

Excel Academy Eagle Update

October 27, 2023

UPDATES FROM THE SCHOOL

Dear Eagle Families

We hope everyone enjoyed a restful Fall Break. Students returned to school ready to work and excited for the many events that happen between now and Winter Break. Be sure to read the Eagle Update, check your child's classroom newsletter, and refer to the school website for information for details.



Thank you to the 84 guardians who completed our **Quick Pulse Survey**. While a relatively small number of respondents based on the size of our school, it's higher than annual district survey in 2022-23 of 65, approaching the 94 in 2021-22, and far more than the 20 participants in 2020-21. Your feedback and input helps us know where things are going well as well as areas for focusing attention for growth and improvement. I'll be sharing the high-level results at the Board of Directors meeting on October 30th. Our School Accountability Committee will also take this data into consideration as we finalize our action steps toward the goals identified in our Unified Improvement Plan as well as add another one related to students feeling a sense of safety and belonging at school.

We are still seeking parents who are interested in serving on our **Interview Team** for this school year. If we have several interested parents, we can rotate among them as we interview for different positions. Members will meet as needed to interview, rate candidate answers, and discuss potential candidates for open positions at Excel Academy. Members need to complete a short online training and sign a confidentiality agreement as well as commit to participating in all interviews for a given position (scheduling will be based on availability of the full committee members, and remote participation is often possible). If you are interested, please email to Julie Smith at Julie.Smith@jeffco.k12.co.us and share why you are interested and any skills, experience, qualifications, or perspective you believe would be beneficial to our Interviewing Team. Note that no prior experience is required, we simply value parental input and perspective as we vet potential future staff members.

We had a smaller group for our monthly **Leadership Coffee Chat** this week, but still had great discussions. Thank you to all who attended for the robust conversations, feedback, and recommendations. Highlights of topics:

- **Field Studies:** A request was made for more details and clarity regarding what to bring and not to bring for field studies. Additionally, Mrs. Smith provided an update on scheduling a one-night overnight Extended Field Study for our 4th grade students, coming up in May.
- **Emergency Hold Protocols:** A parent asked what we tell students when we have an emergency hold in classrooms. She shared that a previous school told students things such as a bear was on the playground. I shared that I believe in sharing as much honest information as is developmentally appropriate without breaching confidentiality so that students take it seriously without causing undue worry. For example, if there was something concerning happening in the neighborhood, I would likely share that there is police activity in the area.
- **Window Replacement Status:** Our replacement windows were ordered within days of the vandalism, but we do not yet have an estimated installation date. At this time custom glass is a long lead time item.
- **PTO Track it Forward App:** Parents supported one another in hearing about how [Track it Forward](#) works, and one parent shared that the app works better on a phone than trying to use the website via phone. Someone asked why every volunteer opportunity in classrooms is not listed through Track it Forward, and it was shared that there are some jobs that teachers need to be able to select for the best fit for the activity.
- **PTO Vegas Night:** Linda Stilling, PTO Member, shared that Vegas Night coming up on November 10th takes the place of the annual gala. She also shared that there will be items for bidding on, but there will not be classroom-created gift baskets this year due to the amount of time those take to collect items and put them together.
- **Explorations:** Questions were asked about what the format of Explorations for our kindergarten and 1st graders, who are working through activities designed to boost convergent and divergent thinking processes. Mrs. Smith shared that students are welcome to bring and leave materials for their Explorations project in the room that they attend Explorations, but that there shouldn't be a huge need for materials, as the school works to supply them with support from parents donating requested items.
- **Winter Middle School Sports Preview:** Coach Miller shared that we have Boys Basketball starting soon, then Girls Basketball following for our winter middle school sports offerings. Coach Miller also shared information about how our league operates as a group of charter and private schools. Coach Miller also shared that indoor sports present a challenge due to lack of space for spectators, the difficulty in securing outside facilities due to both availability and cost.

We invite all guardians to join us at our next Leadership Coffee Chat on Wednesday, November 29th from 8:30 - 9:15 a.m. in the Excel Cafeteria. We provide light breakfast items, you bring topics of interest, questions, and feedback.

In Partnership,
Kresta Vuolo



Driveline Reminders

Brrrrrr!! With cold weather upon us, we want to remind everyone that our school doors do not open for students until 8:00 am. Please **do not drop your children off before 8:00 am** unless they are participating in the YMCA before-care program or are member of a scheduled and supervised activity (NJHS, Lexia Lab). If you arrive before 8:00 am, we ask that your students remain in your vehicle until the school is open.

We need your help making our driveline process run smoothly! Please be respectful to those parents coming in behind you and pull your car forward as far as you can before stopping to let your children out. Especially when the weather is cold, we need to make full use of the sidewalk along the north side of the school in order to get all students and staff in the building in a timely manner.

Also, please be courteous to our staff who stand outside every day in all the different kinds of weather to help keep your students safe!

Classroom Fall Parties

On Tuesday, October 31st students can wear costumes to school.

All costumes must be Rated "G", meet dress code requirements, be school appropriate, and follow the guidelines below:



- No face masks, hats, weapons, or depictions of scary characters or violence
- Face paint must still allow staff to easily identify the person
- No blood, gore, or things that could frighten our youngest scholars
- No Inflatable Costumes
- Students must be able to sit easily at their desk and do schoolwork
- As our school endeavors to provide an environment where families of all backgrounds feel safe and welcome, we ask students and staff to read and follow the recommendations of Jeffco's Department of Community Partnerships in not dressing up in costumes related to indigenous peoples. Please read the guidance document, which contains additional resource links, [here](#).

We will have a regular school day until 2:45 when class parties begin. Please keep this in mind, as costumes could get soiled or damaged during the school day activities.

Classroom parties will start at 2:45. For space reasons and to support students for whom noise, crowds and activity can be overwhelming, we ask that classroom volunteers be limited to 2 people. Watch for an email from the classroom teacher with ways to donate to the class party.



Announcing Share Day in music classes K-5

Each student will be asked to share an interest, passion or talent they have with their classmates during music class. (See schedule below) This performance is not for parents however you may want to practice with them so they are prepared to share. Students can talk about, do, or show something that is unique or important to them. Acts should not last more than 2 minutes to allow time for each student to share. Please support your child in being prepared for their special day.

Some acts I have seen in the past include magic, cup-stacking, bouncing a ball, gymnastics, dancing, karate, singing, reciting a poem, skits etc. We will also discuss and practice appropriate audience behavior. Students will be graded on their preparedness and supportive, respectful audience behavior. The expectation is that each child will share. Share Day allows each child the opportunity to practice presenting and practice supportive, appropriate audience behavior.

Schedule

Thursday, November 9th - Zerr

Friday, November 10th - Rensberger, Mader, McDaniel

Monday, November 13th - Mackey, Clark

Tuesday, November 14th - Raffa, Malmgren, Henningsen

Wednesday, November 15th - Mesa, Kuhl, Dexter

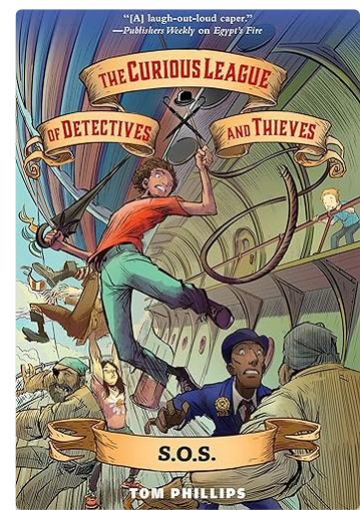
Thursday, November 16th - Adams, Criswell

I look forward to sharing this special day with your amazing children.

Mrs. Boyd

Author, Tom Phillips, Visits Excel!

Excel is excited to have author, Tom Phillips, visit our 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th graders on **Thursday, November 9**. Tom Phillips is the author of [The Curious League of Detectives and Thieves: Egypt's Fire](#) and [The Curious League of Detectives and Thieves: SOS](#). The series includes a hilarious, non-stop adventure, a mysterious jewel heist, and a detective team like no other. Kids that are fans of A Series of Unfortunate Events and Enola Holmes will enjoy this series. Tom Phillips will be personalizing books after his visit. Order a copy of his two books [here](#).





Candy for the Troops

Excel Academy's NJHS students will be collecting all leftover Halloween candy November 1 through November 10 for USO Colorado. *The United Service Organizations strengthens America's military service members by keeping them connected to family, home and country, throughout their service to the nation.* USO Colorado collects and sends these Halloween treats to service members overseas. Any sealed/pre-packaged candy is acceptable. A large container located at the front entry will be the collection point. We'll be delivering the candy the weekend of Nov. 11 so, all donations need to be at school no later than 3pm on Friday Nov. 10th. Thank you!



Veterans Day Celebration November 10

Excel Academy invites you and your veteran family member, friend, or neighbor to our Veterans Day Celebration being held on Friday, November 10 from 8:30 - 9:30 AM. We would like to honor veterans and their family members on this day. Please join us for a tour of the school, light refreshments in the cafeteria, and an optional visit as a guest speaker in the classroom. All visitors, please bring your driver's license or state issued ID and check-in at the front office for a visitor's badge. Only students who have invited a guest, will be excused from class. Your [RSVP here](#) by Wednesday, November 8 is much appreciated. Thank you.

Explorations Needs - Volunteer Opportunities

Supplies: Explorations is underway, and our students have begun planning and crafting their projects. Students have come up with a supply list and we are looking for donations to fulfill their wish lists. It would be wonderful if we could get some of these supplies by

Wednesday when Explorations meets again. If you are able, please consider donating to our

Explorations supply needs: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409094EAFAF2BAB9-44975057-explorations>

Remember that for every \$10 you spend, you can log one volunteer hour with the PTO.

Thank you so much!





Original Works

K-5 families your Children's Original Works are ready to be ordered! Preserve your child's masterpiece on keepsake products perfect for holiday gifts. **Look for a flyer with information on how to order Original Works in Friday Folders this week.** The deadline to order is November 7th! See your child's Friday Folder for directions on how to order.

Second Step

As parents and caregivers, you are your child's first and most important teachers, and play a vital role in their social, emotional, and academic development. Your child's classroom teachers also support you in this, and the Second Step program is one of the tools we use. Second Step programs combine discussions with fun activities and family resources. The programs help children learn social-emotional skills such as responsible decision-making, working together to solve problems, managing strong emotions, and getting along with others. These skills can help children succeed academically and socially. Please take a moment to read the program information by level provided through the links below.



Second Step Elementary [Information](#)

Second Step Middle School [Information](#)

Excel Athletics

Well sports fan the soccer team ended their season with a bang defeating Evergreen Country Day School 8-0. Balanced scoring was the name of the game on Monday as four members of the team chipped in with goals. Barrett Anderson and Argiend Krasniqi both scored three goals while Kaleb Robles and Hagan Heintz each chipped in with one.

In volleyball on Wednesday, the "B" team girls lost in two while the "A" team girls went to three games before succumbing to Woodrow Wilson. With the tournament looming in the future, it looks like both the A and B teams will face Woodrow Wilson!



Coming up this week:

- **Girls Volleyball #3 Excel "B" Team** vs. #2 Woodrow Wilson Academy, Monday, October 30th at 4:15 p.m. at Woodrow Wilson Academy
- **Girls Volleyball #3 Excel "A" Team** vs. #2 Woodrow Wilson Academy, Wednesday, November 1st at 4:15 p.m. at Lincoln Academy

- **Co-Ed Cross Country** at the Woodrow Wilson Invitational, Wednesday, November 1st at 4:15 p.m. at Woodrow Wilson Academy



SOAR Winners

Congratulations to this week's SOAR drawing winners!

Self-Discipline

Outstanding Effort

Acceptance of Others

Resilience

Izzy, Farnsworth Gr: K

Rylyn Kraft Gr:1

Charlie Murray Gr: 2

Kennedy McGoveran Gr:3

Zaria Avila Gr:4

Ari Sheikh Gr:5

Jaden Roy Gr: 6

Alexis Deleo

Jude Palmer Gr: 8

Classroom Winner: Mrs. McDaniel's Class

Middle School Newsletter

Middle School October Newsletter

Check out the [Middle School Newsletter](#). It contains lots of great photos and information pertaining to our class trips, curriculum, and our upcoming fall parties.

FROM THE EXCEL ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

October Meeting Rescheduled

The Board of Directors re-scheduled their October Regular Business Meeting to Monday, October 30th from 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. in the Excel Academy Library. This month's meeting will be in-person only. The meeting was rescheduled in order to assure a quorum of board members could be in attendance. You can see the agenda for the meeting on the [Board page of the Excel Academy website](#).

Thank you for your commitment to our great school community!

The Excel Academy Volunteer Board of Directors

FROM THE CLINIC



**Children's Hospital
Colorado**

Why your child needs regular wellness checks

How regular checkups keep kids healthy

Visiting your pediatrician regularly helps ensure that your child is healthy and happy. In addition to covering basic wellness exams, these visits are also important for vaccinations, vision and hearing tests, mental health screenings, physical development and so much more. Plus, these visits are a key part of disease and illness prevention throughout childhood. Learn more about the importance of wellness checks from our expert partners at Children's Hospital Colorado.

[Children's Hospital](#)

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

PTO Links

[Excel Academy PTO Website](#)

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

ENRICHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

CU Wizards

CU Wizards provides FREE monthly science seminars for students and their families at the CU Boulder Campus. Check out their [monthly schedule here](#).





Trunk Or Treat

Are you looking for a sensory-friendly Halloween celebration? Join Behavioral Innovations ABA center for costumes, candy, activities and more!"

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](#)





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