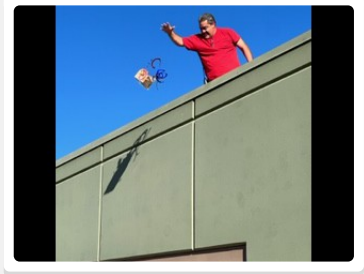
Classroom Winner: Mrs. Zerr's Class

Kindergarten Egg Drop

Today our kindergarten students brought in their egg drop STEM projects. Students learned about the experiment process including creating a hypothesis and testing out their projects at home before bringing them in today. This covered the science standard to plan and conduct an investigation to compare the effects of different strengths of pushes & pulls on the motion of an object.



The excitement during the drop was evident through their cheers and smiling faces.



FROM THE CLINIC

Help Us Help Students Be at School

The start of the school year and all the changes can be hard on some of our students. The health clinic and teachers have had a lot of students with various health complaints. We are always happy to help, however if you can just remind your students that the health clinic is if they are too sick to stay in school. If they are struggling with being in school for other reasons please reinforce the importance of being in school. If your student is sick in the morning, especially with a fever, please keep them home. You can refer to Colorado How sick is too sick guidelines [How sick is too sick](#) to know when you should keep your student at home. Please remember if your student goes home with a fever they need to be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications in order to return to school unless the fever is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DUE SEPTEMBER 8th: Board Advisory Committee Sign-Up

Inviting Family & Staff Participation and Input



One of our primary objectives is to bring the [Excel Academy Strategic Plan](#) to life. To do this, we've created advisory action committees where we'd like to invite families and staff to participate and provide valuable input to achieve the outlined goals. A brief description of each committee is outlined below.

[If your skills and passion align with these committees - and you're interested in participating, please email \[kmurray@excel-board.org\]\(mailto:kmurray@excel-board.org\) by September 8th.](#)

- **Finance Committee:** Meets monthly. This committee includes Excel's business manager and board treasurer, and it reviews the budget and makes recommendations for any needed adjustments, assesses enrollment requirements, reviews annual compensation for staff and makes recommendations to the board regarding any needed adjustments.
- **Technology Committee:** Meets quarterly. This committee assesses technology needs of the school and makes corresponding recommendations as well as reviewing technology services

contracts. This committee will assist the school in the completion of a technology inventory and master plan.

- **Facilities Committee:** Meets quarterly. This committee includes Excel's facilities manager and oversees building maintenance and construction. This committee will assist the school in the completion of a facilities/grounds master plan.
- **Governance Committee:** Meets monthly. This committee assumes the primary responsibility for matters pertaining to Board recruitment, nominations, orientation, training, and evaluation in accordance with the school's bylaws, as well as established policies and practices approved by the Board. The governance committee will also support the ED and staff regarding curriculum review that Excel is considering adopting.
- **School Accountability Committee:** Meets monthly. This committee reviews student achievement and culture data, helps the executive director create the annual Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) and develops the annual Parent Satisfaction Survey and Staff Satisfaction Survey. The SAC committee will create and maintain a dashboard to evaluate how Excel compares to other comparable schools and the district on KPIs.

Thank you for your consideration.

The Excel Academy Volunteer Board of Directors

[Learn more about Charter School Boards](#)

[Attend an Excel Academy Charter School Board Meeting](#)

ENRICHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

STARTING SEPTEMBER 5th: Concert Band for 4th and 5th Graders

Excel Academy is pleased to announce the return of Concert Band for 4th and 5th grade participation. We have not been able to provide this opportunity since before COVID. Research shows students who participate in band benefit in many ways. It increases memory capacity, helps to develop organizational skills, boosts social skills, teaches perseverance, enhances coordination, increases mathematical ability, improves reading comprehension skills, sharpens concentration, and relieves stress. These are a few of the benefits that learning an instrument provides.



The band instruments include: Flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, baritone, and drums. Students must provide their own instrument. Instruments can be rented, purchased or borrowed. Students will also need to purchase a band book. The method book is "Essential Elements 2000 Book 1" for your specific instrument.

Band participants will meet on Tuesday's and Thursday's from 10:30 till 11:00 This means that they will be responsible to manage time and turn in missed work. Band will begin on Sept. 5th. Please fill out the quick interest survey [linked here](#).

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Excel Community Night!

Join the PTO in decorating Excel's truck for the Arvada Harvest Festival Parade. Games and playground provided. Italian Ice available for purchase. September 7th from 6-8 PM at Michael Northey park. Click [HERE](#) for details.

The logo for 'community night' features the word 'community' in a multi-colored, lowercase font above the word 'night' in a solid blue, lowercase font.

Arvada Harvest Festival Parade

Excel students and families are invited to walk in the Arvada Harvest Festival parade on Saturday, September 9th. **Come show your school spirit, connect with your community, and walk with us to our sock hop music!** Click [HERE](#) for details.

Load The Lounge: 8th Grade Families

Let all the outstanding Excel Academy teachers and staff know just how much we appreciate them by providing them with nutritious snacks, sweet treats, and other items for the lounge. All slots are now posted in Track it Forward. Please look for the two events in September labelled "**8th Grade load the Lounge**".

PTO Links

[Excel Academy PTO Website](#)

[Track it Forward Volunteer Opportunities & Hours Tracking Site](#)

Helpful Links & Resources

[Infinite Campus Parent Portal](#) (Check grades, missing assignments, attendance, pay fees)

[Infinite Campus Parent Directions](#)

[Log Volunteer Hours](#) and sign-up for volunteer opportunities


[2023-24 Excel Academy School Year Calendar](#)


Excel Academy K-8 Charter School


 Facebook



 11500 West 84th Avenue, Arvad...

 Julie.Smith@jeffco.k12.co.us

 303-467-2295

 excel-academy.jeffcopublicsch...

