

Excel Academy Eagle Update

September 15, 2023

UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE

Dear Eagle Families,

CMAS Reports Coming Home: Next Friday, students in 4th through 8th grade who attended Excel Academy last year will bring their CMAS score reports home. CMAS stands for Colorado Measures of Academic

Success, and it's our state's annual standardized test to see how students in 3rd grade and older perform in demonstrating knowledge and skill related to the Colorado Academic Standards. All 3rd through 8th grade students complete assessments in English Language Arts and Math, and our 5th and 8th grade students also complete the Science assessment.



Preliminary School Performance Rating: Each year, Colorado public schools and districts receive performance ratings to let them and their communities know how well they are doing. These reports are called the District Performance Frameworks (DPFs) and School Performance Frameworks (SPFs). The overall ratings assigned are based on achievement and growth on state assessments, along with such postsecondary measures as graduation rates, drop-out rates, college entrance exams and college matriculation rates. The ratings help the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and State Board of Education (SBE) make decisions about how to help struggling schools. I'm proud to share that Excel Academy increased our overall points earned by 2.8%. Our school once again received the highest accreditation rating of Performance, meeting state expectations for Academic Growth, and exceeding state expectations for Academic Achievement. You can read more about School Performance Frameworks on the Colorado Department of Education website [here](#).

How we use assessments at Excel: Assessments provide important data about individual students, grade levels, and our school as a whole. Different assessments provide different types of data, and together with student class work, observation of work habits and study skills, as well as social-emotional competency, we are able to see a more complete picture of a student's development over time as well as make appropriate instructional decisions. In addition, CMAS data provides important insight into how well we as a school are doing in assuring students receive instruction and experiences related to the state standards, how well our curriculum supports this, and whether our students are growing at or above expected rates. For students, learning how to take assessments, learning test-

taking strategies, and practicing showing what they know helps prepare them for assessments beyond school, such as those for receiving a driver's license. For more information about the assessments we administer as part of Jeffco Public Schools, please visit the [district site related to assessments](#).

Data related to school culture: In addition to academic data, we seek input related to school culture through surveys provided to students, guardians, and staff. These data sets are analyzed in aggregate by our School Accountability Committee, which then provides recommendations for action steps for school improvement to the Board of Directors and school administration. Because we place high value on data gathered and insights gleaned from assessments and surveys, it's vital that all eligible members participate. The higher the number of respondents to surveys, the more representative of the whole the data reflects.

Can I see all of Excel's data in one place? Yes! Jeffco makes all assessment and culture data available through the [School Insights website](#). The landing page shows the overall district data. To see Excel's information, look for the grey box at the top left of the screen that says "Step 1: Select School" and look for "Excel Acad. Charter" in the drop-down menu. The site provides three years' worth of data in order to show trends over time.

While I know looking at oodles of data sets isn't everyone's cup of tea, it's a key way that our staff and board gain insight into how our students and our school are doing. Grounding instructional, curricular, and operational decisions in evidence contributes to assuring our students and school continue to grow and enrich the academic, social, and emotional experiences of every student.

In Partnership,
Kresta Vuolo
Executive Director

Middle School Newsletter

Our Middle School team created a newsletter introducing the staff as well as information about what our 6th, 7th, and 8th graders are doing in their core classes. [Please check it out here!](#)



Eagle Athletics

Congratulations to our Cross Country runners who participated in their first meet last week at home against Lincoln Academy and Woodrow Wilson Academy. We hope the Eagle Invitational becoming an annual tradition.

Next week, our Girls Volleyball team has their first game at home against Woodrow Wilson Academy. Students are welcome to attend with a guardian to cheer on our Eagles. The b-team plays at 4:15, and a-time at 5:15.

Let's go, Eagles!

Supporting Social-Emotional Learning at Excel

The Social Skills Improvement System™ Social-Emotional Learning Edition Screening (SSIS-SEL):

Later month we will be using the SSIS-SEL to screen students' social and emotional competencies. Current

research indicates a direct connection between students' emotional well-being and their academic performance. The SSIS-SEL is a strength-based tool for screening and progress monitoring social and emotional competence. Students do not "take" the SSIS-SEL, rather teachers score each student in the following areas: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making and motivation to learn.



How will the data be used? The screener and scoring information for individual students will remain at EHS and all information will be kept confidential. The information acquired through the screener will guide our development of school-wide, small group, and/or individual social-emotional interventions. You will be notified if your child is invited to join a small group or individual intervention.

Need more information? Please [find more details here](#). We would be happy to provide a copy of the screener to you.

Prefer your child not be screened? Please send an email to Tori.Rasmussen@jeffco.k12.co.us no later than Noon on Thursday, September 21st with the following information: *Student name, parent/guardian name/phone number/email address.*

NOTE: You do not need to send an email if you are ok with your child being screened

Thank you for helping us support the social emotional needs of Excel Academy students.

Hot Topics & Burning Questions

Periodically, we will share some questions received by our front office staff and share the answers here so that all may benefit. This week's topic focuses on student birthdays.



Q: My child's birthday is coming up. May I come eat lunch with them?

Your child's birthday is a special day! If you would like to come and eat lunch with them, we ask you to please remember to notify the school attendance line in the morning so that our front office staff know to expect you, bring your ID to check in using the Raptor system, then depart at the conclusion of lunch allowing your child to return to their class for the remainder of their day.

Q: May I bring lunch for my child's close friends? What about a treat for them to share with classmates?

We have a school policy against students sharing food. Due to the high number of food allergies and sensitivities, we ask that children eat lunches provided through our hot lunch program or brought from home. As a school in pursuit of Healthy School designation, we ask that any "treats" shared with peers be non-food items, and that there be enough to share with the entire class. If you plan to do this, please inform your child's teacher via email ahead of time so that they can allocate 5 minutes at the end of the school day for your child to distribute to classmates.

Explorations and K/1 P.E.T.S. Update

We had a lot of excitement in the air at Excel Wednesday afternoon during our Explorations kick-off! There is such a variety of topics that students in grades 2 - 8 are diving into. Be sure to ask your student about it!

Explorations in grades K/1 will look a little different this time around. We are using the P.E.T.S. (Primary Education Thinking Skills) program in these classrooms. This enrichment program can be easily integrated into the primary curriculum and is used to teach all students higher-level thinking skills. P.E.T.S. introduces students to different ways of thinking and problem solving. In kindergarten the focus is on divergent/creative thinking, convergent/analytical thinking, visual/spatial thinking, and evaluative/critical thinking. In 1st grade, the focus is on convergent/deductive thinking, divergent/inventive thinking, convergent/analytical thinking, divergent/creative thinking, visual/spatial perception, and evaluative thinking. The format of P.E.T.S. and our Explorations program are both based off of research done by Dr. Renzulli.

Our K/1 students will participate in the Explorations Expo with the rest of the school on November 15. The P.E.T.S. program provides many opportunities for students to be creative and use higher-level thinking skills while producing products that will be displayed at our Expo. More info on the Explorations Expo to come at a later date.

Author Jessica Kim Scheduled to Visit Our 3rd, 4th, and 5th Graders

Excel Academy is honored to work with The Bookies Bookstore in bringing author Jessica Kim to Excel Academy on October 10 to visit with our 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. Jessica is touring and celebrating her newest book, *Make a Move, Sunny Park*, and is ready to share her craft with the students. *The Bookies Bookstore has discounted her books 20% off for this visit. Jessica will autograph and personalize books that are pre-ordered before the visit.*

Please print out [this book order form](#) and submit order and payment to the front office by Monday, September 25. We are so excited to welcome Jessica Kim!



SOAR Winners

Congratulations to this week's SOAR drawing winners!

- Self-Discipline
- Outstanding Effort
- Acceptance of Others
- Resilience

K- Rawley Redland
1- Juniper Hancock
2- June Dickens

- 3-Sebastian Bowser
- 4-Richard Sorenson
- 5-Austin Rensberger
- 6-Ammarae Leal
- 7-Evie Edwards
- 8-Grace Enck

Class: Mr. Vad's 5th Grade Class for Self Discipline and Outstanding Effort

FROM THE CLINIC

Click the picture to read the information:



PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Chipotle Excel FUNdraiser Night!

Chipotle Excel FUNdraiser Night!

Wednesday, September 20th from 4 to 8pm.

Excel receives 20% of all digital and in-store fundraiser sales when you mention the fundraiser at checkout, or order online (or app) with the digital coupon code below!

Chipotle Address: 8797 Wadsworth Blvd, Arvada, CO 80003-0907

CODE: 2KP79BA - use this code in the "Enter a Promo Code" section!





Grown Up Night Out

Grown Up Night Out

September 28th

Click [HERE](#) for details

Twisted Penny starts on Monday!

Twisted Penny starts on Monday! The students and staff are really excited about all the FUN and fundraising we get to do over the next two weeks. Help us reach our goal of raising \$10,000 for our Field Studies and Specials department while helping your kiddo's class win one of the awesome daily classroom prizes!

For those of you who haven't experienced the fun, Twisted Penny is a PTO-lead fun classroom competition to raise funds for our Field Studies Program and Specials Departments.

Logistics: There are tables set up in the front lobby with coin bins for each homeroom teacher.

Students are encouraged to put their change in the bins during the day. The competition really heats up at dismissal. Counts will be held every afternoon at 3:45 pm

· All paper money, checks and pennies are positive. **You want these in your classroom bin.** Get creative with how you "package" the checks and bills. Larger denominations can be hidden in smaller, checks can be wrapped in \$1 bills, etc! Make it fun!

· Silver coins are negative points. You want to put these in other classroom bins. This is the part we refer to as **the "Twist"**.

The daily prizes are listed below and on boards in the front lobby. The PTO will work with teachers to schedule and facilitate the prizes during October and November.

The Middle School will not be competing with the lower grades!

Elementary Prizes: Week #1

M: Popsicles & Extra Recess

Tu: PJ's for the Day & Breakfast Party

W: Board Games & Popcorn Party

Th: Park Playdate with Ms. Rothstein

F: No School

Elementary Prizes: Week #2

M: Popsicles & Extra Recess

Tu: PJ's & Stuffed animal for the Day

W: Board Game & Popcorn Party

Th: Bubble Party with Ms Rothstein

F: WILD CARD (choose any from the list)

Middle School Prizes: Week #1

M: Breakfast Party

Tu: Tie-Dye Party

W: Popsicle & Extra Recess

Th: Outside Game with Coach Miller

F: No School

Middle School Prizes: Week #2

M: Breakfast Party

Tu: Tie-Dye Party



W: Popsicles & Extra Recess

Th: Capture the flag vs Coach Miller and Staff

F: WILD CARD (choose any from the list)

Looking for a volunteer opportunity? Coin Counters are still needed every day. See open spaces in Track it Forward (preferred) <https://www.trackitforward.com/> or email treasurer@excelpto.org



Vegas night!

Join the Excel community on November 10th for an evening of games, food, drinks, and great company! Try your luck at the poker table, roll the dice at the craps table, or spin the wheel at the roulette table, with all the funds spent, going back to the Excel PTO.

Buffet style dinner included and cash bar available.

Also look forward to a silent auction, lawn games, a photo booth, and maybe even a special guest! Save the date, tickets will be available next week!

Click [HERE](#) for details.

PTO Links

[Excel Academy PTO Website](#)

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

ENRICHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS



Boys Volleyball Clinic

7th and 8th grade boys! If you are interested in playing volleyball, Mr. Riley will be hosting a clinic with 2 other Arvada West HS coaches on September 17th and September 24th . Both sessions will be from 1pm to 3pm at A-West. Click the link on the attached flyer to register.

This not a school sponsored event.

[Boys Volleyball Clinic](#)

Join Ralston Valley H.S. Mini Dance Clinic.

Kindergarten through 5th graders! Join the Ralston Valley Poms for Mini-Mustangs Dance Clinic September 26th and 28th with a performance September 29th .

Click [HERE](#) for details.



Helpful Links & Resources

[Order Breakfast or Lunch](#): **October** meals available to order. (due a week before the week of meals)

[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](#)


Ideas for thanking a staff member: [Treats and Deets](#)





Excel Academy K-8 Charter School

 Facebook

 11500 West 84th Avenue, Arvad...

 Julie.Smith@jeffco.k12.co.us

 303-467-2295

 excel-academy.jeffcopublicsch...